

# **Crawley Borough Council 2024-2040 Local Plan Examination MIQs Matter 1 – Issue 5: 1.16**

Report date: November 2023

**Prepared for:**  
Ardmore Limited

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# Matter 1: Legal Compliance and General Plan-making

## Issue 5: Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.16 **Does the sustainability proposal (SA) Document KDSA 01 adequately and reasonably assess the likely effects of the policies and proposals of the plan against the SA objectives (issues) and test the preferred/ selected policy approach against any reasonable alternatives?**
1. The site at Jersey Farm has been promoted by Ardmore Limited previously through the core strategy 2008 and Local Plan 2015, and most recently during the 2019 call for sites. This has been done through Ardmore’s subsidiary company Windsor Developments Limited.
  2. Initial masterplans indicated a site area of 19 hectares but this has been reduced slightly from 19ha to 17.2ha as Option terms have not been progressed with two landowners, namely, site Ref 5(i) (The Grove/Maxwell) and site Ref 5(ii) (Rixon and Crook). In addition, Ardmore has implemented planning permission (CR/2019/0696/FUL) on Plot/Unit Please see Appendix 1 for our updated October 2023 masterplan and Appendix 2 for our regulation 19 representation. Please also refer to our matter statements in relation to 4.10 and 4.31 which also necessarily address the issue of the assessment of reasonable alternatives in the SA (KDSA01).
  3. The supporting evidence base for the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2024-2040 includes a May 2023 updated SA which aims to demonstrate that KDSA01 has looked at Main Employment Areas covered in policies EC1 to EC3, as well as assessing Strategic Employment Locations through EC1 and EC4 against SA objectives.
  4. Page 400 of the SA also confirms the Council have undertaken an assessment of rejected Employment Sites and looked at a scenario wherein the Local Plan makes no employment allocations, stated as “Do not allocate new employment land” (Page 439).
  5. However, the SA does not consider other options in regard to allocating alternative Strategic Employment Land locations. We therefore do not believe that the SA has adequately and reasonably looked at all of the likely effects of the EC policies against the SA objectives. This should have considered sites at Jersey Farm, or the other Manor Royal extensions in combination.
  6. Nor do we believe that the SA as it stands sufficiently tests any reasonable alternatives for a Strategic Employment Location (“SEL”), other than Gatwick Green, including Jersey Farm master planned area or other extensions to Manor Royal promoted by others, combined with Jersey Farm.
  7. The SA does not adequately address the extent of safeguarding consistently (as policies seek to remove safeguarding for the [ Crawley Western Multi Modal Transport Link (CWMMTL) under ST4 and Gatwick Green under EC4). Therefore, the SA does not adequately and reasonably assess the likely effects of allocating alternative locations, in a non-safeguarding scenario.
  8. The principle and extent of safeguarding is therefore ambiguous and is not adequately addressed in the SA, or Topic Paper 5. The policies and SA should be coherent and consistent with each other across the Local Plan Review, and its Proposals Map, rather than GAT2 protecting safeguarding land and EC4 and ST4 allowing its piecemeal removal for development promoted by the Council, when reasonable alternatives for major employment land and CWMMTL alignment have not been assessed. In relation to the allocation of Gatwick Green in particular, the Council has elected to assess its favoured option and omitted to assess alternative(s) that are clearly reasonable – as acknowledged by the SA itself (see further below).

13. In regard to an assessment against SA objectives/issues, we agree with page 377-378 which confirms under objective 5: *“Manor Royal should remain the focus for mixed business development. Retaining the role of Manor Royal as a business-led economic development destination performs strongly against this objective. Significant Positive Impact (++)”*. In conclusion on p78, the SA assessment against EC1-4 suggests that *“Manor Royal Business District is a well-established and sustainable location for business-led economic development that has important local and sub-regional significance. It is a sustainable location for employment growth through the utilisation and intensification of land, and its continued identification as a Main Employment Area reflects a positive and sustainable approach to planning for economic development.”*
14. The SA makes clear that sites adjoining Manor Royal (rejected sites in the SA) were not promoted despite being judged more sustainable than Gatwick Green, and meeting other SA objectives, solely because of the airport safeguarding (under GAT2). However, safeguarding is not applied to Gatwick Green under GAT1 and GAT4 which is inconsistent. *It states “Other locations that have been promoted for strategic employment provision, particularly those adjoining Manor Royal, represent more sustainable locations, but these sites cannot be delivered due to the ongoing requirement to safeguard land for a possible southern runway”.*
15. Therefore the SA on pages 397-398 inconsistently reflects the Council’s treatment of airport safeguarding as an overriding constraint for both in relation land adjoining Manor Royal, and when assessing the promotion of EC4 at Gatwick Green. The SA instead suggests a positive assessment against Objective 5, for Gatwick Green stating that:
- “5. Maintain/Support Employment: The allocation of an industrial-led Strategic Employment Location at Gatwick Green will address a long-standing need for new employment land, specifically within the B8 storage & distribution sector in Crawley. This would support and complement Crawley’s existing business offer, particularly that of Manor Royal, and also the allocated office-led Horley Strategic Business Park. The provision of new strategic employment land would support sustainable economic growth in Crawley and that of the wider Gatwick Diamond, attracting new business and facilitating the expansion of existing businesses which have been frustrated by a lack of available space, particularly within the B8 use class....This is equally possible as some of the rejected sites in a more sustainable location.*
- In its assessment of Gatwick Green, the SA continues” This offers scope for complementarity with Manor Royal, helping retain its existing mixed-use business function which is coming under significant pressure from the demand for B8 floorspace.*
16. We disagree with the SA that Gatwick Green is the only option that offers complementarity with Manor Royal, and that more sustainable locations as extensions could provide better alternative locations.

17. The SA concludes that the *“allocation of a Strategic Employment Location therefore presents a significant opportunity to accommodate the business needs of Crawley, in a manner that does not prejudice the physical land take required to accommodate a possible southern runway at Gatwick Airport, supporting Crawley’s role as the leading employment destination in the Gatwick Diamond. Significant Positive Impact (++)”*.

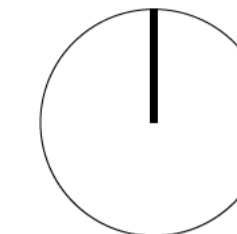
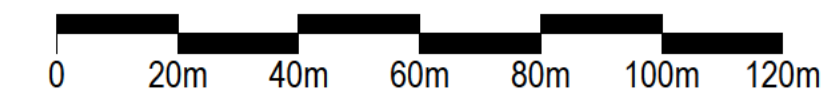
This is inconsistent with the approach of the Council in relation to the assessment of other sites as reasonable alternatives. In particular, the Council’s positive assessment of Gatwick Green does not adequately address the justification for the removal of part of the safeguarded area, either in principle or extent.

18. Further, the proposed allocation at EC4 does not accord with Plan 20 of the 2019 Gatwick Masterplan (in Topic Paper 5) that retains safeguarding and shows the area for car parking. The assessment of Gatwick Green under Objective 8: on sufficient infrastructure, states that *“It is shown in the Gatwick Airport Master Plan as being utilised for a large area of surface car parking. Surface parking does not represent an efficient use of land, particularly given the longstanding employment needs of Crawley, and given the scope for the airport to accommodate parking more efficiently through decked parking and other efficiency measures, should it be demonstrated that additional on-airport parking is required having regard to the airport’s surface access obligations stated in the S106 legal agreement. Therefore, the Local Plan retains safeguarding but amends its boundary to exclude land to the east of Balcombe Road and south of the M23 spur. This represents the most appropriate site within Crawley that can be allocated for strategic employment growth without prejudicing the possible delivery of a southern runway at Gatwick Airport. Positive Impact (+).”*
19. Therefore, the SA is inconsistent in its approach to safeguarding because it seeks to maintain safeguarding for a potential southern runway (despite the many years of sterilising safeguarding with no such expansion and now the DCO) but proposes to remove safeguarding to enable Gatwick Green and so fails to assess safeguarding (in terms both of principle and extent) or alternative strategic employment locations.
20. Under Objective 9 of the SA assessing EC1 and EC4, in regard to the Promotion of Sustainable Communities and encouraging active lifestyles, it states that *“Strategic Employment Development at Gatwick Green would be well placed to link with the existing Main Employment Area at Gatwick Airport and the allocated Horley Strategic Business Park. There are opportunities to reinforce links from the immediate area to the neighbourhoods of Three Bridges and Forge Wood, enhance sustainable linkages with the bus, pedestrian and cycle network, whilst offering scope to contribute to the encouragement of healthy lifestyles through the design process [...] These factors must be considered against the loss of open space, and the need for careful and appropriate master planning to mitigate any negative impacts for nearby residents. Possible Positive or Slight Positive Impact (+?)”* The proposed allocation of Gatwick Green would be at odds with Objective 9 because the site has relatively poor accessibility to, and connection, with the Manor Royal Main Employment Area. The SA scoring (possible positive/slight positive) is unjustified and the allocation will have negative effects.

21. As set out above, in its conclusions the SA confirms that, *“Other locations that have been promoted for strategic employment provision, particularly those adjoining Manor Royal, represent more sustainable locations, but these sites cannot be delivered due to the ongoing requirement to safeguard land for a possible southern runway. It is considered to be the most appropriate site that is of a sufficient scale and location to deliver the quantum of required industrial and warehouse floorspace in a comprehensive way without prejudicing the potential delivery of a southern runway, should the government decide that additional runway capacity is required at Gatwick Airport”* [emphasis added].
22. This makes plain that there has been no proper assessment of alternatives, including a failure to properly assess the principle and extent of the safeguarding land. It also effectively seeks to pre-judge the Gatwick Green allocation (and departs from the GAL Masterplan which shows the area as car parking) on an area not regarded by GAL as surplus land.
23. Page 400-420 of the SA looks at alternative employment locations; land adjacent Hydehurst Lane; land at Rowley Farm and various iterations in regard to the wider masterplan at Jersey Farm, all which are suggested as inappropriate - because they are within the current safeguarding area.
24. Whilst the SA looks at all the sites, it assumes safeguarding as an absolute constraint and accordingly scores the alternative locations negatively. However, CBC has taken an inconsistent approach to safeguarding by proposing the allocation of Gatwick Green. In regard to Jersey Farm, the SA states that against Objective 8 which looks to “Provide Sufficient Infrastructure”, *“It is possible that opportunities may exist to access the site longer-term via a western Crawley multi-modal link road, potentially avoiding development exacerbating existing traffic congestion at County Oak. However, the site cannot be allocated due to the requirement to retain safeguarding, as it is predominantly located on land that is needed for the physical land take of a southern runway, road diversions and other operational uses should this be required. Therefore, there is risk that the potential delivery of nationally significant infrastructure, in the form of a southern runway, would be prejudiced were this site to come forward. Significant Negative Impact (--).”* The site is therefore ‘Red’ assessed.
25. Therefore, the SA is flawed. It selectively uses safeguarding as a flexible constraint for both Gatwick Green under EC1 and EC4 and the Crawley WMMTL under ST4, yet uses it as an absolute constraint for other sites. The SA is also inconsistent in relation to GAT2 which retains and increases safeguarding area, ain which is inconsistent with EC4 and ST4 which removes other areas. It therefore does not adequately and reasonably assess the likely effects of the policies against the SA objectives and is not consistent against any reasonable alternatives.

# Appendix 1

## Updated Master Plan



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**Explanations**  
Unless otherwise stated:  
• General tolerances are to ISO 2768-mK  
• Dimensions are in millimetres  
• Symbols should be read in conjunction with BS 8541-2

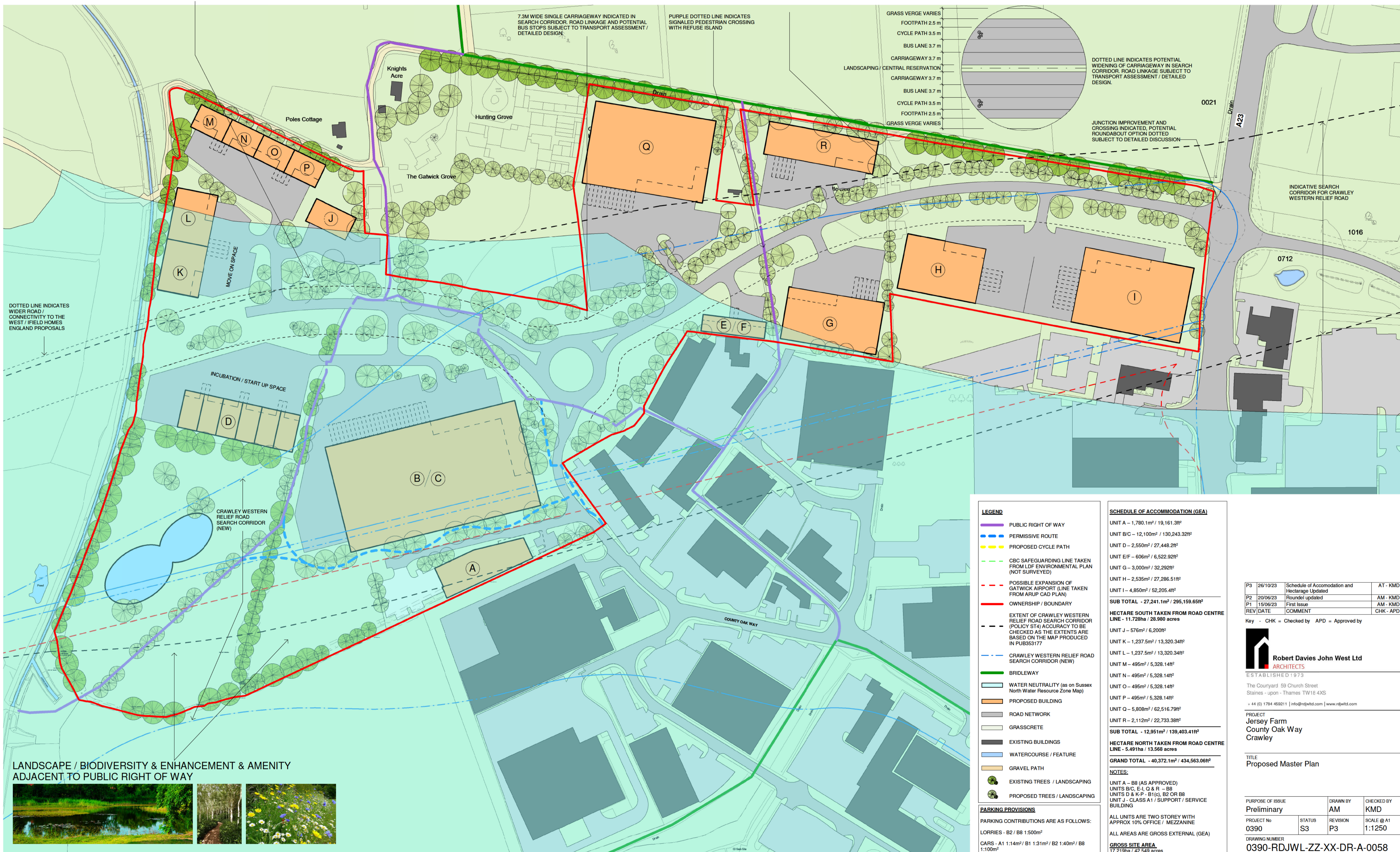
**Instructions**  
Responsibility is not accepted for values obtained in scaling from this drawing. Construction information should be taken from written dimensions only. Inconsistencies should be reported to the legal owner immediately.



PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT AND PLACEMAKING



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND INTERCONNECTIVITY



DOTTED LINE INDICATES WIDER ROAD / CONNECTIVITY TO THE WEST / FIELD HOMES ENGLAND PROPOSALS

7.3M WIDE SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY INDICATED IN SEARCH CORRIDOR. ROAD LINKAGE AND POTENTIAL BUS STOPS SUBJECT TO TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT / DETAILED DESIGN.

PURPLE DOTTED LINE INDICATES SIGNALLED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING WITH REFUGE ISLAND

- GRASS VERGE VARIES
- FOOTPATH 2.5 m
- CYCLE PATH 3.5 m
- BUS LANE 3.7 m
- CARRIAGEWAY 3.7 m
- LANDSCAPING / CENTRAL RESERVATION
- CARRIAGEWAY 3.7 m
- BUS LANE 3.7 m
- CYCLE PATH 3.5 m
- FOOTPATH 2.5 m
- GRASS VERGE VARIES

DOTTED LINE INDICATES POTENTIAL WIDENING OF CARRIAGEWAY IN SEARCH CORRIDOR. ROAD LINKAGE SUBJECT TO TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT / DETAILED DESIGN.

JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT AND CROSSING INDICATED. POTENTIAL ROUNDABOUT OPTION DOTTED SUBJECT TO DETAILED DISCUSSION

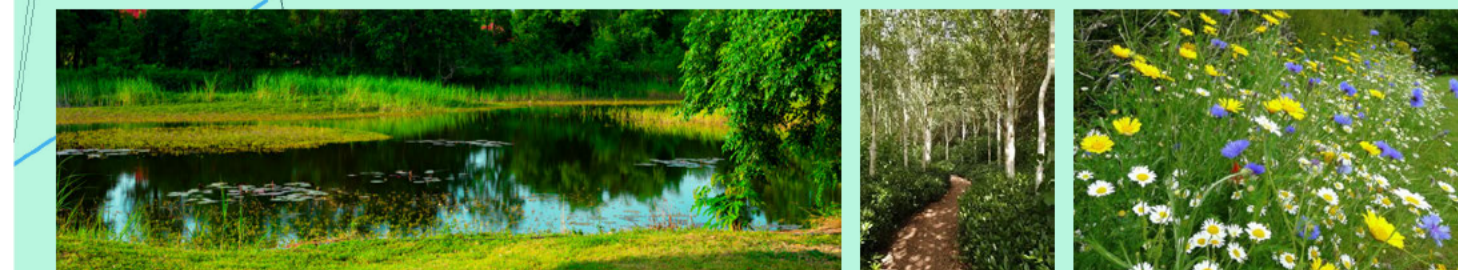
INDICATIVE SEARCH CORRIDOR FOR CRAWLEY WESTERN RELIEF ROAD

INCUBATION / START UP SPACE

CRAWLEY WESTERN RELIEF ROAD SEARCH CORRIDOR (NEW)

COUNTY OAK WAY

LANDSCAPE / BIODIVERSITY & ENHANCEMENT & AMENITY ADJACENT TO PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY



- LEGEND**
- PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY
  - - - PERMISSIVE ROUTE
  - - - PROPOSED CYCLE PATH
  - - - CBC SAFEGUARDING LINE TAKEN FROM LDF ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN (NOT SURVEYED)
  - - - POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF GATWICK AIRPORT (LINE TAKEN FROM ARUP CAD PLAN)
  - OWNERSHIP / BOUNDARY
  - - - EXTENT OF CRAWLEY WESTERN RELIEF ROAD SEARCH CORRIDOR (POLICY ST4) ACCURACY TO BE CHECKED AS THE EXTENTS ARE BASED ON THE MAP PRODUCED IN PUB353177
  - - - CRAWLEY WESTERN RELIEF ROAD SEARCH CORRIDOR (NEW)
  - BRIDLEWAY
  - WATER NEUTRALITY (as on Sussex North Water Resource Zone Map)
  - PROPOSED BUILDING
  - ROAD NETWORK
  - GRASSCRETE
  - EXISTING BUILDINGS
  - WATERCOURSE / FEATURE
  - GRAVEL PATH
  - EXISTING TREES / LANDSCAPING
  - PROPOSED TREES / LANDSCAPING

**PARKING PROVISIONS**  
PARKING CONTRIBUTIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:  
LORRIES - B2 / B8 1:500m<sup>2</sup>  
CARS - A1 1:14m<sup>2</sup> / B1 1:31m<sup>2</sup> / B2 1:40m<sup>2</sup> / B8 1:100m<sup>2</sup>

**SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION (GEA)**

UNIT A	- 1,780.1m <sup>2</sup> / 19,161.3ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT B/C	- 12,100m <sup>2</sup> / 130,243.32ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT D	- 2,550m <sup>2</sup> / 27,448.2ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT E/F	- 606m <sup>2</sup> / 6,522.92ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT G	- 3,000m <sup>2</sup> / 32,292ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT H	- 2,535m <sup>2</sup> / 27,286.51ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT I	- 4,850m <sup>2</sup> / 52,205.4ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>SUB TOTAL - 27,241.1m<sup>2</sup> / 295,159.65ft<sup>2</sup></b>	
<b>HECTARE SOUTH TAKEN FROM ROAD CENTRE LINE - 11.728ha / 28.980 acres</b>	
UNIT J	- 576m <sup>2</sup> / 6,200ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT K	- 1,237.5m <sup>2</sup> / 13,320.34ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT L	- 1,237.5m <sup>2</sup> / 13,320.34ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT M	- 495m <sup>2</sup> / 5,328.14ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT N	- 495m <sup>2</sup> / 5,328.14ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT O	- 495m <sup>2</sup> / 5,328.14ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT P	- 495m <sup>2</sup> / 5,328.14ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT Q	- 5,808m <sup>2</sup> / 62,516.79ft <sup>2</sup>
UNIT R	- 2,112m <sup>2</sup> / 22,733.38ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>SUB TOTAL - 12,951m<sup>2</sup> / 139,403.41ft<sup>2</sup></b>	
<b>HECTARE NORTH TAKEN FROM ROAD CENTRE LINE - 5.491ha / 13.568 acres</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL - 40,372.1m<sup>2</sup> / 434,563.06ft<sup>2</sup></b>	

**NOTES:**  
UNIT A - B8 (AS APPROVED)  
UNITS B/C, E, I, Q & R - B8  
UNITS D & K-P - B1(c), B2 OR B8  
UNIT J - CLASS A1 / SUPPORT / SERVICE BUILDING

ALL UNITS ARE TWO STOREY WITH APPROX 10% OFFICE / MEZZANINE  
ALL AREAS ARE GROSS EXTERNAL (GEA)  
**GROSS SITE AREA**  
17.219ha / 42,549 acres

P3	26/10/23	Schedule of Accommodation and Hectareage Updated	AT - KMD
P2	20/06/23	Roundel Updated	AM - KMD
P1	15/06/23	First Issue	AM - KMD
REV	DATE	COMMENT	CHK - APD

Key - CHK = Checked by APD = Approved by

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PROJECT  
Jersey Farm  
County Oak Way  
Crawley

TITLE  
Proposed Master Plan

PURPOSE OF ISSUE	DRAWN BY	CHECKED BY
Preliminary	AM	KMD
PROJECT No	STATUS	REVISION
0390	S3	P3
SCALE @ A1	1:1250	
DRAWING NUMBER	0390-RDJWL-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0058	

## **Appendix 2**

### Regulation 19 Representation



Ref: P16-2975  
Date: 20 June 2023



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**Emailed to: [strategic.planning@crawlley.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.planning@crawlley.gov.uk)**

Dear Sallie & Elizabeth

## **Response on Behalf of Jersey Farm for Crawley Borough Council Local Plan Review 2024 - 2040 Regulation 19 Local Representations**

Further to our previous representations to both Regulation 18 and 19 of the Crawley Borough Council Local Plan Review (LPR), we are writing on behalf of our clients Ardmere Ltd regarding land at Jersey Farm, which is located to the North of the Borough and immediately adjacent to Manor Royal, the towns largest Main Employment Area.

In line with our previous Regulation 18 & Regulation 19 representations, we still wish all previous comments to be considered by CBC and these additional June 2023 comments should be read in association with all our previous representations, including Connect Consultants Transport's technical notes supporting our planning representations.

Our main areas of comment on this Regulation 19 draft of the 2024-2040 Local Plan relate to the Local Plan Policies affecting our site, identified as outside the Built Up Area Boundary and the supporting evidence base, primarily the updated May 2023 Topic Papers, new 2023 evidence base documents and the May 2023 Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

We also will make further detailed comment on the updated evidence base, especially in relation to the following:

- Economic Growth and Employment Policies EC1, EC2, EC3, EC4 and EC5;
- Gatwick policies GAT 2 and GAT3;
- Policy ST4: Area of Search for a Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport Link;
- overarching policies relating to Sustainable Transport ST1 and ST2, Sustainable Development SD1; Water Neutrality policy SDC4; and
- CL3 on Character Landscape and Form, and CL8 Development Outside the Built Up Area Boundary CL8.

LISTEN

CARE



INNOVATE

LEAD

**For the reasons set out below we submit that the Local Plan as drafted is unsound. Policies EC1, EC4, ST1, ST4, CL3 and CL8, and GAT2 are unjustified, ineffective, and inconsistent with national policy.**

**Gatwick & Safeguarding Policy GAT2:**

The allocation and protection of safeguarding at Gatwick has been discussed at previous Core Strategy and Local Plan Examinations. This historic evidence base regarding safeguarding is still being used to underpin this 2040 LPR. Previous iterations of the LPR included an area of search for an Area Action Plan (AAP) that looked to allocate potential Strategic Employment Locations (SEL) on safeguarded land. Our clients supported this approach that contemplated this positive change. Topic Paper 2 on Gatwick explains that the Council's position has changed following a steer on a critical friend basis from PINS. Given this Regulation 19 version retains safeguarding, we argue that the policy as drafted is unsound as it is based on outdated central government policy and does not reflect the Airports Commission's finding that endorses an additional runway at Heathrow instead of Gatwick.

Topic Paper 2: Gatwick Airport May 2023 confirms that the Local Plan supports development of an airport with a single runway (GAT1) and Safeguarded Land (GAT2). It also recognises the link with ST4: Safeguarding of a search corridor for CWMMTL.

In relation to the council's current evidence base, Topic Paper 5: Employment Needs and Land Supply also confirms that initial PINS advice has been sought on the matter of safeguarding. It states that *"Pointing to continued uncertainty as to whether safeguarding could be lifted and the timescales for doing so, the inspector's position was that an Area Action Plan would unlikely be effective, as the approach would result in a significant change to the Plan's overall development strategy. In those circumstances, an AAP would not be appropriate because it should be consistent with the strategy of the submitted Plan. As such, the inspector's advice was that the Plan should contain a review trigger rather than a reference to an AAP, enabling the whole development and spatial strategy to be re-examined should the additional land become available."*

CBC confirm in para 4.32 that *"considering the steer from the advisory Inspector, GAL's objection and the draft national Aviation Strategy's statement, the council revised its approach, considering the geographic extent of safeguarding rather than questioning the principle of its retention."*

CBC have therefore based their assessment on the GAL Masterplan 2019 as a guide for suitable development, however we contest that maintaining historical safeguarding without robust evidence to justify it, in principle and extent is flawed. An alternative approach to the use of the land in sustainable locations on the edge of Manor Royal, such as Jersey Farm should be considered by the Inspector (and CBC) in light of the need for additional sustainable employment land in the Borough and the existing evidence as to any potential future expansion at Gatwick airport.

Whilst CBC state that GAL are actively supporting the Government approach that maintains safeguarding should an additional runway be required in the future, we contest that this policy approach relies on outdated and *"rolled over"* evidence that does not reflect the opportunities being proposed by GAL, under the promoted Development Consent Order (DCO) for the open use of the Emergency or Northern Runway.

Both the August 2019 Masterplan document and its executive summary “*Making best use of Gatwick*” form the basis of the GAL future proposals for the airport. Plan 19 (p173) shows a widening of the taxiway (1) and the reconfiguring the Rapid Exit Taxiway (4), and plan 20 at (p174) indicates that an additional runway to the South and shows that areas within the Jersey Farm site could be required for a noise bund.

Whilst the 2019 GAL Masterplan illustrates that a noise bund may be required, we believe that even if the principle of continued safeguarding is accepted by the Inspector, a reduced envelope would be appropriate and suitable, allowing the release of additional sustainable employment land to the North of Manor Royal. We also consider that the 2019 GAL Masterplan should not be regarded as determinative, especially as it is materially different to what GAL are currently promoting through the DCO.

No evidence has been submitted to demonstrate any up-to-date assessments of the potential alternatives having been further tested regarding the ability to use the Northern runway (as promoted by DCO) or using less of the existing safeguarded land.

The 2015 Inspector’s Report acknowledged that safeguarding was appropriate, at that time as the council was still pending the Airports Commission decision on an additional runway.

Para 12 of the Inspectors Report stated “*Substantial areas of potentially developable land in the north of the borough are currently safeguarded from development which would be incompatible with the development of a second runway. Consequently, the Government’s decision on the location of an additional runway could have significant implications for future development in the borough.*” However, this has now been concluded with Heathrow selected.

Para 13 & 14 of Inspector Pikes Report on the 2015 Local Plan stated that to wait for the government decision was “*a sensible approach, for trying to address all development options for different runway scenarios would have been unduly complex, potentially confusing and very time-consuming. Accordingly, I indicated at the outset of the examination that I would not consider evidence which sought to take account of the second runway decision.*”

The council’s Topic Paper 5 Employment Needs and Land Supply also states that “*The Local Plan Inspector for the 2015 Local Plan required the council to identify as much developable land as possible from within the borough (a “leave no stone unturned” approach).*”

However, the position has changed since 2015, with the Airports Commission clearly now endorsing growth at Heathrow and therefore the “status quo” of simply rolling over the safeguarding is not appropriate and is unsound, because it both ignores the additional runway commitment at Heathrow and the ongoing DCO work by GAL. This does not replicate the required “no stone unturned” approach required by Inspector Pike. Therefore, another 8 years on from the 2015 Inspector’s Report, the Local Plan Review should reflect this up-to-date position in its policies and its evidence base. Simply continuing to roll over the principle of safeguarding is unjustified and policy GAT2 is unsound.

In addition, the safeguarded area in the Local Plan Review has been extended in size and scale to reflect the GAL 2019 Masterplan without any sufficient evidence to justify the extension and despite the 2023 DCO. Further, 2 policies are inconsistent with the GAT2 safeguarding:

- (i) the Crawley Western Relief Road under Policy ST4 which removes land from safeguarding, and is inconsistent with the 2019 GAL Masterplan and

- (ii) the Gatwick Green EC4 allocation for strategic employment allocation on land which is in the safeguarding area (and identified in the 2019 Masterplan for car parking, and additional hotel or office development).

Both of these proposed incursions and policies are inconsistent with the airport safeguarding otherwise promoted by the council and both incursions are unjustified, ineffective and unsound.

The National Planning Policy Framework para 106 (c) & (e) states that: *“Planning policies should:*

*c) identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development;*

*e) provide for any large-scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area, and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation, expansion and contribution to the wider economy. In doing so they should take into account whether such development is likely to be a nationally significant infrastructure project and any relevant national policy statements;*

Policy ST4 identifies an area of search but this appears inconsistent with the GAT2 safeguarding and also indicates that, where CBC considers it to be required, the extent of safeguarding can be treated as flexible and capable of amendment.

The coalition Government’s Airports Policy 2013 para 5.9 stated *“Land outside existing airports that may be required for airport development in the future needs to be protected against incompatible development until the Government has established any relevant policies and proposals in response to the findings of the Airports Commission, which is due to report in summer 2015.”*

In December 2018 the Government released Aviation 2050. Our client responded to the consultation stating that safeguarding had blighted land in Crawley for decades and clarity over future Aviation provision should be provided. A copy of our formal representation can be provided.

Para 3.66 of the Consultation Strategy document confirmed that *“Several airports safeguard land for future developments. The safeguarded land can be a mix of airport, council and private ownership, depending on the individual airport’s circumstances. It is prudent to continue with a safeguarding policy to maintain a supply of land for future national requirements and to ensure that inappropriate developments do not hinder sustainable aviation growth. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has restated the government’s commitment to “identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice”. The government believes that this provides sufficient guidance for local authorities to consider the future needs of airports and their associated surface access requirements, when developing local plans.”* (Emphasis added).

Since publishing the Airports Policy in 2013 the Airports Commission has found in favour of Heathrow for additional runway capacity. However, despite that material change in circumstances, CBC seeks to rely on rolling over the land safeguarded in 2015, as now proposed to be extended by GAL. The LPR therefore fails to justify the principle or extent of the safeguarding, on the basis of robust and up to date evidence. Further, the boundaries for the proposed safeguarded area are being inconsistently applied so as to unjustifiably seek to

exclude the Gatwick Green allocation (EC4) and to inconsistently safeguard land for the Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport Link (CWMTL) (ST4).

The May 2023 Sustainability Appraisal states that Objective 5 is key to employment growth in order “*To maintain, support and promote a diverse employment base that can serve the local and sub-regional and regional economy.*” We support this objective.

In addition, the SA criteria for assessment confirms that the Local Plan seeks to ensure Investment attractiveness, whilst recognising that insufficient land supply exists and is resulting in a lack of qualitative and quantitative employment floorspace, fit for current & future business growth.

The SA also confirms that Crawley has experienced a “*Changing Economy*” and states that “*The recent economic implications arising from COVID-19 have shown Crawley’s economy to be very reliant on the aviation sector, and as identified by the Economic Recovery Plan (2021) there is need to support continued economic recovery and diversification*”.

In regard to the Growth at Gatwick, the Sustainability Appraisal confirms that pre covid levels of passengers per annum at the Airport are now demonstrating recovery at the Airport but there is *also “a need to support the continued economic recovery of aviation related sectors, whilst also supporting the diversifying of Crawley’s economy so that it is more responsive to change.”* Whilst we agree with the approach, we would suggest that this needs to relate to opportunities both on airport and off airport, especially those locations suitable for development close to the airport’s current boundary.

Para 5.11 of the SA states that it has tested under Scenario 3 (Crawley borough focus), “*the introduction of policies seeking to increase densities and maximise effective use of land, .....and ... The extent of the safeguarding required for further expansion of Gatwick Airport .....to open potential opportunities for balancing the needs of the Airport with other economic needs.*”

The SA fails to robustly address opportunities to maximise effective use of land, or the extent of safeguarding required for further expansion of Gatwick Airport and prioritises potential airport growth over the ability for the local economy to diversify and be more robust to aviation patterns of growth and consolidation.

Local landowners and developers, as well as local stakeholders and business groups are significantly frustrated with the ongoing constraint to economic land supply and GAL objections to any planning applications within safeguarding boundaries, including as proposed to be extended, which is further stifling economic growth. We also note that the Consultation Statement Appendix C relating to The Wilky Group’s (TWG) submissions (in support of the proposed Gatwick Green allocation), confirm TWG agree that the safeguarding area protected in the Local Plan 2015 is now outdated following the Airports Commission’s findings and national and local evidence no longer warrants the safeguarding to the North of Manor Royal.

The Economic Growth Assessment (EGA) supporting this Local Plan as well as the Employment Land Area Assessment (ELAA) and the Employment Land Trajectory (ELT) indicate that insufficient land is available and therefore we believe the LPR Inspector should scrutinise all opportunities for the reassessment of safeguarded land, to facilitate increased employment development, especially those that are sustainable and located adjacent to Main Employment Areas.



The Employment Topic paper 5 also clarifies that *“the requirement to safeguard land for a possible future southern runway at Gatwick Airport severely restricted the supply of available land for employment.”*

Government planning objectives are set out in Para 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 which confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, linking the three-overarching economic, social, and environmental objectives.

In relation to the economic objective, para 8a outlines the need *‘to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure’*. Para. 8b outlines the social objective to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities, and para. 8c outlines the environmental objective to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including through making effective use of land, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change.

**By maintaining safeguarding without an up to date evidence base to justify both the principle and extent, we submit that: (i) GAT2 is inconsistent with the NPPF; (ii) Policy GAT2 and Topic Paper 2 are inconsistent with Policy ST4 and EC4, where safeguarding has been amended, and (iii) the policy should be further amended to reflect an up to date and robust alternative assessment of any necessary extent of airport safeguarding, which can then be consistently applied across the whole plan, rather than the partial, inconsistent and unjustified alterations to safeguarding currently proposed.**

#### **Policy ST4: Area of Search for Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport Link (CWMMTL)**

Policy ST4 identifies an area of search for a new Crawley Relief Road, renamed in the May 2023 Regulation 19 draft as a Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport Link. This CWMMTL is proposed to run through the Jersey Farm site and aims to link the A264 to the Southwest and the A23 to the East. The policy aims to link with Horsham District Councils’ emerging Regulation 19 District Plan which has now been delayed and would link to a potential allocation at land west of Crawley at Ifield promoted by Homes England. Our project team have ensured regular and constant dialogue with Homes England to consider updates to both project, potential layouts, and version update of our Masterplan, and to discuss issues and options behind consistency of design and trajectory of any road alignment.

The May 2023 Sustainability Appraisal under Objective 8 relates to Infrastructure and states that the Local Plan must *“ensure the provision of sufficient infrastructure to meet the requirements of the borough”*. It also states that *“The rate of development, particularly residential and also airport growth, requires careful management to ensure that it does not outstrip the borough’s infrastructure.”*

Historically a relief road or bypass has been considered for many decades, including a 2005 variation, with discussions with WSCC, HDC and WSCC but despite various evidence base documents over decades, this Local Plan Review Policy ST4 in 2023 still fails to identify a defined route, but instead protects a very large area of search. In the recent May 2023 evidence base this is now extended even further the scope of the area, affecting more existing buildings to the south and proposing an even wider area of safeguarding, also protected by GAT2.

Despite the significant delays in the Horsham District Plan and the CBC Local Plan, which has occurred due to the issues around Water Neutrality, no clear alignment route exists. There is still no route nor further agreement from parties about any alignment, after decades of assessment (and more recently more than 4 years of Local Plan Review). Policy ST4 and the SA make clear a route is required but the policy continues to fail to confirm when or where it will be constructed.

The policy fails to reduce the impact of any route, and instead the criteria-based policy lists general considerations, including design and impact and sustainable transport that are covered by other policies in the Local Plan. Therefore, the only role of the policy is to “safeguard” land; land that is already safeguarded for potential airport purposes under GAT2. Therefore, ST4 and GAT2 are mutually inconsistent, ineffective, unjustified, and unsound.

Inconsistent to GAT2, the council’s position is that under ST4 a new relief road could be acceptable development subject to the criteria being met. The policy does not require any alignment to be consistent with safeguarding nor the 2019 GAL Masterplan and acknowledges that land will be required for necessary infrastructure.

This is at odds with the clear evidence provided in Jersey Farm masterplan 0390-RDJWL-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0058-S3-P2, which illustrates a potential alignment that meets the technical specification set out in the SYSTRA report. We have reviewed the SYSTRA report, which considers a total of 19 options for the route of the eastern end of the CWMRTL northern section, including two options which pass through the Jersey Farm site.

Connect Consultants’ transport report notes at para 3.2 that *“The Jersey Farm site lies within this section. Option ES3, as shown in the SYSTRA report extract above, is the most closely aligned of the 19 route options to that which is proposed in the Jersey Farm masterplan. The report acknowledges that there are clear benefits to this route option, with the obvious caveat that it encroaches into the safeguarded land by c.155m.”* (emphasis added).

Para 5.3.5 of the SYSTRA report confirms again that the option has been explored *“to explore an alignment if it can be introduced before (if) Gatwick expands.”* The Local Plan evidence also recognises *“it could be several decades before Gatwick needs to bring forward a southern runway if it ever does so”*. This para also confirms that it ties in *“with London Road at Hydehurst lane which has been identified as the preferred location and which match the new roundabout location proposed in the GAL masterplan”*.

The SYSTRA report states that only GAL raised concerns, requesting that options ES3 and ES3a should be sifted-out. 7 other options considered also encroach on safeguarded land but no objection to these options were raised by GAL. Given the preferred roundabout location, and the trajectory to link with Hydehurst Lane the SYSTRA report also confirms that further detailed designs will be needed regarding the road and the Gatwick masterplan 2019, recognising that neither are confirmed or ready for delivery.

Para 1.2.5 of the SYSTRA report also confirms that *“Private landowners were not consulted as part of this commission based on the early stage of the scheme and that the Area of Search would be consulted on through Local Plan consultation and examination. It is expected that further detailed consultation directly with potentially affected Landowners will take place during future stages in the delivery of the route”*.

The Stantec ‘Crawley Transport Study’ concludes that a more detailed study is necessary to consider how the CWMML and its junctions may be designed to elicit the best attributes of the CWMML while minimising or eliminating any potential adverse impacts.

We agree that the Area of Search identified still requires further consideration and detailed assessment but believe that our masterplan indicates a deliverable and suitable route for the CWMML, aligning with the wider Local Plan objectives. We believe that not having early engagement with our client and other local landowners, yet covering a very large area of land with further potential restrictions is flawed, unjustified and ineffective, and contrary to the council’s own SCI, especially part 4 figure 1.

Our client has assembled land and implemented the recent planning permission reference CR/2019/0696/FUL yet no engagement on mechanisms to provide the CWMML have been discussed and only through assessment of the Local Plan Review was it evident that a further restriction was being recommended by CBC. The lack of defined route, clarity on delivery regarding purchase, CPO or timelines is therefore flawed and ST4 should be redrafted to reflect a more transparent relationship with the GAL Masterplan and the proposed location of any roundabout at London Road. Policy ST4 should also clarify further any relationship between West of Crawley (HDC) and any other potential extensions to Manor Royal as a result. However, what is clear is that the council considers that the road is required, and it would override safeguarding under GAT2. The local plan is therefore inconsistent and unjustified.

In the May 2023 SA, the site assessment of land at Jersey Farm, under objective 8 on providing sufficient infrastructure it states that *“It is possible that opportunities may exist to access the site longer-term via a western Crawley multi-modal link road, potentially avoiding development exacerbating existing traffic congestion at County Oak. However, the site cannot be allocated due to the requirement to retain safeguarding, as it is predominantly located on land that is needed for the physical land take of a southern runway, road diversions and other operational uses should this be required. Therefore, there is risk that the potential delivery of nationally significant infrastructure, in the form of a southern runway, would be prejudiced were this site to come forward.”*

The SA therefore scores this site as having a *Significant Negative Impact* (--). We do not agree that this site should have been given a red, significant negative impact scoring, especially when considered against Gatwick Green and the significant benefits of providing 40.372sp.m GEA of floor space to the North of Manor Royal (as illustrated by our Masterplan).

**We therefore find the policy inconsistent with GAT2. In particular, for the reasons set out above, we consider that the GAT2 safeguarding area is unjustified in principle and in extent, as is too great. Further, the Council’s rejection of other sites that fall within the safeguarding area, whilst simultaneously and inconsistently promoting (EC4) the removal of areas of safeguarded land for the Gatwick Green allocation and (ST4) conflicting alternative safeguarding for the western relief road is ineffective, unjustified, and contrary to national policy.**



### **Strategic Policy EC4: Strategic Employment Location**

Gatwick Green was promoted and not allocated in the 2015 local Plan. Para 81 of the 2015 Examination Inspector's report confirmed that, *"identifying Gatwick Green now would pre-empt a decision about the location of a strategic employment site. At this stage it is appropriate that the Council leaves all options open, including the potential selection of land to the north of Manor Royal, pending the review of the Plan following the second runway decision. For this reason, I do not accept the suggestion that a reserve site should be identified. The Council has gone as far as it can by identifying areas of search; to do anything more would be premature and could involve abortive work."*

In Policy EC4, the Gatwick Green Strategic Employment Location is allocated for 77,500 square metres (sqm) gross floor area, or 57.8 hectares of development. TWG's consultation response to the SA confirms that the group own over 63 hectares of land.

As stated above, the proposed Gatwick Green employment land allocation is located within the identified safeguarding land (as per the adopted 2015 Local Plan) and is inconsistent with the cited 2019 GAL Masterplan that restricts other such developments within the safeguarded area. The 2019 Masterplan by GAL indicates that the area is required for airport related parking. As we understand it GAL also objects to the policy ST4.

We submit that this allocation, is unjustified and ineffective and that the location and scale of the strategic employment allocation is unsustainable and unsound.

The complex nature of allocating Gatwick Green is reflected by the detail of policy of EC4 which requires 22 criteria to be met to address numerous constraints to development of the land for employment uses. The contentious nature of the allocation is also set out further in the councils own Topic Paper 2.

Para 2.1.4. explains that *"Policy GAT3, Gatwick Airport Related Parking, which restricts additional or replacement parking, where there is demonstrable evidence of need, to within the airport boundary, received particular scrutiny at the Examination into the 2015 Local Plan. In his report, concluding that Policy GAT3 is sound, the Local Plan Inspector endorsed the policy approach, observing in para. 88 that "there is obvious logic to the argument that car parks close to the terminals will minimise the length of car journeys for most people, and that on-airport provision is therefore a more sustainable option.... Furthermore, given the scarcity of land in Crawley and the available capacity at the airport, there is a strong argument that the priority for land which becomes available outside the airport should be a more productive use such as housing or employment"*.

Para 2.1.5 confirms that *"the Local Plan approach in Policy GAT3 was subsequently challenged at the High Court"*. Whilst the Judicial Review challenge failed and the Local Plan was subsequently adopted, Topic Paper 2 highlights the need to retain car parking within the airport boundary, and this is further endorsed by Local Plan Review Policy GAT3.

Topic Paper 2 also confirms the latest position in relation to the s106 Agreement between Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL), West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and Crawley Borough Council (CBC) signed in May 2022. This agreement supports the growth of the airport by making best use of its existing one runway, two terminal configuration, whilst ensuring that measures are in place to minimise its short and longer-term environmental impacts.

For context detailed guidance for the airport was set out in the Gatwick Airport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2008 which is now very outdated. CBCs January 2023 Local Development Scheme states that the SPD will be updated post the Local Plan Review adoption. We submit that any employment land allocation at Gatwick Green is inconsistent with adopted and proposed local plan policy and guidance, and conflicts with other airport-related policies such as updated GAT 1 and GAT3 of the Local Plan Review.

Policy EC4 states that any application for the allocation will need to be supported by an Impact assessment on how Gatwick Green will ensure its offer is complementary to the mixed use business function of Manor Royal, and HOR9 at Horley and other strategic employment locations in the functional market area. However, we submit that an allocation for the size and scale of the proposed Gatwick Green is neither sustainable nor sound, will not be effective and is not justified. In particular, the proposed allocation is separate from and poorly located to Manor Royal, the pre-eminent employment location in the borough – which is demonstrably highly effective as a mixed use multi-functional area.

The physical separation and distance to Manor Royal means that, as the SA confirms, Gatwick Green is “a stand-alone” location, with evident and serious limitations. The proposed allocation would have an adverse impact in terms of the lack of physical connectivity with local neighbourhoods, local work force and cycle and pedestrian links and the consequent traffic generation, and lack of physical connectivity with local neighbourhoods, local workforce and cycle and pedestrian links can be seen to adversely affect the character and function of Manor Royal which under EC3 is stated as the Boroughs Main Employment Area. We submit EC4 is therefore inconsistent with Policy EC3. With the allocation not being connected to local neighbourhoods, we also believe that this will be likely to increase in-commuting, further exacerbating local skills shortages and increasing traffic pressures on the existing road network.

The poor location of the Gatwick Green site was also the subject of other representations at previous consultations of the Local Plan Review, yet the council has still sought to allocate the land and have rejected other more sustainable locations adjacent to the boundary with Manor Royal.

The council’s SA states that under objective 1 on climate change and mitigation: *“The Gatwick Green site is however somewhat separated from Crawley’s other Main Employment Areas and Established Residential Areas, potentially increasing the need to travel by private vehicle, whilst the storage & distribution-led nature of operations will lead to an increase in HGV traffic movements. In this regard, other employment sites promoted through the Local Plan process would be more sustainable options, including those adjacent to Manor Royal, but these cannot be progressed due to the requirement to retain safeguarding and the fact that these other sites are situated on land that is potentially required to accommodate the physical land take of a southern runway, road diversions and other operational uses”* (emphasis added). We agree. The Gatwick Green site is plainly less well-related and connected to the local area and, in particular, the existing, demonstrably effective, employment land at Manor Royal at a Main Employment Area, promoted by EC3.

In addition, Objective 7 promoting sustainable journeys the council confirm that Gatwick Green “*is however relatively isolated from Crawley’s other Main Employment Areas and established residential neighbourhoods, potentially increasing the need to travel by private vehicle. The storage & distribution-led nature of operations will inevitably lead to an increase in HGV traffic movements. Other sites that have been promoted for employment, particularly those adjoining Manor Royal, are more sustainably located but these cannot be progressed due to the requirement to retain safeguarding*”.

As part of the Jersey Farm Project Team, Connect Consultants has reviewed the “*Crawley Transport Study: Transport Study of Strategic Development Options and Sustainable Transport Measures: Draft Crawley Local Plan 2021 – 2037*” by Stantec (dated December 2020). Revision E of the Stantec report, dated 23 June 2022, was published as part of CBC’s evidence base for public consultation in May 2023. Connect has also reviewed the SYSTRA report “*Crawley Western Link Road – Northern Section Study*”, dated March 2023.

Using the most up-to-date traffic modelling data from the CBC Local Plan evidence base, purchased from CBC/Stantec in June 2023, Connect Consultants have undertaken a review of the traffic impact of the Gatwick Green site. In addition, please see attached Connect Consultants’ ‘*Technical Note 07 – Jersey Farm Traffic and Transport Technical Note*’, dated June 2023. The Gatwick Green site is estimated to generate 333 two-way trips in the AM peak and 298 two-way trips in the PM peak. There are impacts predicted on the B2036 Balcombe Road for most of its length both North and South of the B2037 Antlands Lane junction with Balcombe Road. These impacts are greater in the PM peak than in the AM peak.

A significant proportion of these trips are freight/HGV traffic that cannot be replaced by active modes or public transport. The modelling has assumed that there will be an element of car trips for employees working at the site and these would respond to sustainable mitigation measures.

Overall, the residual Gatwick Green trips assumed to impact the network are 312 two-way trips in the AM peak and 281 trips in the PM peak.

During the AM peak, 67 two-way trips are predicted to use the northern sections of Balcombe Road through Horley and beyond, while 245 two-way trips are predicted to use the southern sections of Balcombe Road and beyond. Around 68 two-way trips are predicted to use the rural routes east of the site, including Shipley Bridge Lane through Copthorne en-route to the motorway junction and Effingham Road to/from East Grinstead.

The M23 junction 10 is predicted to be used by 55 of the Gatwick Green trips in the AM peak; none are predicted to use junction 9.

During the PM peak, 65 two-way trips are predicted to use the northern sections of Balcombe Road through Horley and beyond, while 216 two-way trips are predicted to use the southern sections of Balcombe Road and beyond. Around 40 two-way trips are predicted to use the rural routes east of the site, including Shipley Bridge Lane through Copthorne en-route to the motorway junction and Effingham Road to/from East Grinstead; around the same number are predicted to use the southern part of Balcombe Road.

The M23 junction 10 is predicted to be used by around 40 of the Gatwick Green trips in the PM peak; none are predicted to use junction 9. These predicted traffic flows to/from Gatwick Green are shown graphically on maps at Appendix 7 of the Connect report TN-07. These clearly show the impact of the traffic on the surrounding local roads. To mitigate the impacts of the Gatwick Green traffic on the surrounding local roads and lanes, an HGV ban is proposed for traffic heading to Gatwick Green from the north on Balcombe Road to prevent this traffic travelling through the built-up area in Horley.

A right-turn ban is also proposed for HGV traffic egressing the site, to prevent this traffic using the northern sections of Balcombe Road thus mitigating the adverse impacts of this HGV traffic, including noise and air pollution.

A committed/planned new link road between the A2011 and Balcombe Road, designed to improve the access route to the Northeast Sector developments, is shown to have capacity problems in the Reference Case and the Local Plan scenarios, even after the proposed sustainable travel mitigation is applied.

Clearly, there are concerns and issues raised by CBC themselves in Policy EC4 regarding the Gatwick Green freight traffic using the local roads and lanes, and with Gatwick Green traffic generally on the surrounding road network.

With this fact clearly acknowledged by CBC, and with the evident need for physical interventions to protect the local roads from the impact of HGV traffic, we contest that the location of the strategic employment site at Gatwick Green is the correct location and is therefore unsound and unjustified in regard to Policy ST1, ST3, CL3 and EC3.

Proposed Policy ST1 relates to sustainable transport, and the reasoned justification explains the requirement for developments to use Travel Plans and Mobility Strategies to first reduce overall travel demand and second to minimise mode share by private car. The proposed strategic employment site at Gatwick Green does not benefit from the ready-made sustainable travel infrastructure inherent at the pre-eminent employment district of Manor Royal. The strategic traffic modelling of the evidence base demonstrates that little can be done to replace the traffic movements by active modes or public transport, and for this reason the location of the proposed Gatwick Green employment site is inconsistent with Policy EC3 and ST1.

Proposed Policy ST3 relates to improving the existing rail station in the borough, which we fully support. However, the Gatwick Green site, which is only c.1km (straight line distance) from Gatwick rail station, has only one existing bus route connecting the two. The 422 bus route serves a pair of stops on Antlands Lane, once per hour during the peak periods, and the journey time to Gatwick station is approximately 12 minutes.

The existing bus routes which serve the Manor Royal Business District (the 4, 5, and 100 routes) connect to both Crawley Station and Three Bridges Station, with a combined seven services an hour during the peak periods, with a journey time of c.11 minutes to Crawley Station and c.22 minutes to Three Bridges Station, and therefore employment development would be more sustainable if forming part of an extension to the existing Manor Royal Business District complying with EC3.

Regarding infrastructure provision, we strongly disagree that policy EC4 is robust and sound, particularly as it is underpinned by the SA which, under objective 8: providing sufficient infrastructure, treats Gatwick Green differently regarding safeguarding. *“Therefore, the Local Plan retains safeguarding but amends its boundary to exclude land to the east of Balcombe Road and south of the M23 spur. This represents the most appropriate site within Crawley that can be allocated for strategic employment growth without prejudicing the possible delivery of a southern runway at Gatwick Airport”.*

Under Objective 5: maintain and support employment: the SA states that *“The allocation of an industrial-led Strategic Employment Location at Gatwick Green will address a long-standing need for new employment land, specifically within the B8 storage & distribution sector in Crawley. This would support and complement Crawley’s existing business offer, particularly that of Manor Royal, and the allocated office led Horley Strategic Business Park. The provision of new strategic employment land would support sustainable economic growth in Crawley and that of the wider Gatwick Diamond, attracting new business and facilitating the expansion of existing businesses which have been frustrated by a lack of available space, particularly within the B8 use class. This offers scope for complementarity with Manor Royal, helping retain its existing mixed-use business function which is coming under significant pressure from the demand for B8 floorspace. Allocation of a Strategic Employment Location therefore presents a significant opportunity to accommodate the business needs of Crawley, in a manner that does not prejudice the physical land take required to accommodate a possible southern runway at Gatwick Airport, supporting Crawley’s role as the leading employment destination in the Gatwick Diamond.”* For the reasons set out above, we do not agree and consider the SA on Gatwick Green that underpins policy EC4 is flawed in its assessment, meaning the policy is unsound.

Many of the policy criteria in EC4, such as the requirement to provide a high-quality public realm, BREAAAM and the function of the buildings, setting, character, noise etc, can be achieved elsewhere, further emphasising the unsustainability of the proposed allocation, particularly compared to Manor Royal as the Main Employment Area to the Borough.

The fact that only 13.73 ha of land is considered suitable for development of the 55 hectares, or 63 hectares controlled by TWG, within the allocation, is inconsistent with polices including CL3 and CL8 that seek efficient use of land in more urban areas, and the countryside location means the land will require a significant degree of landscape mitigation given its location.

The policy itself notes that a mobility strategy and provision of links must be provided and agreed, given its location to ensure links with existing neighbourhoods. With other locations on the edge of neighbourhoods and Main Employment Areas this is already established, and Manor Royal can build on the successful transport strategies and connectivity, projects already in place and that will form part of the BID3 programme & projects pack. We therefore submit that the proposals are not aligned with sustainable transport polices ST1 and ST2 or the aim to support amenities within 20 min walking, within Manor Royal nor the council’s own adopted LCWIP.

Policy EC4 states that the site will be allocated for B8 uses. We consider that the market signals indicate that a more mixed-use allocation for any strategic employment location would be more suitable and sustainable therefore should provide more SME opportunities and amenity facilities than large B8 led distribution sheds (see market commentary under policy EC1 below). The proposed allocation will not sustainably diversify the local economy and fails to complement Manor Royal.

We note that there are also significant transport and infrastructure requirements associated with the allocation at Gatwick Green that would be inconsistent with transport policies proposed in the Local Plan Review. In the first instance airport related car parking will be lost which will need to be replaced. In addition, significant highway mitigation will also be required. Whilst we will address these further in a later section under transport, it is evident that in order to mitigate the impacts an HGV ban is proposed for traffic heading to/from Gatwick Green from the north on Balcombe Road, to prevent this traffic travelling through the built-up area in Horley.

A further a right turn ban is also proposed for HGV traffic egressing the site, to prevent traffic using the northern sections of Balcombe Road, to mitigate the adverse impacts of Gatwick Green's HGV traffic, including noise and air pollution.

The Stantec Transport Study states in para 7.8.1 *"Gatwick Green is the main site proposed for employment in the Crawley Local Plan update. This development is the main addition between the modelled Scenario 2 when compared to Scenario 1. The development is estimated to generate 333 two-way trips in the AM peak and 298 two-way trips in the PM peak. Being 70% B8 land use and 30% B2, a significant proportion of these trips will be freight/HGV traffic and therefore cannot be shifted to active modes or public transport. It is assumed that a proportion of employees working at the site would use the sustainable mitigation measures."*

We contest that material modal shift would be possible, given Gatwick Green's location. Indeed, the report itself states that most of the traffic generation from the B8 led development cannot be mitigated.

We concur with Stantec's statement that the majority of the Gatwick Green traffic cannot be mitigated by sustainable travel interventions, as would be the case for any other B8 / B2 employment site. However, with this fact clearly acknowledged by CBC, and with the evident need for physical interventions to protect the local roads from the impact of HGV traffic, we contest that the location and scale of the strategic employment site at Gatwick Green is sustainable.

We therefore submit the allocation at ST4 is contrary to SD1, transport policy ST1 and believe the "uncertain" score given to objective 7 on promoting sustainable journeys in the SA for Gatwick Green is incorrect and a negative score should be cited.

**We therefore submit Policy EC4 is inconsistent with other Local Plan Review policies and national policy. This is due to the site being in an unsustainable location, disparate from the town and the local workforce, and it is therefore in conflict with policy ST1. It will fail to complement the town's main employment area at Manor Royal and therefore conflicts with Policy EC3. The fact that Policy EC4 seeks to defer a proper impact assessment until planning application, underlines the unjustified and ineffective nature of the policy. The allocation is also inconsistent with GAT2 as it fails to adequately address the impact on the use of the area for car parking and is inconsistent with GAT3 on airport related car parking. The allocation also fails to**



**adequately address its impact on the countryside by introducing a significant scale of development in an area protected by countryside in the 2015 adopted local plan and outside the built-up area boundary, contrary to Policy CH9.**

### **Strategic Policy EC1: Sustainable Economic Growth**

The May 2023 SA confirms that employment and growth are a key factor for the resilience and growth of the town under the Local Plan Review.

Regarding Economic Growth, it states in para 6 that *“Crawley is firmly established as one of the key economic drivers in the Southeast of England, representing the geographic and economic heart of the Gatwick Diamond and wider Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership area. The town’s economy is generally strong with total employment in the town being around 100,000 jobs and, although the COVID-19 pandemic impacted significantly on the borough’s aviation-led economy, Crawley is recovering well economically. With the economy forecast to consolidate and grow over the Plan period to 2040, new business land and floorspace is identified.”*

We would however argue that insufficient new business land is identified to reflect the role and function of the town within the wider region.

In the May 2023 SA, the Council’s site assessment of Jersey Farm acknowledges that the *“site is a logical extension to MR”* under objective 1.

The SA also recognises that *“There is significant in-commuting to the town, and on average people who travel into Crawley for work earn more than people who live within the borough. Many residents are employed in lower-paid industries, and addressing the local skills gap to increase opportunities for Crawley residents is a priority.”* This confirms, consistent with Policy EC5 on skills that local employment opportunities are essential to the Local Plan Review.

Topic Paper 5: Employment Needs and Land Supply May 2023 confirms that the Local Plan Employment policies are under pinned by the Northern West Sussex Economic Growth Assessment (January 2020) and its Crawley focused updates (September 2020 and January 2023, and the Employment Land Availability Assessment. An updated Employment Land Trajectory (Base Date 31 March 2023), sets out the employment land supply pipeline, as planned for through the LPR.

Para 2.5 of Topic Paper 5 confirms that Crawley’s economy has proven to be resilient and continues to trend towards recovery, post Covid pandemic, and that the councils own *“One Town Crawley Economic Recovery Plan”* (2021) identifies interventions to support the economic recovery of Crawley, and to future proof its economy so that it is better able to adapt to unforeseen change. It clearly states that *“Key to this is the unlocking of sufficient suitable employment land to provide for employment growth sectors and boost jobs for residents, increasing the borough’s overall economic resilience, supporting a green economy, and promoting skills development...”*

Para 2.6 continues that while *“there remains need for new business land and floorspace over the forthcoming Plan period. Given what are significant land supply constraints faced within the borough, the Local Plan sets out a pro-active and ambitious economic strategy to support economic recovery in the shorter-term, whilst planning positively for economic growth and diversification”*. We do not consider that the council have properly considered sustainable opportunities for employment on the edge of Manor Royal by use of a more flexible approach to airport safeguarding (GAT2) and the alignment of the CWMML (ST4).

Para 3.10 of the Topic Paper 5 confirms that the adopted Local Plan (2015) planned for a baseline need of 57.9 hectares new business land in the Borough over the Plan period to 2030, but only 23 hectares of business land was identified, through reuse and intensification of sites within the existing main employment areas. This does not accept any potential gain from a proper “no stone untuned” approach (see above) on the edge of Manor Royal.

The 2015 Local Plan resulted in an unmet business land requirement of 35 hectares over the adopted Plan period 2015-2030. This has frustrated local markets and potential investors and developers looking to grow and locate in the town.

Whilst the Councils Topic Paper 5 states that HOR9 under Reigate and Banstead’s Development Management Plan 2019 meets some unfulfilled need, this allocation is still not forthcoming and does not address fully local mixed employment needs. Indeed, the required SPD for the site by RBBC has also not been drafted nor adopted and therefore the 4-year delay to any delivery must be a factor in considering the increasingly frustrated and declining opportunities for employment growth in the Northern West Sussex Region, and immediately adjacent to Crawley and Gatwick Airport.

However, we do not agree that this is resolved through the proposed allocation at Gatwick Green which is in such a disparate and poorly related location from Manor Royal, within the safeguarded area currently identified for airport related car parking (as encouraged by GAT3) and with such a significant impact on highways, countryside, and noise environment etc.

Regarding CBCs own evidence base, as with the Adopted 2015 Local Plan, Lichfield’s Northern West Sussex EGA, looks at market constraints and opportunities for CBC alongside HDC and MSDC. For the CBC Local Plan Review the 2018 Lichfield’s report and various updates reconfirm that B8 requirements were similarly constrained and remain unmet across the town, with a low rate of vacancy across existing stock.

Para 4.5 of the Topic Paper also recognises that *“the 2018 market analysis identified a particular gap in the supply of smaller industrial ‘starter units’ ranging in size from 400-500sq ft and ‘move on’ space. At the larger scale end of the market, industrial units over 20,000sq ft are found to be in short supply.”*

We do not believe that Gatwick Green under EC4 adequately addresses the ability to provide SME opportunities as well as larger industrial units. We agree that under EC2 opportunities to extend Manor Royal should remain the focus for employment generating development in the Local Plan Review.



The 2018 Lichfield study and updates also highlight that a focus on development should be at Manor Royal given its key advantages, and describes them as *“its strategic access links, variety and mix of uses, and a developing business community through the work of the BID.”* It also recognises that *“Access to amenities and landscaping are identified as areas for improvement, with the absence of a centralised amenity hub to meet the needs of businesses and employees representing a disadvantage in comparison to competitors.”* We consider that increased qualitative improvements could be made through further development and the expansion of Manor Royal.

The July 2019 update of the NWS EGA stated that between 44.6 and 57.63 hectares of land would be needed between 2020-2035. With only 13.19 hectares available the council themselves identified an area of search to be explored. Topic Paper 5 confirms the aim of this approach. *“With much of this land subject to safeguarding for a possible southern runway at Gatwick Airport, the initial draft Plan set out that work to identify a new Strategic Employment Location would only take place once the status of safeguarding had been clarified.”*

Para 4.10 also confirms that *“The Council considered that Aviation 2050 (December 2018), the government’s draft Aviation Strategy, did not provide a definitive steer as to whether or not the council would be required to safeguard land moving forward.”*

Our clients made formal representations to the government on the Aviation Strategy 2050 and particularly the emphasis on local LPAs to make informed decisions themselves *“on the future needs of airports and associated surface access requirements, when developing local plans.”*

Lichfield has subsequently revised more EGA updates, including January 2020 to support the regulation 19 July 2020 Local Plan Review. It suggested planning for economic growth based on the Past Development Rates requirement of 33ha new business land over the Plan period, with an available land supply pipeline at the time of 12ha as supported by the Employment Land Trajectory, December 2019, a 21-hectare deficit.

Despite the council at this time suggesting an Area Action Plan for part of the Local Plan to determine the scope of additional employment land, this approach was then advised against by a PINS inspector at an advisory meeting in April 2020. The call for sites from CBC in their previous approach to identify an Area of Search, and a subsequent Area Action Plan (AAP) identified 140 hectares of additional land within the area of search identified in the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan Review. When commenting on the PINS informal advice CBC stated that *“The inspector advised that an approach of planning for need based on past development trends would not necessarily enable the requirements of new and changing employment sectors to be accommodated”.*

A September 2020 Crawley focused EGA was also undertaken given the impact of COVID and these new scenarios generated employment land requirements that range from 22ha to 57ha. This new assessment of the Crawley EGA 2020 identified a need for a minimum of 38.7ha of new business land over the Plan period. This figure can be broken down into an office land requirement of 5.9ha and an industrial land requirement of 32.8ha.



In the Council's evidence base, a further Employment Land Demand/Supply Balance study (January 2021) state that office demand could be met, but there would be an increased deficit of B8 floorspace of c 24ha. It also confirms that many of the sites under the call for sites (para 4.56) *"would prejudice the potential future delivery of a southern runway at Gatwick Airport should this be required, contrary to national policy. Therefore, as required by national policy, land to the south of Gatwick Airport continues to be safeguarded and cannot be considered for strategic employment at this time"*.

Para 4.56 confirms CBC believe that *"Only one of the sites promoted for employment is considered capable of providing the required quantum of business land in a manner that would not prejudice future delivery of a southern runway at Gatwick Airport should this be required by national policy. This is the land east of Balcombe Road and south of the M23 spur, referred to as Gatwick Green."*

The final Regulation 19 evidence base documents are the EGA Supplementary Update for Crawley (January 2023) and the Employment Land Demand/Supply Balance (January to May 2023). These state that based on the 2022 Q4 Experian forecast, the Crawley EGA 2023 identifies the need for a minimum 26.2ha new business land over the Plan period. This can be broken down into an office (E(g)(i)/E(g)(ii)) land requirement of 3.3ha and an industrial (E(g)(iii)/B2/B8) land requirement of 22.9ha.

The ELT March 2023 update shows a +2.02 hectare of office floorspace oversupply and a 13.73 deficit of industrial land.

On behalf of our client, we dispute that the allocation at Gatwick Green is consistent with the GAL 2019 Masterplan or objectives of the EGA and disagree that the land supply figures of January 2021 remain appropriate, namely that all office provision is accommodated, (especially given any light industrial, manufacturing requirement), or that there is only 13–24-hectare range of additional B8 floorspace required.

We believe the evidence base does not adequately reflect the prosperity of the town, its rapid recovery since COVID, nor the increase in demand over the plan period to 2040. As local land agents, Vail Williams consider the growth scenarios to be unambitious for such a regional hub and that should land become available, significant demand is now pent up. We contest that a more pragmatic and balanced approach to employment demand and supply is required, that aims to locate adequate employment space within Crawley and within the Manor Royal Main Employment Area. We therefore consider rather than the current policy position is unsound and contrary to Policy EC3, and EC4 allocation and is flawed.

We believe that to understand this further, additional assessment of local market conditions is required to assist the Inspector ahead of an Examination hearing, as the council's ELT has both historically and recently identified a shortfall of B8 warehousing and to a lesser extent, industrial accommodation. As local agents, Vail Williams would like to provide the following market context to support our submission that EC1 and EC4 are flawed and unsound require additional consideration.

### **Vail Williams Market Context on EC1 to EC4:**

To support EC1 on Sustainable Economic Growth we would agree that the commercial property market has seen significant volatility because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The warehouse market, however, has remained robust, driven by a change in shopping habits with more people now favoring online shopping. What followed as a result was significant demand from Third Party Logistic (3PL) operators and online retail businesses. The industrial sector has also been strong when compared to a poor B1 office market but nowhere as buoyant as the B8 sector.

Demand from B8 operators has put strain on the supply of existing industrial/warehouse market, with developers focusing on providing B8 schemes due to the higher returns, which has meant many traditional light industrial businesses have also had limited options to move to, mainly on grounds of rents being too high, or the suitability of new B8 buildings for Class Eg(iii) light industrial use.

With the evolving environmental, social, and governance (ESG) landscape, we are also seeing industrial and manufacturers progressing towards their ESG commitments by making operational changes, with relocation to more energy efficient buildings and better working place for staff. As a result, Vail Williams expect to see the highest demand for new units which have the ESG benefits, with a continued occupier *'flight to quality'*.

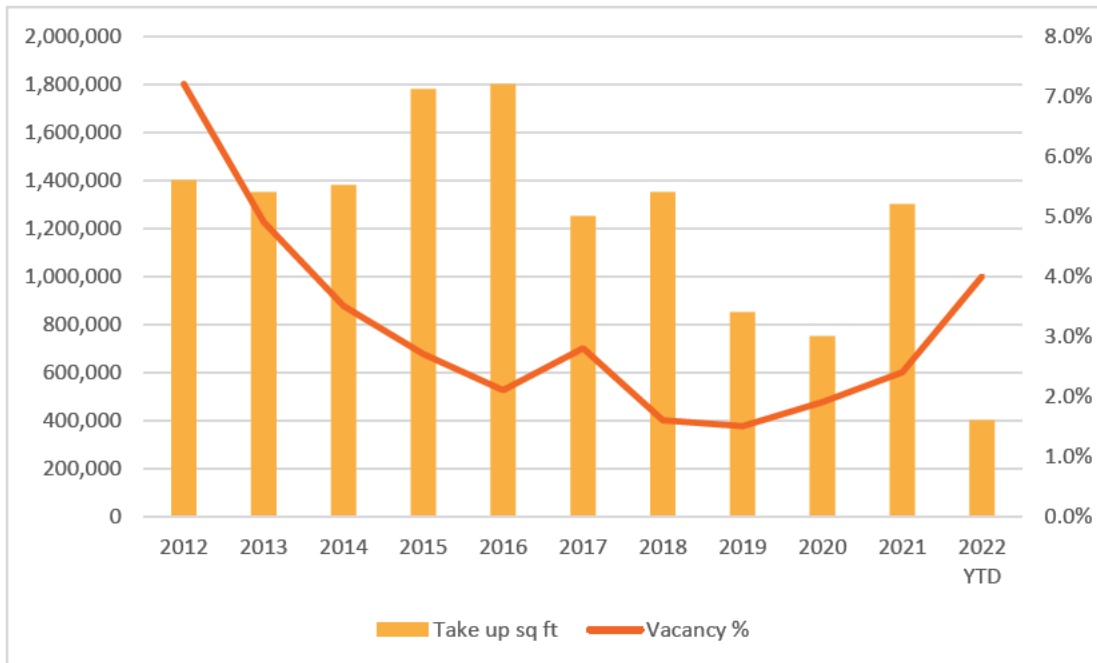
The primary focus of recently completed and forthcoming developments (see ELAA section below) is geared toward 'mid-box' B8 occupiers, in the region of 50,000 sq ft (4645 sq m) +/- 15,000 sq ft (1,393 sq m).

### **EC1 - Take Up & Demand**

Policy EC1 confirms that *"Crawley's role as the key economic driver for the Coast to Capital and Gatwick Diamond areas will be protected and enhanced. Suitable opportunities are identified within the borough to enable existing and new businesses to grow and prosper. There is need for a minimum of 113,390sqm (26.2 hectares) new business land in the borough which, taking off the opportunities identified in the Employment Land Trajectory, results in an outstanding requirement for a minimum 41,315sqm (13.73 hectares) new B8 industrial, principally storage & distribution land over the period to 2040."*

We disagree that this is an appropriate or justified approach and note that it is also inconsistent with the 2015 Inspector 's report that acknowledged the extent of the constraint 8 years go and required a *"no stone unturned approach"*.

To assist, the table below sets out vacancy rates for the Sussex, Gatwick, Brighton region from 2012 to 2022.



(Table 1)

Source – DTRE

Vail Williams has records of industrial and warehouse take-up over a 7-year period for units above 10,000 sq ft (929 sq m), within the immediate Crawley catchment. Our records show take-up has varied from a high of 463,000 sq ft (43,000 sq m) per annum in 2021, to a low of 111,000 sq ft (10,300 sq m) in 2017. This data does not capture smaller lettings/sales but is a useful guide. It is also relevant to note that in the absence of a reasonable supply of new stock, take-up rates will be suppressed, and Crawley has suffered from a lack of new developments over several years. The average annual take-up over this period was approximately 284,000 sq ft (26,400 sq m) per annum.

Suppressed provision will therefore adversely affect the ability for the town to continue to maintain its strong economic function in the region as required by EC1 and in the absence of modern fit for purpose units being built take up rates will be further suppressed.

From the evidence base supporting the Local Plan Review, the ELAA (March 2023) analyses Office and Industrial land options, with specific sites identified/categorised as being suitable for Office or Industrial use. Whilst we acknowledge that B8 and B2 uses are included within 'Industrial' we would comment that it is not clear where light industrial (Egiii or old use class B1c) uses are considered. We believe that historically B1c had been grouped within B1 in ELAA assessments, so there is a risk that the supply needs for Industrial land is under catered for, however we would welcome confirmation that this is or is not the case.

Crawley's ELAA's have historically and recently identified shortfalls of B8 warehousing land. Vail Williams agree with this historic shortfall of B8 space but as mentioned above, recently several significant sites have been developed in the immediate catchment for B8 mid box units as below:

**Availability (New build and immediate pipeline) table (table 2).**

<b>New Speculative Developments</b>	<b>Total Size Sq Ft</b>	<b>Rent (PSF)</b>	<b>Status</b>
Arrow Point (Churchill Ct), Crawley	85,000	£15.50	Built and ready for occupation
G-Hub, Napier Way, Crawley	164,000	£15.50	Built and ready for occupation
The Base, Fleming Way, Crawley	235,000	£15.50	Construction complete. Lettings being sought
Panattoni Park, Fleming Way, Crawley	200,000	Not quoting	Planning submitted. Pre lets being sought
<b>Crawley District Sub-total</b>	<b>684,000 sq ft (63,545 sq m)</b>		
Panattoni Park, Burgess Hill (Formerly The Hub)	300,000	£15's	Planning granted. Construction started. Pre lets being sought
Nowhurst Business Park, Horsham	290,000	£12.00 – 13.00	Pre lets sought from circa 100,000 sq ft
Midpoint 23, Pease Pottage, Crawley	86,000	£13.50	Construction complete. Only one unit left.
Titan/Saga site Salfords, Redhill	84,000	£15's	Planning secured for 84,000 sq ft Pre lets sought
Frontier Park, Southwater	40,000	£13's	Planning for seven new units – PC Q3 2023
Sussex Junction, Bolney	46,500	£13.00 - £15.00	Built. Part let /part under offer
<b>Wider catchment Total</b>	<b>1,530,500 sq ft (142,186 sq m)</b>		

(Table 2)

There are other proposals “*in the planning pipeline*” including St Modwen’s for another large B8 unit at junction 9 M23 currently under construction, and schemes in Southwater proposed by Graftongate and Chancerygate. Each development could provide individual schemes of 100,000 sq ft (9,290 sq m) or more.

The above table shows circa 1,530,500 sq ft (142,186 sq m) of available new build accommodation or immediate pipeline, in the wider catchment. Approximately 684,000 (63,545 sq m) is located on Manor Royal, and there is currently occupier interest in some of the above units.

The ELAA identifies several potential Industrial sites, with Gatwick Green being the only site ‘allocated’ with an indication of 160,000 sq m of Industrial space. The only unallocated site of scale with a quantum of floorspace shown on the ELAA is Land to the north and south of Hydehurst Lane, which ABRDN are promoting for circa 74,000 sqm.

Should policies ST4 and GAT2 be amended (see above), then Jersey Farm would be the next largest site with potential for 40,372 sq m as per our illustrative Masterplan. We note that from the SA the council comment that the Land North and South of Hydehurst Lane, the ABRDN site is also constrained by Airport safeguarding and not considered of scale to positively score against infrastructure provision objective 8. Jersey Farm would be the next largest site with potential for 40,372 sq m GEA on 17.2ha.

Vail Williams consider the potential provision of Industrial accommodation land to 2040 as inadequate to comply with Policy EC1, based on our analysis of annual take-up in the immediate Crawley catchment at circa 26,400 sq m per annum. We consider this take-up rate as a ‘suppressed’ figure due to periods of poor availability. It is also relevant to consider that if allocated, there is a high probability that Gatwick Green will attract national distributors requiring scale, i.e., major online distributors such as Amazon, or other retail distributors, who could easily acquire 200,000 to 300,000 sq m in a single unit. In our opinion, if large strategic sites such as this secure planning, take-up in Crawley District would easily be 30,000 sq m per annum or more.

Our high-level analysis is set out below (Table 3):

Potential Supply	Crawley District	Years’ supply (assuming 26,400 sq m per annum take-up)	Years’ supply (assuming 30,000 sq m per annum take-up)
Existing New Build Stock or in pipeline	63,545 sq m	2.4	2.1
Pipeline (Allocated Gatwick Green)	160,000 sq m	6	5.3
Possible pipeline (ABRDN)	74,000 sq m	2.8	2.5
Possible pipeline (Jersey Farm)	40,372 sq m	1.5	1.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>12.7</b>	<b>11.3</b>

(Table 3)

In comparison, in the supplementary update in the EGA dated January 2023, past take up rates for all types of space are quoted as 22,930 sq m for office and R&D and 110,210sq m for B2 and B8 totalling 133,140 sq m.

There are 16.5 years to 2040, so it is clear from the table above that even if both ABRDN and Jersey Farm were allocated, further Industrial land is needed.

Indeed, even if the plan allocates all sites, then we have only 11-13 years supply. The approach to retain GAT2 safeguarding and not use ST4 as an opportunity to release land on the edge on Manor Royal, therefore, will result in significant constraint to growth contrary to Policy EC1 and objective 5 to maintain and support the economy of the May 2023 SA.

To provide additional context around Policy EC2 which aims to focus development in the Main Employment Areas, even prior to the pandemic, the opportunity for freehold industrial/warehouse buildings for owner occupiers was scarce. It is relevant to note that all the sites mentioned in Table 2 are currently being offered on a leasehold basis. The Jersey Farm development is intended to be available on both a leasehold and freehold basis, offering occupiers freehold turn-key tenure or freehold speculative units, as evidenced by our client's freehold sale of Site A in 2022 to Philip Dennis Food Services.

Relevant to focusing development in the Main Employment Areas, it is also important to note the recent supply identified on Table 2 addresses the immediate shortfall of supply for mid box units over c50,000 sq ft (4645 sq m), but within Crawley district there are significant gaps in provision for new industrial units and smaller B8 units.

Traditionally, the occupier market tended not to differential between warehouse (B8) and industrial (Eg(iii) and B2) uses, providing parking standards can be met and a change of use secure if needed. However, a significant element of the recent speculative B8 development is targeting logistic occupiers, so some industrial users may struggle to find suitable buildings despite the high supply in B8 units.

There is limited provision of new smaller units, below c15,000 sq ft (1400 sq m) being provided or coming through the pipeline. Therefore, in the short to medium term (next 5 years), Vail Williams anticipate a shortage of traditional industrial units across the size spectrum, with extreme shortages of smaller industrial and warehouse units, below c1,400 sq m.

We also anticipate a general shortage of new industrial units due to the rental values being the same as warehousing, yet those units need more parking spaces for planning, meaning they are less valuable for developers to build.

Therefore, we believe the allocation under ST4 at Gatwick Green does not reflect or make adequate provision for the type, location or landlord structure that is required in the town and fails to be consistent with EC1 and EC2 of the Local Plan Review.

**Our illustrative masterplan 0390-RDJWL-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0058-S3-P2 illustrates how an indicative layout specifically addresses this need for smaller units, including Egiii users, and is likely to provide for smaller occupiers when compared with Gatwick Green under ST4, more closely aligning with market demand in a location consistent with EC2, whereas Gatwick Green would be more likely to attract and be most profitable for both 'mid box' (sub 10,000 sq m) and 'big box' B8 (20,000 sq m plus) B8 occupiers.**

### **Policy CL8: Development outside the Built-Up Area Boundary**

Policy CL8 aims to ensure that “*Crawley’s Compact nature and attractive setting is maintained*”. It also requires “*all proposals must recognise the individual character and distinctiveness, and the role of the landscape character area or edge in which it is proposed as shown on the Local Plan Map, established by the Crawley Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment*”

In regard to the Upper Mole Farmlands Rural Fringe, it confirms that “*Proposals which do not create, or are able to adequately mitigate, visual/noise intrusion are generally supported. This area has an important role in maintaining the separation of the distinct identity of Gatwick Airport from Crawley and the valuable recreational links from the northern neighbourhoods of Crawley into the countryside. Extensions to Manor Royal that would deliver new business land may be suitable in this location. Such development must be of a scale that is appropriate to its countryside location, meeting criteria i-vii of this Policy in its relationship with the surrounding countryside.*” (Emphasis added).

Throughout our Local Plan Review representations to Regulation 18 and 19 we have continued to confirm that our site A is now consented and implemented and is now sold and therefore the BUAB should be realigned accordingly.

We have also submitted that the BUAB is at odds with Policy ST4 for the CWMML road and this should further support a review and realignment of the BUAB. We also contest that ST4 (CWMML alone) will fundamentally change the character and setting of the Upper Mole Farmlands Fringe.

**Policy CL8 states that “*Proposals which alter the overall character of the area must demonstrate that the need for the development clearly outweighs the impact on landscape character and is in accordance with national and local policy. Mitigation and/or compensation will be sought in such cases where this can be proven. Applicants are advised to consider the enhancement opportunities identified in the Crawley Borough Landscape Character Assessment.*”** We believe that development to extend the Main Employment Area, consistent with EC1 and EC3 can align with CL8, but additional clarity over the ST4 potential CWMML and the development at Jersey Farm now implemented indicate a need to review the BUAB on the proposals map. In its current form we therefore consider that CL8 is unsound and unjustified.

### **Policy CL3: Character, Landscape & Development Form**

In regard to design the Local Plan Review, Chapter 4: Character, Landscape & Development Form, also sets out under Policy CL3: Movement Patterns, Layout and Sustainable Urban Design that all development should seek to use land more efficiently and sustainably. The policy states that any development should “*integrate land uses and movement networks.*”

We contest that Policy ST4 is consistent and robust when considered against Policy CL8 by virtue of allocating development at Gatwick Green despite Policy CL3 stating that development that development “*should build upon, connect to, enhance and extend sustainable movement, in turn maximising opportunities for compact development and sustainable travel and increased levels of sustainable transport modal share... and put people before traffic and encourage walking and cycling through establishing a layout of pathways which: Understand*



and respond to the wider borough pattern of movement, demonstrating how walking and cycling connections will enhance and integrate schemes with Crawley town centre, local centres, transportation hubs, schools and employment areas. (Emphasis added).

**As per our comments under EC4, we therefore submit that the Strategic Employment Allocation at Gatwick Green is inconsistent with CL3 and is unsound and unjustified.**

### **Policy SDC4: Water Neutrality**

Following the announcement back in March 2020 and the Position Statement from Natural England in September 2021, the project team have been working closely with our clients and CBC to support the cross authority working across the Sussex North Water Supply Zone (WRZ). With Part C of the 3-tier report being published in December 2022, and a new project manager for all authorities having been secured it is evident that work towards the mitigation and offsetting is being developed.

We have reviewed the Joint Topic Paper by Chichester District Council (CDC), Crawley Borough Council (CBC), Horsham District Council (HDC), Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC), South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and whilst the issue frustrates development we welcome the cross-boundary approach to ensure consistency across the LPAs. We also welcome the joint JBA evidence base to underpin all LPAs Local Plan Reviews.

Section 6.0 of the CBC Sustainability Appraisal considers the need for the Local Plan to adequately address Water Neutrality, and any potential offsetting or reasonable alternatives. We agree that the 2015 local plan tested that the area was an area of Water Stress, and that JBA Part C report identifies 3 credits within the Water WAT01 Water consumption issue category for BREEAM or 85l/p/d known as a reasonable achievable target. This is agreed in the statement of common ground between all effected LPAs and the joint topic paper.

Para 6.15 of the SA states that the potential for both water efficiency and offsetting are finite, thus constraining the amount of development possible in an area. Para 6.16 continues that *“The Water Neutrality Part C study notes that, jointly, the local planning authorities in the Sussex North Water Resource Zone (WRZ) propose to deliver nearly 20,000 units between them.”*

The table of SA Objective assessment against policy SDC4 shows a double negative score against the objective 5 that aims to *“5. To maintain, support and promote a diverse employment base that can serve the local and sub-regional and regional economy.”*

Whilst we agree with the SA objective 5, we note that any further restriction to employment opportunities as result of Water Neutrality will further limit the town’s ability to meet its local or regional economic needs and contradict with policy EC1.

Following the significant delay to the Local Plan as a result, we welcome the SoCG with the adjacent authorities and WSCC and seek further clarification on the mitigation and offsetting measures as they become available.

For our client, there is additional 3.67 hectares of current agricultural land to the North of the Jersey Farm site that will allow an opportunity for offsetting, and mitigation in addition to any formal procedures identified by the LPAs.

In the Joint Authorities Water Neutrality Topic Paper May 2023 prepared by CBC in support of the Local Plan Review, paragraph 15.51 confirms this development will be able to demonstrate how water neutrality will be achieved through a Water Neutrality Statement to be submitted as part of any planning application.

**We support the additional clarity in policy SD4 regarding a potential LPA led offsetting scheme and the opportunity to explore alternative water extraction, and that any development will need to produce a water neutrality statement. We agree with Policy SD4 but note that this issue is another constraint to sustainable economic development in the region.**

**Conclusion:**

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment as part of this Regulation 19 Local Plan Review. For the reasons set out above, we consider the Local Plan Review and the Sustainability Appraisal are unjustified, ineffective, contrary to national policy and therefore unsound. In particular:

- Economic Growth and employment policies EC1, EC2, EC3, EC4 and EC5;
- Gatwick policies GAT2 and GAT3;
- Policy ST4: Area of Search for a Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport Link;
- more general policies relation to Sustainable Transport ST1 and ST2, Sustainable Development SD1, Water Neutrality Policy SDC4; and
- CL3 on Character Landscape and Form, and CL8 Development Outside the Built Up Area Boundary CL8.

We wish to participate in the Examination Hearings in relation to the policies identified above and look forward to hearing from CBC in due course regarding formal submission to PINS.

Yours sincerely



Suzanne Holloway BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

