

JT/KM/P16-0633

01 March 2023

Planning Policy
West Berkshire Council
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

By Email: planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Representations to West Berkshire Local Plan Review to 2037 Consultation (January-March 2023) – Regulation 19 Consultation

Introduction

This letter has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of our client, Walker Logistics (Holdings) Ltd. [‘Walkers’], and comprises formal representations to the Regulation 19 Consultation (January – March 2023) in respect of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review [‘LPR’].

Please find enclosed:

- Economic Benefits Report.
- Indicative Scheme (22021-SK-103).
- Landscape Visual Appraisal.

Site Description

Walkers are promoting a site for allocation through the LPR, for industrial, storage and distribution uses (Use Class E(g)(iii), B2 and B8). The extent of the site is included in **Appendix 1**. Land within the red line land extends to 20.9ha.

The site is located to the west of Ramsbury Road, approximately 0.5km south of the M4 motorway. The site comprises:

- Agricultural fields.
- Woodland.
- Landscaped strips.
- Membury airfield runway (disused).
- The existing premises of Walker Logistics¹.

¹ Walker Logistics is a family-owned business. It was founded in 1999 and predominantly comprises an e-commerce fulfilment company focusing on the picking and packing of internet

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In terms of the Adopted Development Plan, the site is located outside of any defined settlement boundary and is defined as 'Countryside' under Policy ADPP1 of the Core Strategy. The site is within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ['AONB'].

The site is bounded to the north by existing commercial and industrial buildings (Jacquet Weston Engineering and a Trinity Grain Sillo and Storage Depot). To the south is agricultural fields. To the east is Ramsbury Road. A small number of individual residential properties are located further to the east and to the north east of the site. To the west is agricultural fields/woodlands. Outside of the site boundary are commercial buildings (Andy Godwin, Accident Repair Centre).

It is noted that an application (Ref. 21/O3083/COMIND) for 'change of use of land to Class B8' was granted on 23rd September 2022. This is for the site to the north.

Areas to the north and south of the site are designated in the Local Plan as within a 'Protected Employment Area' (Membury).

Background to Local Plan Promotion

On behalf of Walkers, Pegasus submitted to the 'Call for Sites' between December 2016 and March 2017. Subsequently, Pegasus submitted to West Berkshire Council ['WBC'] a 'Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) Site Submission Form' under the Call for Sites in November 2018.

WBC published The Employment Land Review ['ELR'] in August 2020. It assessed future demand for employment floorspace, as well as existing and committed future supply. The study also identified floorspace/ land requirements to address unmet need. It stated that there is a gross demand of 62,000sqm for industrial floorspace and 16ha of new land is needed to meet future demand over the Plan period.

With regards to the current site (identified as 'LAM6'), the ELR stated at Paragraph 6.65 (emphasis added):

"A fifth site that could be suitable for industrial use is Land West of Ramsbury Road, Membury (LAM6). It is located within the western part of the District, which has generally low market attractiveness, but is immediately adjacent to the Membury industrial estate area that is fully occupied, and has experienced a number of redevelopments and expansions in the past to allow existing local businesses to grow supporting the rural economy. The continuing demand for space for local businesses is illustrated by the planning application currently under consideration for a large warehouse unit (plus D1 space) on the LAM6 site. To support the rural economy, part or all of this 6.9 ha site could be considered for allocation for employment use, albeit that the site is within the AONB designation. The site has the potential to provide the

orders, which are then grouped and despatched at the end of each day.

smaller units (circa 500 sq m) that the market assessment identifies are in particular short supply and that are in demand throughout the District. It is relevant to note that the 16 ha industrial requirement is a minimum to meet the need, there could therefore be merit in allocating the whole of the site.

The ELR recommended that the Council ‘consider allocating ‘Land West of Ramsbury Road, Membury’ [LAM6] for industrial uses.

WBC published the West Berkshire Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment in December 2020. The site [LAM6] was identified as available, achievable, and potentially developable. The supporting ‘interactive map’ identified the area that is ‘potentially developable’, as shown in Figure 1 below.

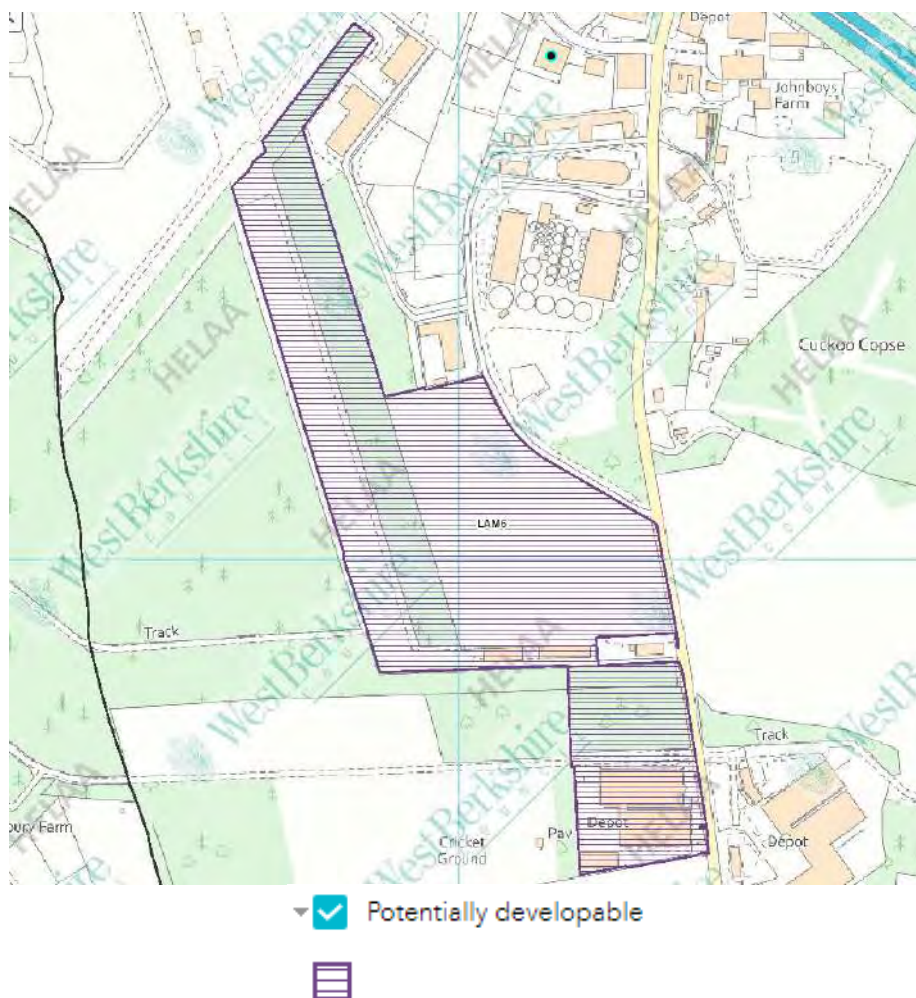


Figure 1 - Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment



WBC consulted on the Regulation 18 version of the LPR between December 2020 and February 2021. Draft Policy SP21 (Sites Allocated for Economic Development) included 4no. sites for allocation, including 'Land West of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands' [EMP5] for 27,600sqm of industrial, storage and distribution uses.

WBC did not update the Policies Map in support of the Regulation 18 version of the LPR. However, WBC Planning Policy Officers informed us that the possible extent of the designation is 'in line with the proposed developable area as promoted'. They attached a map; the area accords with that set out in Figure 1 above. Please see correspondence in **Appendix 2**.

On behalf of Walkers, Pegasus Group submitted representations to the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan Review in February 2021. These representations set out our support for the proposed allocation and noted that it would form a natural, high-quality extension to the Protected Employment Areas in the site's vicinity.

To confirm that the intention is for the site to be allocated for industrial, storage and distribution uses.

Planning History

Outline Planning Permission (Ref. 19/O2979/OUTMAJ)

In May 2021, outline planning permission (Ref. 19/O2979/OUTMAJ) was granted at 'Land South of Tower Works, Lambourn Woodlands, Hungerford' [the 'outline planning permission']. This comprises part of the current site being promoted in the Emerging Local Plan. Please see **Appendix 3** for a Site Location Plan.

The outline planning permission was for the below description of development:

"Outline application for the erection of a new logistics warehouse building (for occupation by Walker Logistics) (Use Class B8) with ancillary office floorspace, an aircraft museum building (Use Class D1), and associated access, car parking and landscaping. Matters to be considered: Scale".

The outline planning permission provides a framework for the details of future reserved matters application(s) through the following conditions:

- Condition 3 (Indicative Plans) – This states that the layout of the site is to be in broad accordance with the Indicative Block Plan (Drawing Ref. 03100-00-C).
 - Condition 3 also states that the building shall be a maximum of 12.6m in height.
- Condition 5 (Maximum Floor Areas) – This sets out the below maximum floor areas, for different elements of the proposal:
 - Museum and military vehicle storage area – 2,180sqm.
 - Class B8 storage and distribution warehouse – 9,060sqm.
 - Ancillary office area – 1,150sqm.
 - Ancillary welfare and security area – 180sqm.



The Committee Report for Ref. 19/02979/OUTMAJ stated (own emphasis):

"In the case of consideration of this application your officers have carefully evaluated the environmental impacts of the development of the site for the proposed use against the associated economic benefits of doing so. While it is important to note that the NPPF states that major development in the AONB should only be supported in exceptional circumstances, it also states that significant weight should be afforded to the need to support economic growth and productivity. The application has identified a need for this form of development and a shortfall of available space in the District to support it. As such, on balance officers accept the exceptional need for the development, and recommend that the application is approved."

It is clear from the Officer's Report and subsequent grant of Ref. 19/02979/OUTMAJ that the Council accepted that there was an exceptional need for additional industrial floorspace and that the proposed building's location in the AONB was not a bar to development.

Reserved Matters Application (Ref. 22/00897/RESMAJ)

An application for reserved matters ['RMA'], pursuant to the outline planning permission, was submitted and validated (Ref. 22/00897/RESMAJ) in April 2022. This was for the below description of development:

"Approval of reserved matters following Outline application for the erection of a new logistics warehouse building (for occupation by Walker Logistics) (Use Class B8) with ancillary office floorspace, an aircraft museum building (Use Class D1), and associated access, car parking and landscaping. Matters to be considered: Access, Appearance, Landscaping and Layout."

This was granted on 14 February 2023.

Council's Latest Evidence Base

WBC have published documents that form the evidence base for the LPR. Those of most relevance are summarised below.

Employment

The Council have published:

- Employment Land Review (August 2020).
- West Berkshire Employment Land Review Addendum (December 2022).

The relevant extracts of the Employment Land Review (August 2020) are summarised above.



The key findings of the West Berkshire Employment Land Review Addendum (December 2022) comprise (own emphasis):

- The (industrial) market is very tight in Hungerford, and when space does become available it is re-occupied.
- Demand for industrial space has increased since the previous assessment, while supply has continued to fall, placing further pressure on the existing stock market. Overall, there remains an acute shortage of good quality space.
- The industrial requirement is 91,000sqm (or 23ha).
- The scope for employment use (industrial) at LAM6 (land west of Ramsbury Road, Membury) has been confirmed through the 2021 planning permission.
- The industrial land requirement identified in this Addendum is a minimum.
- Given the need to address a current market shortage for industrial space there is a more pressing need to frontload the plan with a readily available pipeline of space. So, we suggest that as much as possible of this 23ha minimum should be allocated on easily deliverable sites.

Landscape

The Council have published Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessments ['LCA']. These seek to ascertain if development would result in harm to the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. The LCA of relevance to these representations comprises 'LAM6: Land West of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate' (September 2021).

This concludes that Areas A and B (see Figure 2 below) have potential for development. It concluded that the airfield runway is inappropriate for development.

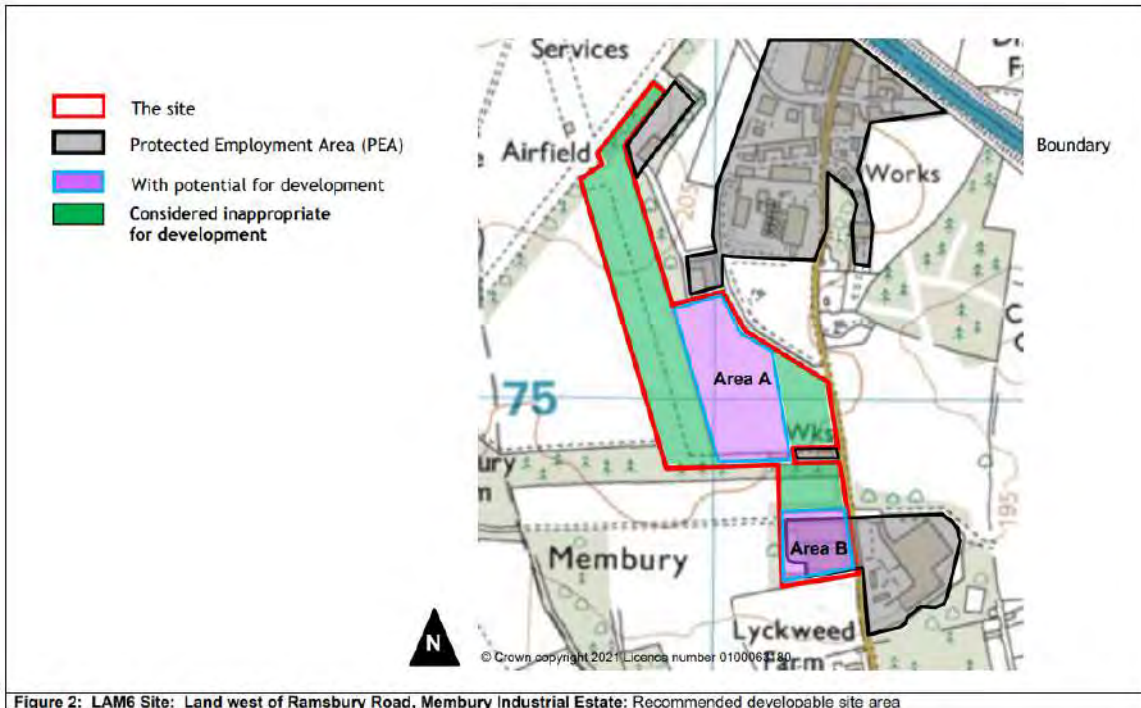


Figure 2 - Extract from LCA (September 2021)

Employment Background Paper

WBC published an Employment Background Paper (January 2023). This is described as “an informal background paper that assists in the understanding of the employment evidence base and employment policies that are contained within the LPR”.

It states (own emphasis):

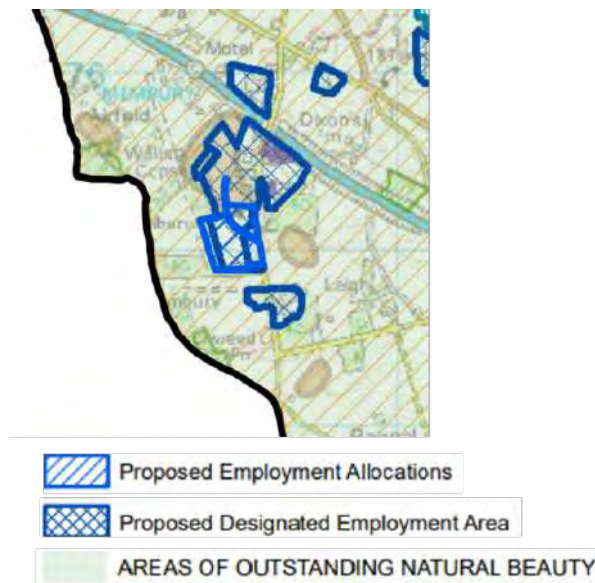
- The industrial requirement to be accommodated is c. 91,000sqm and at a plot ratio of 40% coverage, this equates to a land area of 23ha. This is higher than the 62,000sqm or 16ha requirement identified in the ELR 2020.
- The evidence in the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessments (LCA) fed into the process of seeking to allocate sites. The Assessments prepared for individual sites within the North Wessex Downs AONB recommend landscape buffers to ensure development would fit with the existing pattern of the landscape as well as to bring landscape enhancements. These buffers reduce the area of the individual sites considered appropriate for development.
 - LAM6 is identified as having a site area of 6.98ha, with a developable area of 4.4ha, and a land supply of 10,381sqm.
- The Council identify a requirement for 91,109sqm of industrial floorspace (as identified in the ELR Addendum) and a supply of 58,400sqm. LAM6 is excluded from the employment land supply, as it is already counted within the committed supply.
- Thus, there is a shortfall of 32,709sqm of industrial land.

- The Council state that they are committed to a five-year review and 'is taking positive and proactive action to seek opportunities for additional employment land to come forward'.

Proposed Site Allocation

The Policies Map, which displays the policies contained within the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) LPR, allocates the site as within (see Figure 3):

- AONB.
- Designated Employment Area ['DEA'] (in part).
- Employment Allocation (in part).



The extent of the DEA is shown in further detail in Map 9 in Appendix 1 of the Employment Background Paper (see Figure 4 below).

Designated Employment Area - Membury Estate, including Hurst Farm

Map 9

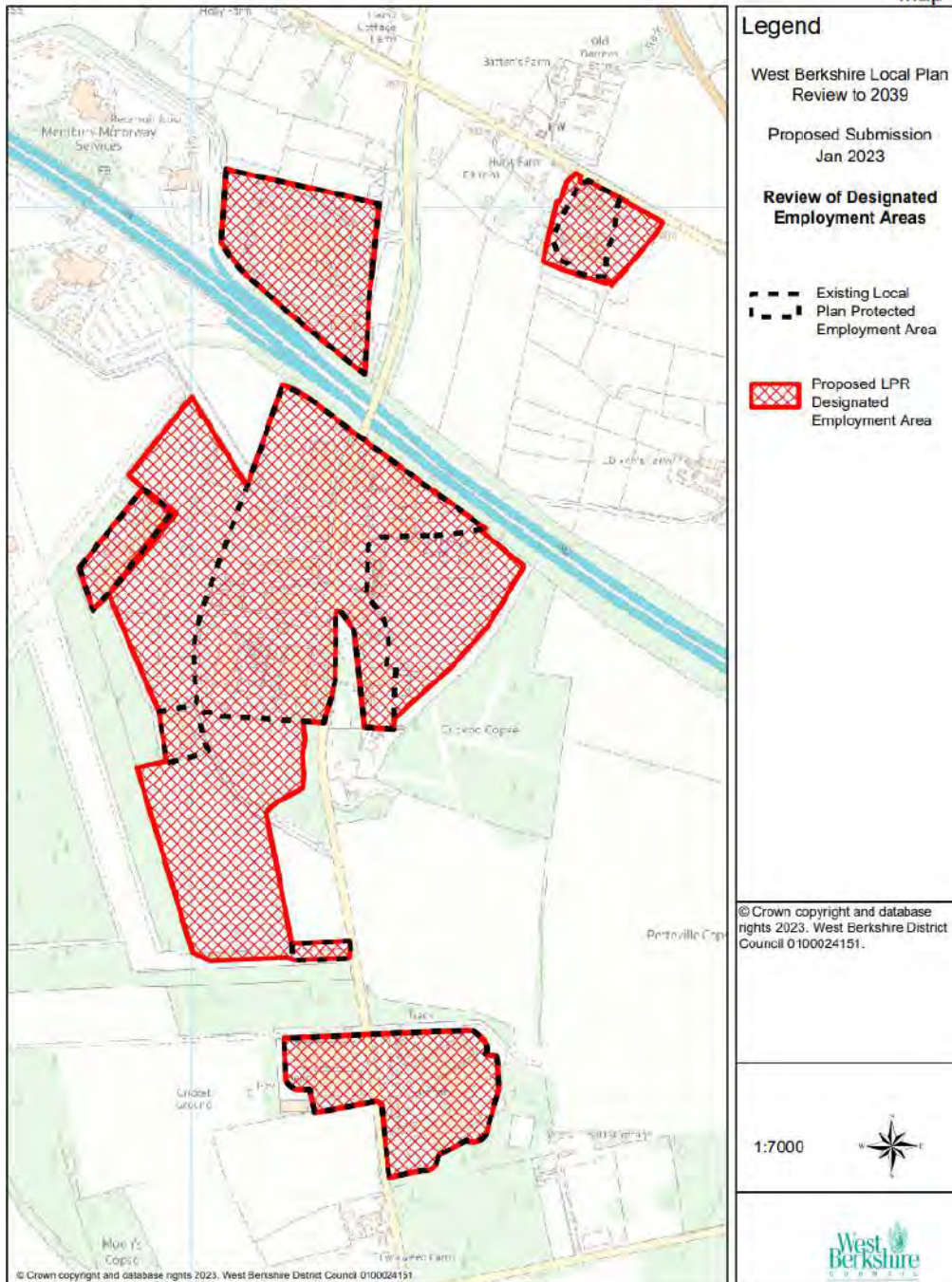


Figure 4 - Map 9 of Appendix 1 in Employment Background Paper

The extent of the employment allocation is shown in further detail in the map that supports Draft Policy ESA2 (see Figure 5 below).

Land west of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands



Figure 5 - Supporting Map to Draft Policy ESA2

Therefore, the DEA and site allocation only covers the land which benefits from outline planning permission (Ref. 19/02979/OUTMAJ), and for which reserved matters approval (Ref. 22/00897/RESMAJ) was granted on 14 February 2023. The extent of the boundary has been reduced from that assessed in the HELAA (and identified as 'deliverable') and from which WBC Planning Policy confirmed was allocated in the Regulation 18 version of the LPR (under Draft Policy EMP5); the area covered by the runway has been omitted.



Key Policies

Policy SP20 (Strategic Approach to Employment Land)

Draft Policy SP20 states that through the LPR the Council will seek to facilitate the growth and forecasted change of business development over the plan period, to meet the identified shortfall (of office and industrial space).

Supporting Paragraph 7.9 recognises that whilst the employment allocations go some way towards meeting the identified industrial requirement, there remains a shortfall. It states:

“The District is heavily constrained and this has resulted in a lack of suitable available sites. Given the identified shortfall in supply the Council will commit to seek to address this matter again at the first five year review of the Local Plan”.

Supporting Paragraph 7.10 states:

“The ELR is clear that the industrial requirement of 91,109sqm is a minimum and therefore the regeneration of the London Road Industrial Estate (LRIE) will provide flexibility to the figures in the later part of the plan period.”.

Therefore, WBC suggest that the LRIE has potential to deliver flexibility to the employment figures over the plan period.

The ELR states that the industrial land requirement that has been identified is a minimum and given the need to address a current market shortage for industrial space there is a more pressing need to frontload the plan with a readily available pipeline of space. So, it suggests that as much as possible of this 23ha minimum should be allocated on easily deliverable sites.

The LPR does not accord with this as it fails to:

1. Allocate sufficient floorspace to meet the identified need in the ELR.
2. Frontload the plan with a readily available pipeline of space.

Paragraph 35 of the NPPF states that plans are ‘sound’ if they are positively prepared. This is defined as providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s ‘objectively assessed needs’. Thus, the LPR cannot be found to be sound and there is a requirement to allocate additional sites through the LPR to ensure that the LPR can be adopted.

Other Comments

In terms of the location of business development, we support the Council’s approach to extend the DEA allocation, at Membury Estate, and Draft Policy SP20s approach to support business development in these locations.



The policy states that an Employment and Skills Plan will be encouraged as part of major business development proposals. Further detail on what is required to address this should be set out.

Policy SP21 (Sites Allocated for Employment Land)

Draft Policy SP21 sets out the sites allocated for employment land and identifies the approximate floorspace and use(s).

Land West of Ramsbury Road is identified as ESA2, for 10,381sqm of B2/B8 floorspace. Supporting Paragraph 7.25 states:

“The ELR outlines that to support the creation of local job opportunities in the more western rural areas, DEA boundaries could be extended at Membury Industrial Estate. Membury has seen a number of redevelopments and expansions, including outline planning permission granted for industrial use on one of the two proposed allocated sites (ESA2). The allocations sites at Membury (ESA2 and ESA3) and extending the DEA boundary will aid in addressing a local and rural demand”.

It is noted that the Regulation 18 version of the LPR proposed to allocate Land West of Ramsbury Road for 27,600sqm of industrial, storage and distribution uses. Thus, the Regulation 19 version of the LPR seeks to significantly reduce the amount of floorspace (and site area) allocated for employment land. To confirm, we do not agree with this approach.

The Employment Background Paper explains that the LPR identifies a total employment land supply of 58,400sqm, across 5no. sites². LAM6 (Land West of Ramsbury Road) is not included in the total supply of employment land as it is already counted within the committed supply and therefore cannot be counted as an additional contribution to meeting the employment land requirement. This is the correct approach, which we do endorse.

Policy ESA2 (Land West of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands (Site Ref: LAM6))

Draft Policy ESA2 sets out the requirements for delivering employment floorspace on the allocated site.

As explained above, outline planning permission (Ref. 19/O2979/OUTMAJ) was granted in May 2021. The applicant has since submitted the RMA (Ref. 22/OO897/RESMAJ), which was granted on 14 February 2023, and multiple applications seeking to discharge the pre-commencement conditions attached to Ref. 19/O2979/OUTMAJ. Significant effort and cost have been exerted in seeking to realise this planning permission and a lawful commencement of development works on site will take place as soon as possible (2023/2024).

² MID5, LAM10, BEEN 3/5, BEEN10 and PAD4.



Given the applicant's intention to deliver the outline planning permission, and subsequent RMA, we have no comment to make on the wording of Draft Policy ESA2 as we do not envisage a further planning application being required.

However, it is crucial that the boundary of the site allocation is extended (for industrial, storage and distribution uses). This would make a significant contribution to helping WBC meet the identified need for industrial floorspace in West Berkshire. The whole site is owned by Walkers, it is in a suitable and sustainable location for development and is therefore a viable option that can be delivered in the short-term (years 1-5). One of the primary purposes of the Local Plan is to consider the future growth aims of the District and to allocate land for development that is not currently committed.

It is recognised that the site is within AONB. However, the site is well-contained by existing (and emerging) buildings and the site includes a former runway which comprises concrete/hardstanding, the visual amenity of which is not of benefit to the AONB. It is crucial that the AONB designation does not constrain development which would otherwise result in significant economic benefits. Indeed, this was recognised by WBC through the granting of Ref. 19/O2979/OUTMAJ.

Policy DM32 (Designated Employment Areas).

As explained above, we agree with the proposal to extend the DEA at Membury Estate. It is the correct approach to extend existing DEAs. Such extensions ensure efficiencies are maximised and that development is best or properly integrated with functioning employment areas.

However, the DEA should (at a minimum) be extended to reflect the boundary of the ESA2 site allocation. As drawn, it removes the eastern part of the site allocation.

It is also appropriate to further extend the DEA to include the whole of the site being promoted by Walkers, including the airfield runway. In addition, we consider that the existing Walker Logistics complex (to the south), which comprises employment floorspace, should be included in the DEA.

Indicative Scheme

We have enclosed a drawing (22021-SK-103) [**Appendix 4**], which demonstrates how a scheme could be delivered on the site allocation set out in the Regulation 18 version of the LPR (i.e., the boundary which includes the airfield runway).

For completeness, the scheme includes the extant consent (Ref. 19/O2979/OUTMAJ) for the new logistics warehouse building. In addition, 5no. buildings are shown to the west, along with associated car parking and access, as well as a landscape buffer further to the west. Excluding the extant consent, the scheme would deliver a total Gross External Area ['GEA'] of 21,491sqm across 17no. units (which range in size from 322sqm to 3,798sqm) for industrial, storage and distribution uses.



WBC's Employment Background Paper identifies that there is a shortfall of 32,709sqm of industrial land. Therefore, the proposed scheme would make a significant contribution in helping to address this shortfall (reducing it by 34%, to 11,218sqm).

The scheme has been informed by advice from Savills on market demand. The unit sizes shown are in demand within the regional market (of Oxford/Newbury/Swindon). There is the potential to provide for small medium enterprises within smaller units. It is therefore considered that the units proposed reflect the target audience and occupier demand. To confirm, it is not anticipated that the scheme will be occupied by Walker Logistics themselves, but it will be available to the market for other industrial, storage and/or distribution uses.

The proposed scheme would provide much-needed supply to the immediate locality. Within the smaller sub-15,000 sq ft size range, at the end of Q4 2022 according to Savills, there was one available unit within a 5-mile radius, comprising 1,504 sq ft which has subsequently been occupied.

Increasing this radius to 10 miles to include the eastern boundary of Swindon and western boundary of Newbury, there were 9 available units available at the end of Q4. There is demonstrably a considerable under-supply of small, light industrial and warehouse units, forcing many local businesses to re-locate.

It is noted that WBC have reduced the area of the site considered appropriate for development, from that assessed in the HELAA and allocated in the Regulation 18 version of the LPA, as a result of the evidence in the LCA.

A Landscape Visual Appraisal ['LVA'] has been prepared, to assess the visual and landscape impact of developing the area allocated in the Regulation 18 version of the LPR, and the potential impact of the Indicative Scheme.

This concludes:

- The site is considered to have very limited visual relationship and inter-visibility with the surrounding and adjacent areas and the wider AONB landscape.
- The site is of low visual sensitivity.
- The woodland buffer on the western edge, shown on the Indicative Scheme, would be as effective in screening views in and out as the currently present maturing woodland that marks the edge of the main north to south landing strip.
- The allocation of the (wider) site would not cause any undue harm to the visual amenity or appreciation of the AONB landscape, that cannot be mitigated against.
- The Council's published Assessment does not represent the correct landscape character baseline (as it does not consider the approved outline application Ref. 19/O2979/OUTMAJ³).
- The site comprises an already transformed landscape, of the former airfield, and the hardstanding of the southern runway could be utilised as building platforms.

³ This is a committed scheme, in planning terms, and one which the applicant intends to be built in 2023/2024.



The LVA demonstrates that a larger site allocation would not bring any undue harm to the visual amenity or landscape character of the AONB, utilises landscape that has already been transformed and is influenced by the existing facilities nearby, and is well enclosed and integrated into the receiving landscape.

Thus, it is appropriate to allocate the whole site promoted by Walkers.

Economic Benefits

The economic benefits of allocating the site (including the former airfield) are summarised in the submitted 'Economic Benefits of proposed Expansion of Activities at Walker Logistics' Report. This concludes:

- The proposal will create economic benefits during the build phase and once it is operational.
- Allocating the airstrip at land west of Ramsbury Road could deliver a further 21,419sqm of industrial floorspace, which would bring the allocated industrial sites in the LPR almost in line with the recommended requirement of 91,109sqm in the Employment Land Review.

Conclusion

The inclusion of the site at 'Land West of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate' as an allocated employment site is fully supported. However, the boundary of the allocation should be extended to include the former runway. This would continue to ensure that the site allocation forms a natural, high-quality extension to the DEAs in the site's vicinity and development would result in significant socio-economic benefits. More importantly, it would help WBC to meet their identified need for industrial floorspace, which the LPR fails to do and therefore cannot be found to be sound.

Please contact me if you have any queries relating to this.

Yours faithfully,

Pegasus Group

Jim Tarzey
Executive Director



Appendix 1: Red Line of Site being Promoted through the LPR

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Offices throughout the UK and Ireland.

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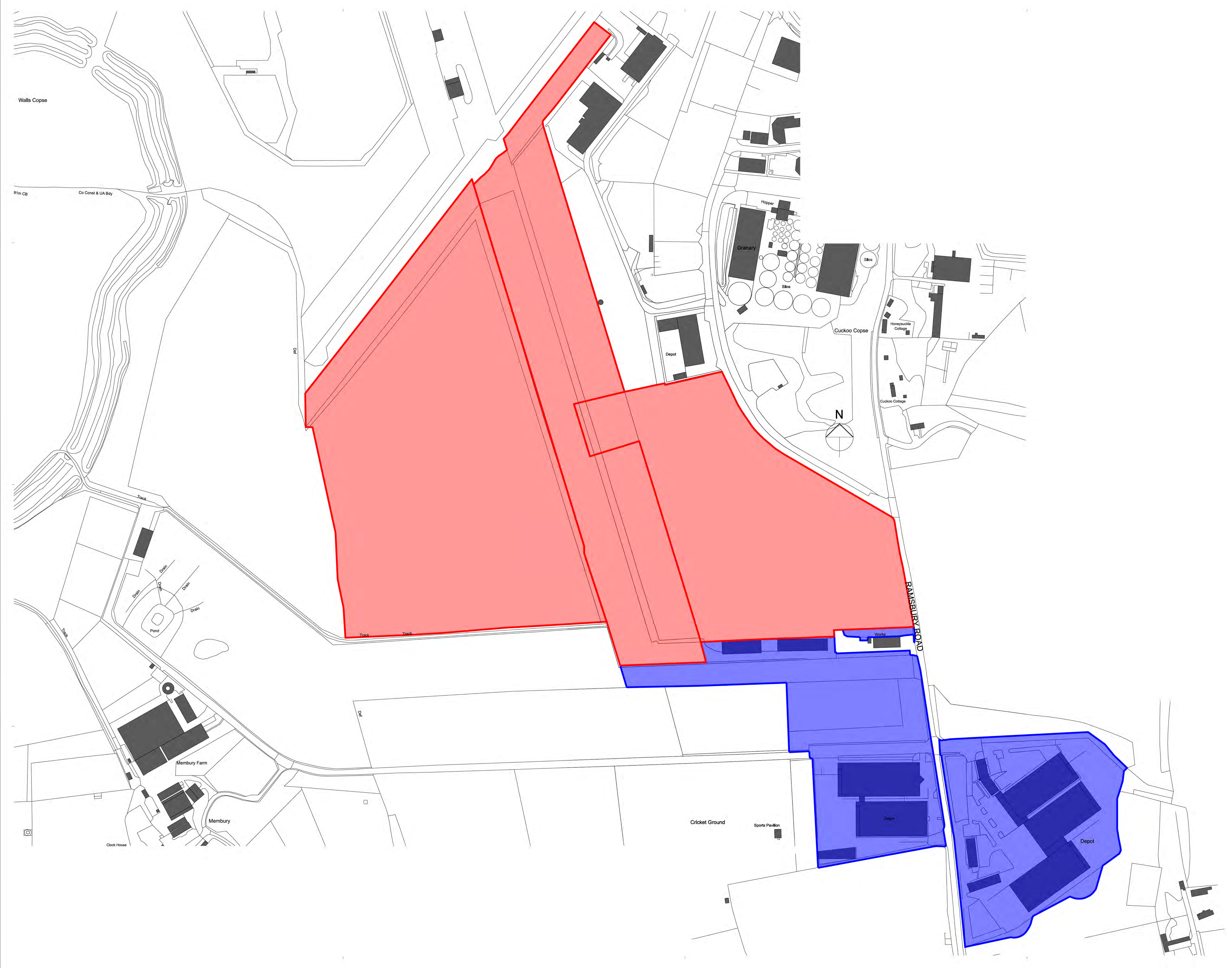
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NOTES

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 Subject to survey.
 Subject to design development.
 Where applicable this drawing is to be read in conjunction with other consultants drawings, sub-contractor information and with the specification.
 All dimensions to be checked on site prior to commencement of work.
 Subject to Rights of Light Approval.

KEY:

- Land in ownership of Walker Logistics
- Land in ownership of Walker Logistics for potential future employment use



C	Shading amended to suit recent developments	RP	15/02/2023
B	Draft status removed	ED	28/09/2022
A	Boundary lines amended to client markup	ED	27/09/2022
Rev	Description	CHK	Date

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RIBA Chartered Practice
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Project Title: **MEMBRUY FIELD**

Drawing Title: **SITE BOUNDARIES ALLOCATION**

Drawing Status: **PRELIMINARY**

Scale: 0 10 metres 100
 Drawn By: E D | Scale: 1:1250 @ A0 | Date: 22/09/2022 | Check By: X X
 Walker Logistics

Drawing No: **22021 - SK - 007** | Rev: **C**
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Appendix 2: Correspondence with WBC (re Extent of Allocation in Regulation 18 Version of LPR)

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: West Berks New Local Plan - Extensions to DEA
Date: 23 December 2020 20:39:39
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[Lambourn.JPG](#)

[REDACTED]
We haven't updated the policies map for this consultation – this will be done for our next consultation.

However, see map attached which identifies the site – the extent of which is in line with the proposed developable area of the site as promoted.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 December 2020 12:54

To: PlanningPolicy <PlanningPolicy@westberks.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: West Berks New Local Plan - Extensions to DEA

This is an EXTERNAL EMAIL. STOP. THINK before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments.

Hi,

Note the Draft Local Plan proposes to extend the existing 'Designated Employment Area' at 'land west of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands' for 27,600sqm of industrial, storage and distribution uses.

Is there an updated Policies Map or anything within the Draft Local Plan which confirms the extent (red line) of the site which is proposed for extension?

We are the agents for the current application for Walker Logistics (19/02979/OUTMAJ).

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Pegasus Group

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Our company will take a break over the festive period so

Pegasus Group will close from 5.30pm on
Wednesday 23rd December 2020 and reopen at 9am on
Monday 4th January 2021



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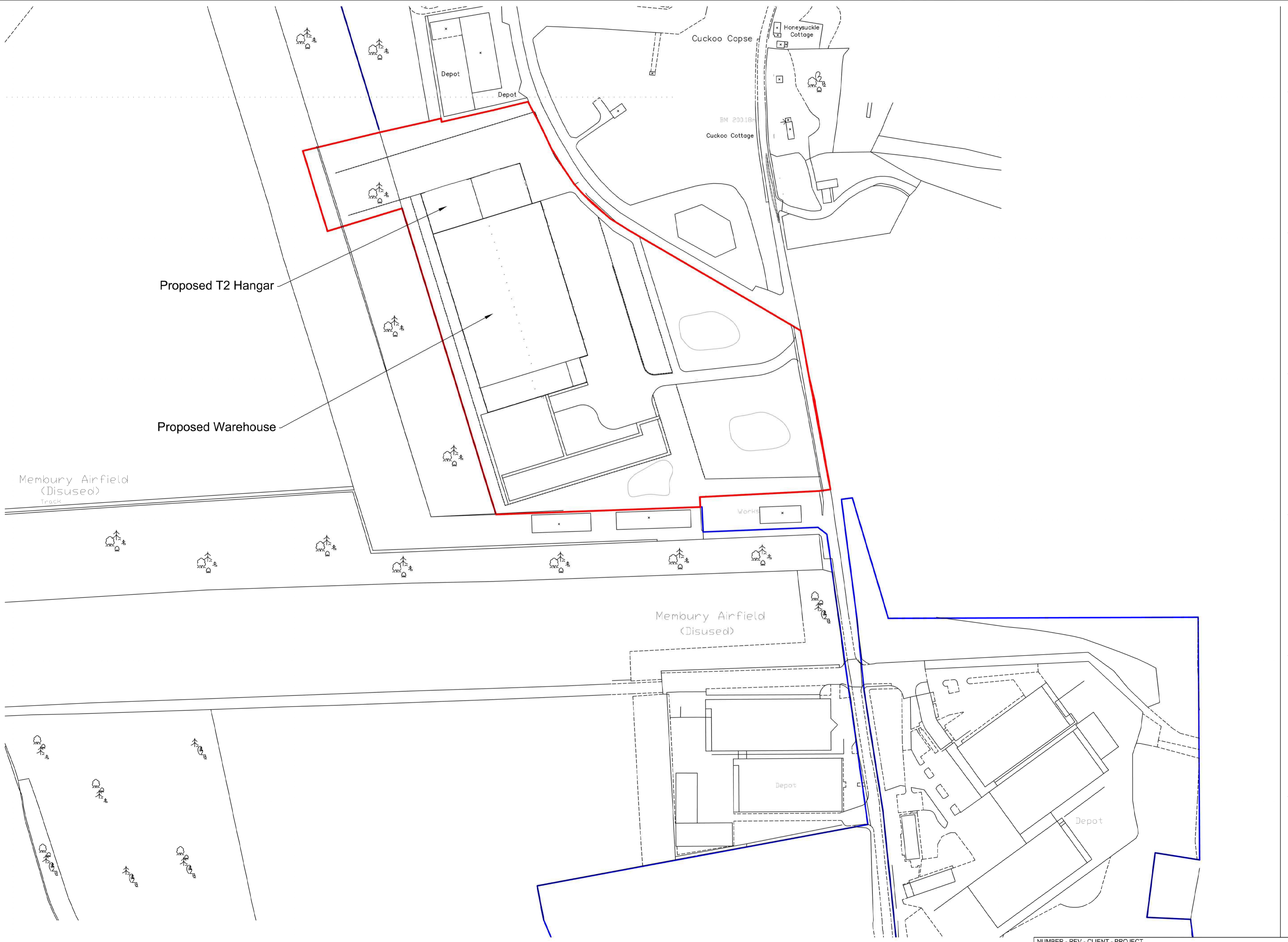
Appendix 3: Site Location Plan for Ref. 19/02979/OUTMAJ

21 Ganton Street, London, W1F 9BN
T 020 3897 1110 E London@pegasusgroup.co.uk
Offices throughout the UK and Ireland.

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758

757

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755

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753

Proposed T2 Hangar

Proposed Warehouse

Membury Airfield
(Disused)
Track

Membury Airfield
(Disused)

Cuckoo Copse

Honeysuckle
Cottage

Depot

Depot

BM 20018

Cuckoo Cottage

Works

Depot

Depot



NUMBER - REV - CLIENT - PROJECT
03100-00 - D - Walker Logistics - Walker Logistics

TITLE Location Plan		
DATE 09.08.19	SHEET 01	SCALE 1:1250
DRN BY AW	CHK BY VW	PAPER SIZE A1

V B WHEELER
BOURNE WORKS
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Rev No	Revision Note	Date	Drawn	Checked
D	Drafft removed, OS Map licence added to location plan	15.11.19	CJB	VW

Appendix 4: Indicative Proposed Plan

21 Ganton Street, London, W1F 9BN
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SCHEDULE OF APPROXIMATE AREAS									
Job name: Airfield site Option 2									
UHR	Ground sq.m	OFA	First sq.m	First sq.ft	OFA total	% AT 1ST FLOOR	CARS	Parking ratio	
1	3420	36813	378	4069	3798	42882	10	76	50
2	3420	36813	378	4069	3798	42882	10	76	50
3	1426	15349	144	1550	1570	16899	9	21	75
4	1978	21291	189	2034	2187	23226	9	40	54
5	1702	18320	189	2034	1891	20355	10	32	63
6	1702	18320	189	2034	1891	20355	10	32	69
7	925	9967	99	1066	1024	11022	10	20	51
8	925	9967	99	1066	1024	11022	10	20	51
9	310	3337	120	1292	430	4629	28	9	48
10	232	2497	90	969	322	3466	28	6	54
11	232	2497	90	969	322	3466	28	6	54
12	232	2497	90	969	322	3466	28	6	54
13	232	2497	90	969	322	3466	28	6	54
14	711	7653	90	969	801	8522	11	12	67
15	426	4585	90	969	516	5554	17	10	52
16	426	4585	90	969	516	5554	17	10	52
17	687	7356	90	969	777	8354	12	18	49
GRAND TOTAL	18896	204305	2020	21691	21491	23129	390	54	

Developable Site Area: 51819 m² 12.805 Acres
 Site Coverage: 36.64%
 Site Density: 41.47%
 Parking bays shown at 5x2.5m



KEY

- Airfield site boundary
- Landscape buffer zone
- Electrical cable route

Rev	Description	CHK	Date

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RIBA Chartered Practice **cornisharchitects**

Project Title: **MEMBURY FIELD**

Drawing Title: **AIRFIELD SITE PLAN OPTION2**

Drawing Status: **PRELIMINARY**

Scale: 0 10 metres 80

Drawn By: E D | Scale: 1:1000 @ A0 | Date: 01/09/2022 | Check By: M T

Drawing No: **22021 - SK - 103** | Rev: -

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Representations to Regulation 19 Consultation of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review: Economic Benefits of Proposed Expansion of Activities at Walker Logistics & Developing the Adjacent Airstrip

Ramsbury Road, Membury, Hungerford.

Walker Logistics (Holdings) Ltd (Hungerford)

Date: 01/03/2023 | Pegasus Ref: P16_O633_RO01v4_EC_MAN_NR_RC

Authors: Niamh Ruane





Document Management.

Version	Date	Author	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for revision
1	10/02/2023	NR	RC	-
2	16/02/2023	NR	RC	Feedback on first draft
3	28/02/2023	NR	RC	Amended impact analysis to reflect floorspace use update
4	01/03/2023	NR	RC	Amended following internal comments



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Executive Summary

Background

This report has been produced on behalf of Walker Logistics (Holdings) Limited in response to the regulation 19 consultation of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review. It provides details on the economic benefits of developing the site on land west of Ramsbury Road, Hungerford, West Berkshire, and also considers the extent to which the Local Plan Review identifies sufficient sites to meet industrial floorspace needs in West Berkshire. The indicative scheme that has been submitted will see up to 21,491 sq. m. (GEA) of B2/B8 space developed on the adjacent airstrip at Walker Logistics' existing location. The site could be used by any occupier, not just Walker Logistics. This is in addition to the 10,381 sq. m. of warehousing and office floorspace on the east of the site which already has planning permission (for occupation by Walker Logistics). This will make a significant long-term positive contribution to the West Berkshire economy, as well as supporting one of the fastest growing sectors of the national economy.

Jobs Growth in West Berkshire

Based on data from the Business Register & Employment Survey published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), between 2015 and 2021 West Berkshire saw jobs decline by 2%. This compares to the jobs growth of 1.9% seen in the South East and 5.2% seen in Great Britain over the same timeframe. Therefore, it is important new job opportunities are created within West Berkshire to support the area in its recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and bring jobs growth in line with regional and national averages.

The Importance of the Logistics Sector & Demand for Warehouses

Logistics is one of the largest sectors in the country, directly supporting at least 1.6 million jobs in Great Britain in 2021. Between 2015 and 2021, jobs in transport and storage increased by 227,000, making it the fastest growing sector in Great Britain. The sector also generated an estimated £70.7billion in gross value added (GVA) for the UK economy in 2020. The GVA contribution made by logistics has increased significantly over the long-term – by 21.3% (£12.4billion) since 2010.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on online retail as between March 2020 and May 2020 during the first national lockdown, online sales increased from 22.1% to 32.8%. This was seen again in November 2020 during a second national lockdown where online sales reached 37.2%. This proportion has decreased as lockdown rules were relaxed; however online sales are still above their pre-pandemic levels at 26.6% as of December 2022. One of the impacts of this rise has been to increase demand for warehousing space across the country.

Demand for warehousing space in the South East remains strong. It had the second highest take-up of this space at a regional level in 2022, accounting for 20.2% (7.7 million sq. ft.) of total warehousing space taken.

The logistics sector is declining in West Berkshire, with jobs falling by 16.7% between 2015 and 2021. This compares to a growth of 20.2% and 16.7% in the South East and Great Britain respectively. Expanding activities at Walker Logistics will create new employment opportunities and support the sector in reversing the jobs decline.



Economic Benefits Created by the Scheme¹

Construction

- During the construction of the Dakota Building that already has planning permission, an estimated **185 temporary jobs** could be supported per annum. This includes on-site roles and jobs in the wider supply chain. The build phase could also generate around **£12.9million** in GVA.
- The construction of the proposed expansion on the airstrip could support an estimated **174 temporary jobs** per annum including on-site jobs and jobs in the wider supply chain. Over the estimated two-year build phase around **£24.2million** of GVA could be generated.

Operational

- Once fully built and operational, the current operations of Walker Logistics and the Proposed Developments could support **596-884 gross FTE on-site jobs**.
- Once built and operational, the contribution to economic output by current operations by Walker Logistics and the Proposed Developments is estimated at **£39.5million-£87.9million** per annum.
- Business rates generated by the existing operations of Walker Logistics and the Proposed Developments could be in the region of **£1.1million** per annum, a proportion of which will be available locally to invest in local services.
- The estimated wages paid to staff currently working at Walker Logistics and the on-site staff supported by the Proposed Developments could be between **£21.5million and £31.7million** per annum.

Providing jobs at a range of skill levels²

One of the misconceptions about employment in the manufacturing and logistics sectors is that they are low-skilled. Analysis of ONS data on the logistics sector in the South East indicates that a range of skill levels are supported. The on-site jobs are estimated to break down as follows:

- An estimated **36.5% of on-site jobs** will be for people with a degree or higher.
- A further **27.8% of on-site jobs** will be for people with A levels or equivalent.
- Around **5.8% of on-site jobs** could require no formal qualifications.
- Around **29.8% of on-site jobs** would require other qualifications.

¹ Full details on the methodologies used to calculate the different economic benefits of the scheme are provided in sections 5, 6, 7 & 8 of the report.

² Figures may not sum due to rounding.



Contribution to Strategic Objectives

In addition to the quantifiable benefits generated by the expansion, the scheme will make an important contribution to economic development objectives. This includes the Levelling Up the UK White Paper, Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth report, the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan, and West Berkshire's Economic Development Strategy. The scheme will also support the growth of a sector recognised by government as playing a critical role in contributing to local employment opportunities.

Addressing the Shortfall of Industrial Floorspace in West Berkshire

The West Berkshire Local Plan Review is proposing to allocate 68,781 sq. m. for industrial employment land over the Local Plan period of 2022–2039. However, the Employment Land Review addendum from 2022 recommends a minimum requirement of 91,109 sq. m. of industrial employment land up to 2039 to meet the needs of the District. Developing the airstrip at land west of Ramsbury Road could deliver a further 21,419 sq. m. of industrial floorspace, which would bring the allocated industrial sites in the Local Plan almost in line with the recommended requirement of 91,109 sq. m. in the Employment Land Review.

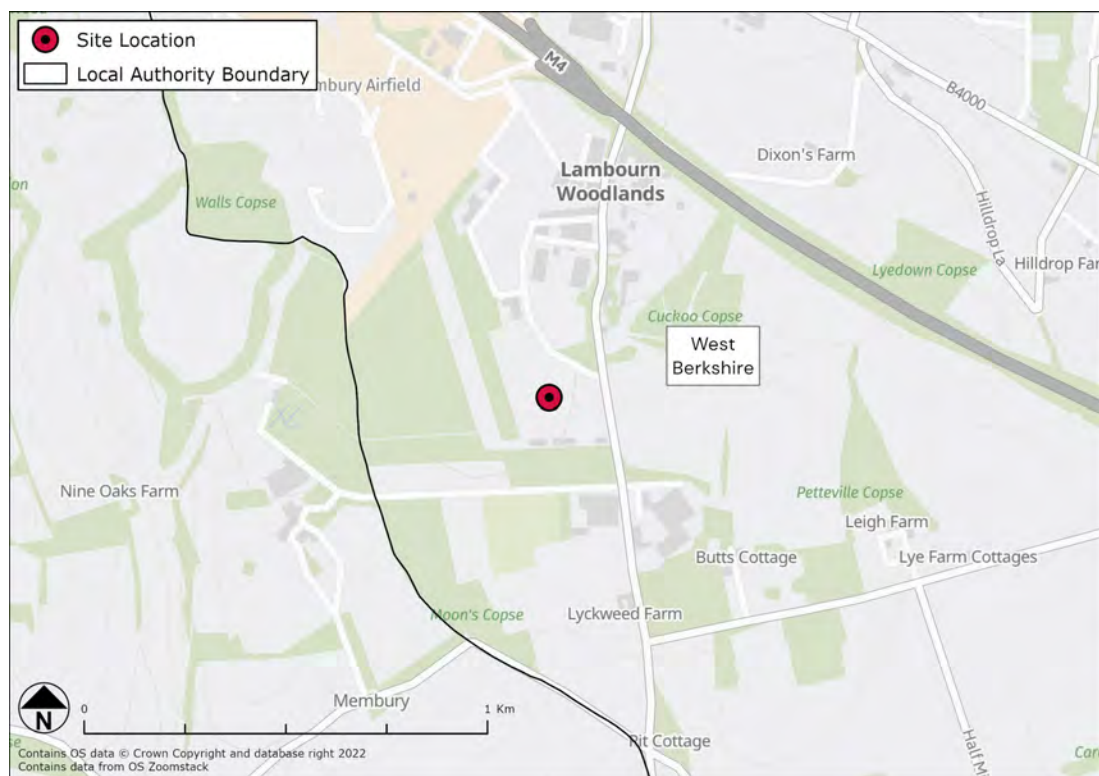
From both a quantitative and qualitative perspective, the Proposed Development will therefore make a significant contribution to supporting long-term sustainable economic growth in West Berkshire and the wider South East region. Significantly, developing the airstrip will help meet the current shortfall of industrial employment land.

1. Introduction

Scope and Purpose

- 1.1. This report has been produced on behalf of Walker Logistics (Holdings) Limited in response to the regulation 19 consultation of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review. It provides details on the economic benefits of developing the site on land at Ramsbury Road, Hungerford, West Berkshire, and also considers the extent to which the Local Plan Review identifies sufficient sites to meet industrial floorspace needs.
- 1.2. The indicative scheme submitted by Walker Logistics will see up to 21,491 sq. m. (GEA) of B2/B8 warehousing space in West Berkshire. The site could be used by any occupier, not just Walker Logistics. This is in addition to the proposed 10,381 sq. m. of warehousing and office floorspace on the east of the site which already has planning permission (known as the Dakota Building, to be occupied by Walker Logistics as per condition 15 of Ref. 19/O2979/OUTMAJ). Both these proposals are referred to as the “Proposed Development” in the remainder of the report. The proposals will make a significant long-term positive contribution to the West Berkshire economy, as well as supporting one of the fastest growing sectors of the national economy. Figure 1.1 shows the site location.

Figure 1.1: Site Location



- 1.3. The main impacts quantified are:
 - Job creation & contribution to economic output.
 - Business rates generated.
 - Wages paid to on-site workers



- The range of skill levels that jobs created by the scheme will cater for once built and operational.

Report Structure

1.4. The report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** gives a socio-economic overview of the West Berkshire economy with comparators at a regional and national level.
- **Section 3** looks at the importance of logistics and how the rise of e-commerce is shaping occupier requirements.
- **Section 4** looks at the West Berkshire Local Plan Review alongside the 2020 and 2022 Employment Land Reviews and considers the extent to which the Review identifies a sufficient quantum of industrial floorspace to meet future need.
- **Section 5** looks at economic impact of the construction phase of the additional floorspace.
- **Section 6** looks at the economic impact of the existing activities of Walker Logistics and the and the long-term impact of developing the additional floorspace.
- **Section 7** considers the extent to which activities undertaken by Walker Logistics and activities on the development of the airstrip will provide jobs in a range of occupation types and at a range of skill levels.
- **Section 8** looks at how the proposed expansion of activities support national and sub-regional economic development objectives.
- **Section 9** provides overall conclusions on the analysis.



2. Socio-Economic Overview of West Berkshire

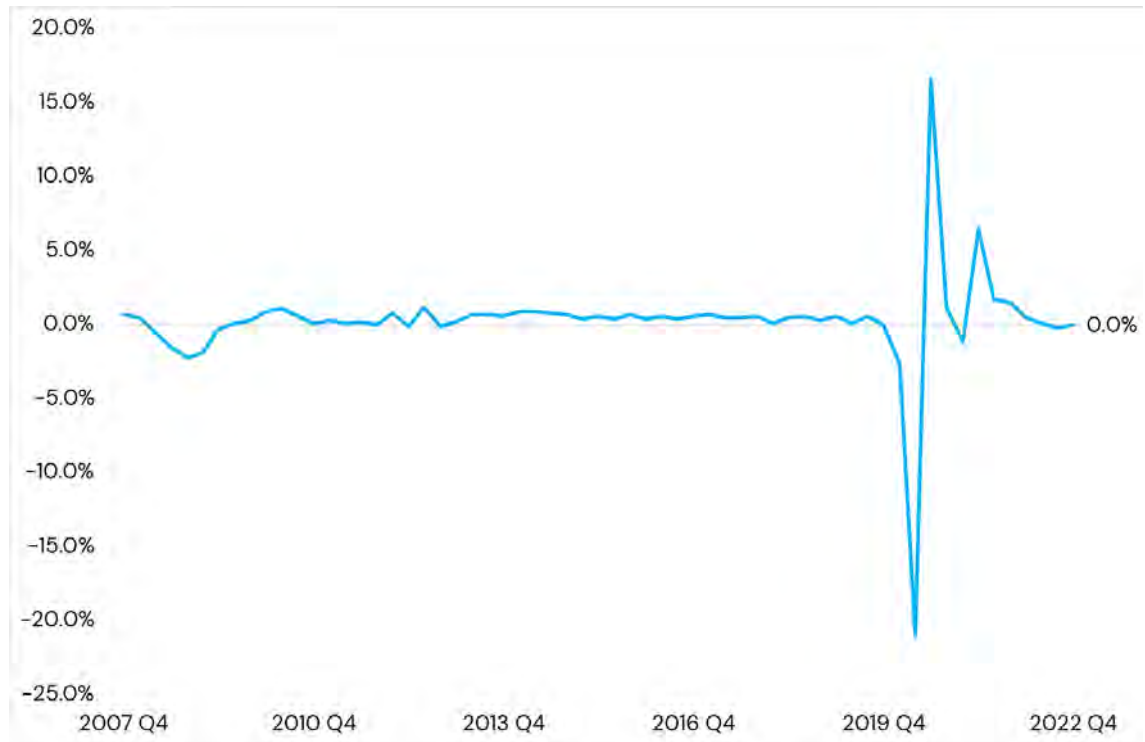
Introduction

- 2.1. This section provides a socio-economic overview of the West Berkshire economy alongside regional and national comparators. It looks at the following indicators:
- UK GDP.
 - Population – past and future trends.
 - Employment – total change and by sector.
 - Business numbers & Business Start-ups.
 - Unemployment – Claimant Count.
 - Skill levels of working age population.
 - Commuting patterns.
 - Deprivation – Index of Multiple Deprivation.

GDP

- 2.2. As shown in Figure 2.1, UK GDP fell by 21% in the second quarter of 2020. This represents the biggest economic downturn in over 300 years, a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. UK GDP is estimated to have had no growth in Q4 2022. This follows a decline in GDP of 0.2% in Q3 2022.
- 2.3. The impact of the pandemic, high inflation, and the fact the UK economy experienced no economic growth in the last quarter make it even more important that all areas across the country see new schemes being brought forward that will generate new employment opportunities and support long-term economic growth. The National Institute of Economic and Social Research have forecast that the UK will not enter recession this year, however they believe that higher interest rates and some withdrawal of fiscal support will likely bear down on economic activity throughout 2023 and 2024. The Proposed Development will bring new investment to West Berkshire and deliver long-term economic benefits to the area.

Figure 2.1: UK GDP, Quarter on Quarter Growth, 2007–22

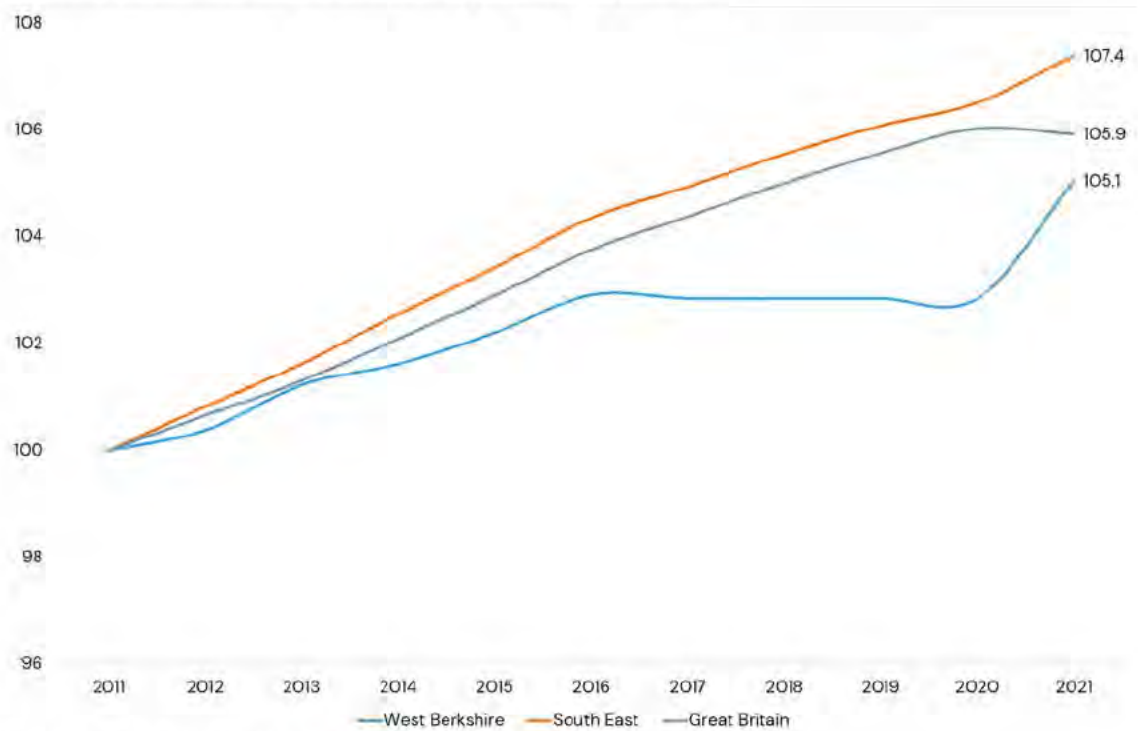


Source: ONS

Population

- 2.4. Figure 2.2 shows population change between 2011 and 2021 in West Berkshire, the South East and Great Britain. Between 2011 and 2021, the population of West Berkshire grew by 5.1%, representing an absolute increase of 7,800. The growth rate of the population in West Berkshire was below that seen in the South East (7.4%) and Great Britain (5.9%) over the same timeframe.

Figure 2.2: Indexed Population Change, 2011-21 (2011=100)



Source: ONS, Mid-Year Population Estimates

- 2.5. Tables 2.1-2.3 show population change by age in West Berkshire, the South East and England between 2011 and 2021. In all comparator areas the fastest growing age group were those aged 65 and over. This cohort grew by 33.1% in West Berkshire, an increase of 7,900 people. This was above the growth rate of this age group in the South East (21.5%) and Great Britain (19.8%). In West Berkshire there was a much smaller rise in the number of people aged 16-64 which grew by 0.4% (400) between 2011 and 2021. In the same timeframe, the number of people aged 0-15 in West Berkshire fell by 1.9% (600).

Table 2.1: Population Change by Age in West Berkshire, 2011-21

	2011	2021	Absolute Change	% Change
0-15	31,200	30,600	-600	-1.9%
16-64	99,100	99,500	400	0.4%
65+	23,900	31,800	7,900	33.1%
Total	154,100	161,900	7,800	5.1%

Source: ONS, Mid-Year Population Estimates

Table 2.2: Population Change by Age in the South East, 2011-21

	2011	2021	Absolute Change	% Change
0-15	1,643,800	1,721,900	78,100	4.8%
16-64	5,513,600	5,755,600	242,000	4.4%
65+	1,495,500	1,816,500	321,000	21.5%
Total	8,652,800	9,294,000	641,200	7.4%

Source: ONS, Mid-Year Population Estimates



Table 2.3: Population Change by Age in Great Britain, 2011–21

	2011	2021	Absolute Change	% Change
0–15	11,502,100	11,926,400	424,300	3.7%
16–64	39,776,300	40,987,500	1,211,200	3.0%
65+	10,192,400	12,207,800	2,015,400	19.8%
Total	61,470,800	65,121,700	3,650,900	5.9%

Source: ONS, Population Estimates

- 2.6. Data from the ONS 2018–based sub–national population projections show that between 2018 and 2039 the population of West Berkshire is projected to decrease by 0.8%, which is a fall of 1,326 people. In this time the number of people aged 0–15 and 16–64 are projected to decline by 16.1% (5,096) and 20.6% (10,293) respectively. However, in the same timeframe, the number of people aged 65 and over in West Berkshire is projected to increase by 47% (12,062). This is similar across the South East and England, where in both areas the number of people aged 0–15 are projected to decrease and the number of people aged 65 and over having the largest projected increase. However, at both a regional and national level the population is projected to grow between 2018 and 2039, by 7.6% and 8.9% respectively.

Table 2.4: Population Projections by Age in West Berkshire, 2018–2039

	2018	2039	Absolute Change	% Change
0–15	31,643	26,547	-5,096	-16.1%
16–64	96,965	86,672	-10,293	-10.6%
65+	29,919	43,981	14,062	47.0%
Total	158,527	157,201	-1,326	-0.8%

Source: ONS, 2018–based Sub–National Population Projections

Table 2.5: Population Projections by Age in the South East, 2018–2039

	2018	2039	Absolute Change	% Change
0–15	1,755,267	1,652,061	-103,206	-5.9%
16–64	5,616,593	5,662,474	45,881	0.8%
65+	1,761,765	2,511,009	749,244	42.5%
Total	9,133,625	9,825,575	691,950	7.6%

Source: ONS, 2018–based Sub–National Population Projections

Table 2.6: Population Projections by Age in England, 2018–2039

	2018	2039	Absolute Change	% Change
0–15	10,748,458	10,415,734	-332,724	-3.1%
16–64	35,049,467	36,109,691	1,060,224	3.0%
65+	10,179,253	14,436,306	4,257,053	41.8%
Total	55,977,178	60,961,810	4,984,632	8.9%

Source: ONS, 2018–based Sub–National Population Projections

Employment

- 2.7. A review of West Berkshire’s labour market helps to provide some context as to how expanding activities at Walker Logistics will support growth of the local area’s economy. Between 2015 and 2021 West Berkshire saw jobs decline by 2%, which was an absolute decrease of 2,000 jobs (see Figure 2.3). This compares to jobs growth of 1.9% in the South East (79,000 additional jobs) and 5.2% in Great Britain (1.5 million additional jobs). Creating new jobs at Walker Logistics will help to reverse West Berkshire’s declining employment.

Figure 2.3: Employment Change, 2015–21



Source: ONS, Business Register & Employment Survey

- 2.8. Table 2.7 shows employment shares by broad sector in West Berkshire, the South East and Great Britain as of 2021. In terms of transport & storage jobs in West Berkshire, the sector most likely to benefit from expanding activities at Walker Logistics, the sector accounted for 2.6% of total employment and supported 2,500 jobs in 2021. This makes it relatively small when compared to other South East authorities – for example, the 2021 jobs figures for Crawley and Milton Keynes were 22,000 and 17,000 respectively.
- 2.9. Between 2015 and 2021, the transport and storage sector in West Berkshire declined by 16.7% (500 fewer jobs). This compares to a growth of 20.2% and 16.7% in the sector in the South East and Great Britain respectively. The Proposed Development will increase the supply of logistics floorspace in West Berkshire and allow an existing business to grow and create new employment opportunities in a sector that has been in decline in recent years.

Table 2.7: Employment by Sector, 2021

	West Berkshire	South East	Great Britain
Agriculture, mining, utilities etc.	2.6%	2.7%	2.8%
Manufacturing	11.6%	5.7%	7.4%
Construction	5.3%	5.8%	5.0%
Wholesale & retail	14.0%	15.8%	14.4%
Transport & storage	2.6%	5.1%	5.1%
Accommodation & food services	5.3%	7.2%	7.5%
Information & communication	13.7%	5.3%	4.3%
Business, financial & professional services	20.6%	22.6%	23.0%
Public admin, education & health	17.9%	25.2%	26.3%
Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services	6.3%	4.5%	4.3%

Source: ONS, Business Register & Employment Survey

Business Numbers

- 2.10. Table 2.8 shows the change in the number of businesses in West Berkshire between 2012 and 2022. It also presents the change for comparator areas of the South East and Great Britain. The number of businesses in West Berkshire grew by 5.9% from 2012–22, equating to 535 new companies. This was behind the growth seen in the South East (18.5%) and Great Britain (23.7%). The Proposed Development will support business numbers in West Berkshire to grow, bringing it more in line with regional and national trends.

Table 2.8: Change in Business Numbers, 2011–21

	2012	2022	Absolute Change	% Change
West Berkshire	9,080	9,615	535	5.9%
South East	399,755	473,720	73,965	18.5%
Great Britain	2,527,640	3,126,800	599,160	23.7%

Source: ONS, UK Business Count

- 2.11. Table 2.9 shows businesses by size in West Berkshire, the South West and Great Britain. In West Berkshire, 84.6% of businesses are micro (0 to 9 employees). This is slightly below the rate in the South East (85.6%) and Great Britain (84.7%). In West Berkshire, 12.4% of businesses are small (10 to 49 employees) which is in line with Great Britain and above the rate in the South East (11.7%). A further 2.4% of businesses are medium-sized (50 to 249 employees) and 0.5% are large (250+ employees).
- 2.12. In West Berkshire, the majority (85.5%) of transport and storage businesses are micro, 9.7% are small and 3.2% are medium-sized. There are not currently any large transport and storage businesses in West Berkshire that employ over 250 people.

Table 2.9: Business by Size, 2022

	Micro (0 to 9 employees)	Small (10 to 49 employees)	Medium-sized (50 to 249 employees)	Large (250+)
West Berkshire	84.6%	12.4%	2.4%	0.5%
South East	85.6%	11.7%	2.3%	0.3%
Great Britain	84.7%	12.4%	2.5%	0.4%

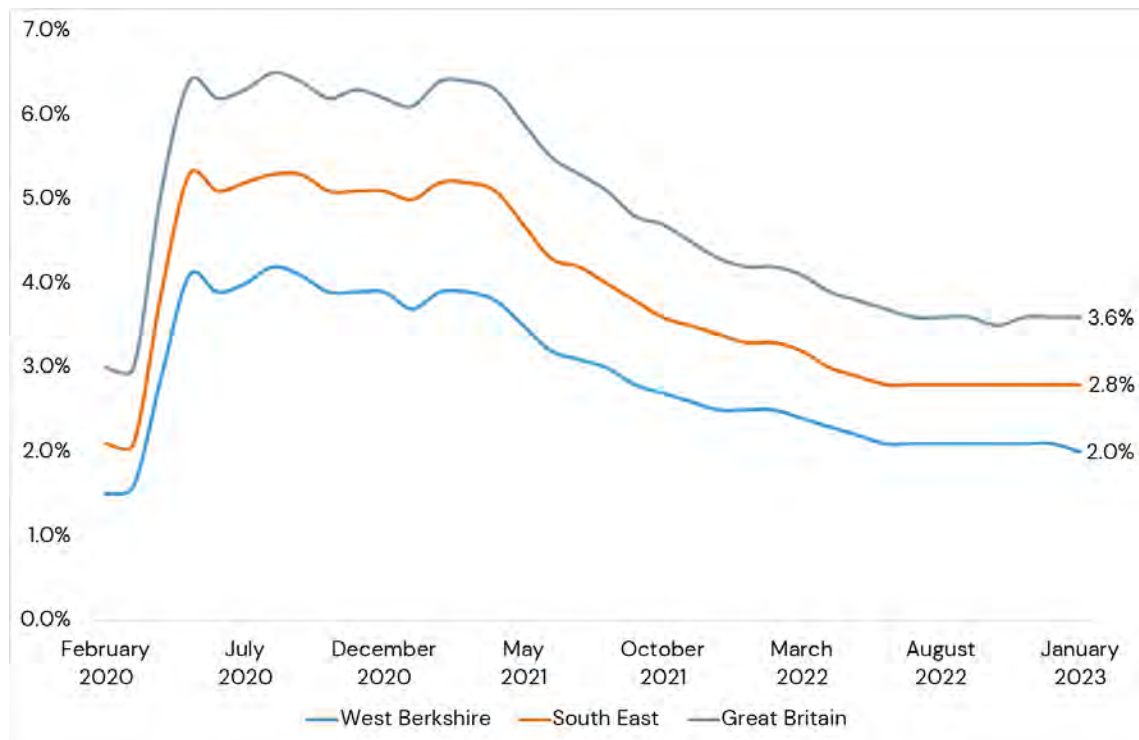
Source: ONS, UK Business Count



Claimant Count

- 2.13. The claimant count records the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit and are required to seek work and be available for work.
- 2.14. Figure 2.4 shows the claimant count as a proportion of people aged 16–64 in West Berkshire, the South East and Great Britain for the period February 2020 to January 2023, for all residents aged 16+. A sharp rise is evident in the claimant count between March and April 2020, which will be down to the impact of Covid-19. This is down in part to more people claiming unemployment-related benefits and also because of changes made to the system by government which means more people are eligible to claim benefits. Further details on this are provided below.
- 2.15. ONS state that enhancements to Universal Credit as part of the UK Government's response to the coronavirus pandemic mean that an increasing number of people became eligible for unemployment-related benefit support despite still being in work. Consequently, changes in the claimant count will not be wholly because of changes in the number of people who are not in work. It is not possible to identify to what extent people who are employed or unemployed have affected the numbers.
- 2.16. In February 2020, the claimant count in West Berkshire was 1.5% and by January 2023 it had risen to 2%, which represented an increase of 510 more people claiming benefits. The claimant count in West Berkshire is below that of the South East (2.8%) and Great Britain (3.6%) as of January 2023.
- 2.17. It is still reasonable to assume that the legacy effects of the pandemic mean the claimant rate will be higher than it was pre-March 2020. With CPI inflation hitting 10.1% in January 2023 and the UK economy experiencing no growth in Q4 2022, this makes it even more important that all areas across the country see new schemes being brought forward that will generate new employment opportunities and support long-term economic growth. The Proposed Development will do this, creating new employment opportunities during the construction phase of the scheme and once it is operational.

Figure 2.4: Claimant Count as a Proportion of Working Age (16–64) Population, February 2020–January 2023

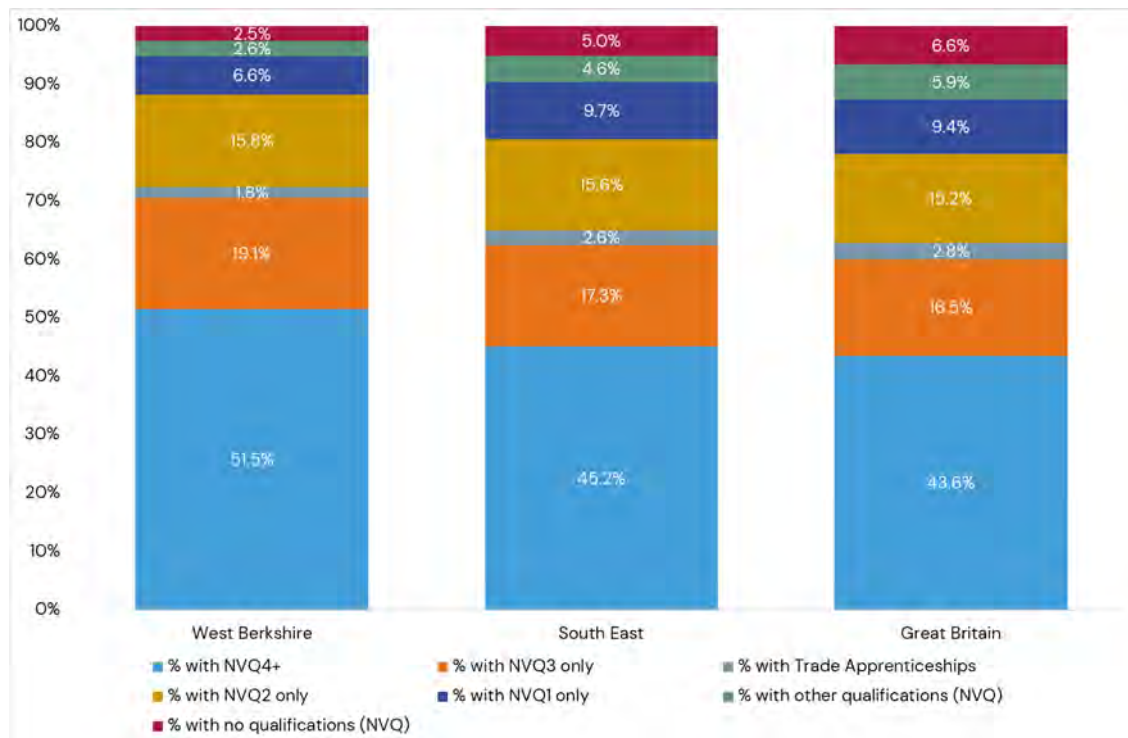


Source: ONS, Claimant Count

Skills Profile

- 2.18. Figure 2.5 shows the skill profile of the working age (16–64) population in West Berkshire, the South East and Great Britain. In West Berkshire, 51.5% of working aged people have a degree level qualification or higher (NVQ4+). This is above the rate seen in the South East (45.2%) and Great Britain (43.6%). A further 19.1% of the working age population in West Berkshire have A-levels or equivalent (NVQ3). This is above the rate in the South East (17.3%) and Great Britain (16.5%). There were 2.5% of working age people in West Berkshire that had no qualifications. This was below the rate in the South East (5%) and Great Britain (6.6%).

Figure 2.5: Skills Profile of Resident Working Age (16-64) Population, January-December 2021



Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey

Commuting

- 2.19. Data from the 2011 Census shows that there were 36,364 people that lived and worked in West Berkshire. There were a further 33,614 people that worked in West Berkshire but lived elsewhere. The top origin destination for people working in West Berkshire were Basingstoke and Deane (7,670), Reading (6,255), Wokingham (2,695) and Wiltshire (2,221).
- 2.20. There were also 28,028 people that lived in West Berkshire and worked elsewhere with the top destinations people were travelling to being Reading (9,199), Basingstoke and Deane (2,744), Wokingham (2,498) and City of Westminster (1,263).
- 2.21. With an inflow of 33,614 commuters and an outflow of 28,028 commuters, there is a net inflow of 5,586 commuters into West Berkshire.

Deprivation

- 2.22. The 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) provides an indication of the average levels of deprivation for Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) across England. The Index provides an overall assessment of the average levels of deprivation as well as an assessment against domains of deprivation. In total, England has 32,844 LSOAs, with 97 in West Berkshire.
- 2.23. The Proposed Development falls within the LSOA West Berkshire 002B, which is ranked 17,592 and placed in the top 50% least deprived LSOAs in England. Looking at the individual domains of deprivation, West Berkshire has its highest level of deprivation for the barriers to housing and services domain where it has a rank of 5,204, placing it in the top 50% most

deprived LSOAs for this indicator. It has its lowest rank in the health domain with a rank of 27,867, putting it in the top 50% least deprived LSOAs for this domain. Table 2.10 shows the rank of each domain in detail.

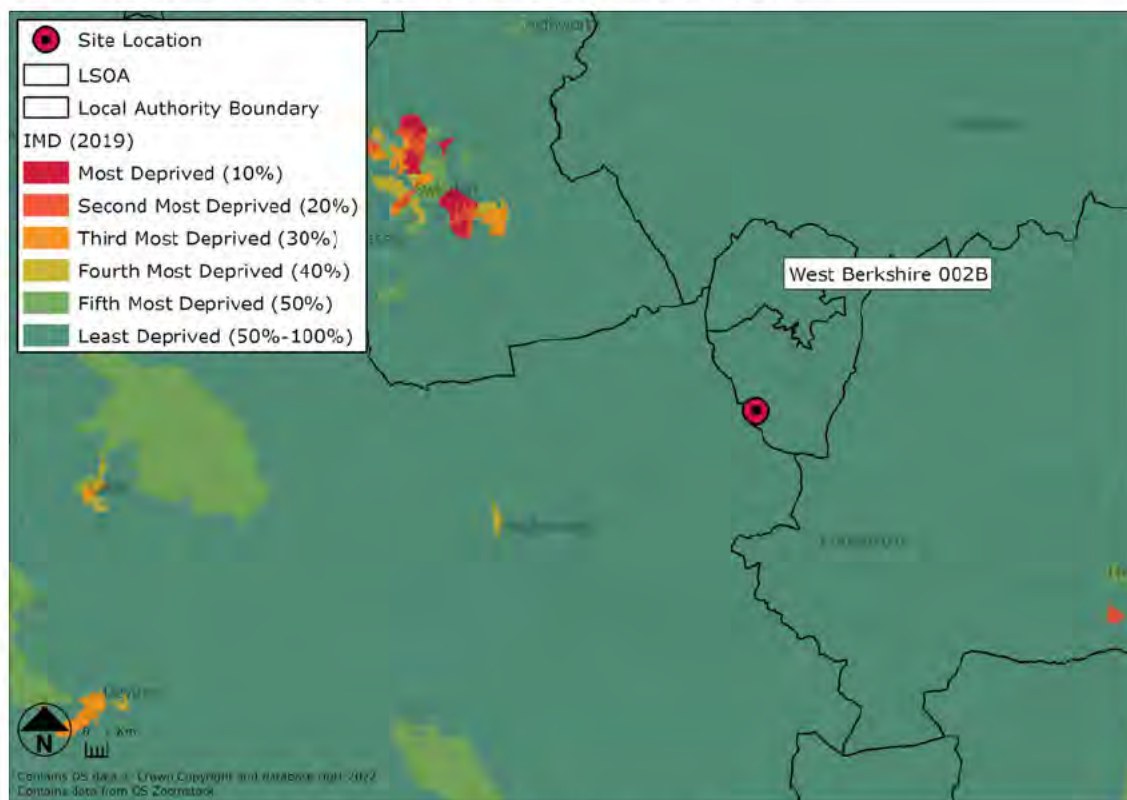
Table 2.10: Index of Multiple Deprivation for West Berkshire 002B

IMD 2019 Domain	West Berkshire 002B Rank (out of 32,844, 1 being the most deprived)
Overall IMD	17,592
Income	18,381
Employment	25,237
Education & Training	11,884
Health	27,867
Crime	12,641
Barriers to Housing and Services	5,204
Living Environment	9,081

Source: Ministry for Housing Communities & Local Government

- 2.24. Figure 2.6 maps the overall level of deprivation in West Berkshire 002B and its neighbouring LSOAs. As can be seen from Figure 2.7, many LSOAs surrounding the site fall within the least deprived 50% of the country. However, there are some pockets of deprivation to the north west of the site with some LSOAs falling into the top 10% and top 20% most deprived LSOAs in the country. The Proposed Development could create job opportunities for people living within these LSOAs.

Figure 2.6: Index of Multiple Deprivation for Site location, 2019



Source: Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government



Summary

UK GDP

- 2.25. In Q4 2022, UK GDP experienced no growth. This follows a decline in GDP of 0.2% in Q3 2022. With high rates of inflation and no growth in the UK economy, it is important that schemes are brought forward across the country to generate new employment opportunities and support long-term economic growth.

Population

- 2.26. Between 2011 and 2021, the population of West Berkshire grew by 5.1% which was below the growth rate seen in the South East (7.4%) and Great Britain (5.9%). This growth was mainly attributable to the number of people aged 65 and over with this age group growing by 33.1% between 2011 and 2021.
- 2.27. Between 2018 and 2039, the ageing population in West Berkshire is projected to increase, with the number of people aged 65 and over projected to increase by 47%. This compares to a projected fall of 16.1% in people aged 0–15 and a fall of 10.6% in people aged 16–64.

Employment

- 2.28. Between 2015 and 2021, employment in West Berkshire declined by 2%, a fall of 2,000 jobs. This compares to jobs growth in the South East and Great Britain of 1.9% and 5.2% respectively. As of 2021, the transport and storage sector accounted for 2.6% of total employment in West Berkshire. This sector declined by 16.7% between 2015 and 2021. The Proposed Development will create employment opportunities during the construction and operational phases of the development, helping bring employment more in line with regional and national averages and help support a declining sector.

Business Count

- 2.29. Between 2012 and 2022, the number of businesses in West Berkshire grew by 5.9%. This was behind the business growth that was seen in the South East (18.5%) and Great Britain (23.7%). In West Berkshire, the majority of businesses (84.6%) were micro businesses that have 0 to 9 employees. This trend was similar in the transport and storage sector with 85.5% of businesses in the sector being micro.

Claimant Count

- 2.30. As of January 2023, the claimant count rate in West Berkshire is 2%. This is currently below the rate seen in the South East (2.8%) and Great Britain (3.6%); however, it is above its pre-pandemic rate of 1.5% in February 2020. The Proposed Development will create new employment opportunities for local people which will help the continued recovery of the labour market following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Skills

- 2.31. In West Berkshire, 51.5% of the working age population had a degree or above qualification. This was above the rate in the South East (45.2%) and Great Britain (43.6%). There were only 2.5% of the working age population in West Berkshire that had no formal qualifications, this was below the rate in the South East (5%) and Great Britain (6.6%).



Commuting

- 2.32. According to the 2011 Census there are 36,364 people that live and work in West Berkshire. There were also 33,614 people that worked in West Berkshire and live elsewhere, with the top origin destinations being Basingstoke and Deane, Reading, Wokingham and Wiltshire. There were a further 28,028 people that live in West Berkshire and work elsewhere with the top destinations for commuters being Reading, Basingstoke and Deane, Wokingham and Westminster. This gives a net inflow of 5,586 into West Berkshire.

Deprivation

- 2.33. The overall IMD rank for West Berkshire 002B was 17,592, putting it in the top 50% least deprived LSOAs in the country. The LSOA had its highest level of deprivation in barriers to housing and services domain with a rank of 5,204 and its lowest level of deprivation in the health domain with a rank of 27,867.

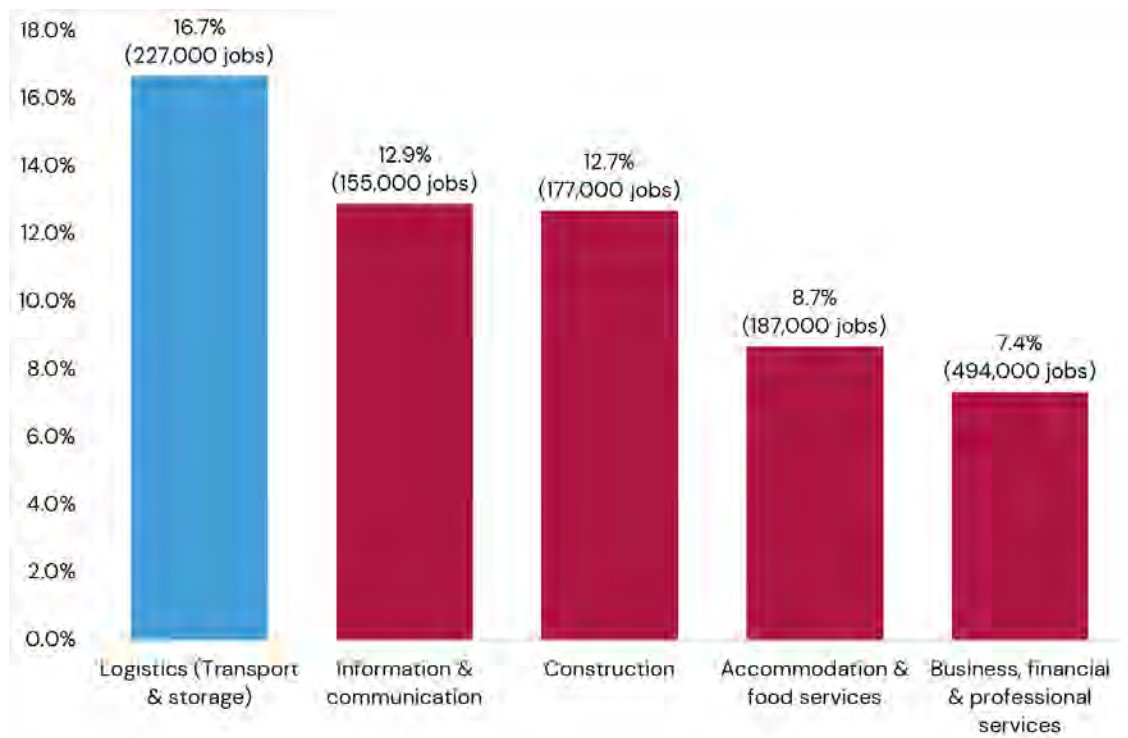
3. The Importance of the Logistics Sector

3.1. The Proposed Development will help an already established logistics company in West Berkshire to grow further. This section looks at the importance of logistics to the national economy.

Contribution of Logistics to the National Economy

3.2. Logistics is one of the largest sectors in the country, directly supporting at least 1.6 million jobs in Great Britain as of 2021³. Between 2015 and 2021 the number of logistics jobs increased nationally by 16.7%, equating to 227,000 new opportunities and making logistics the fastest growing sector in the country in terms of employment (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Top Five Growing Sectors for Jobs in Great Britain, 2015–21



Source: ONS, Business Register & Employment Survey

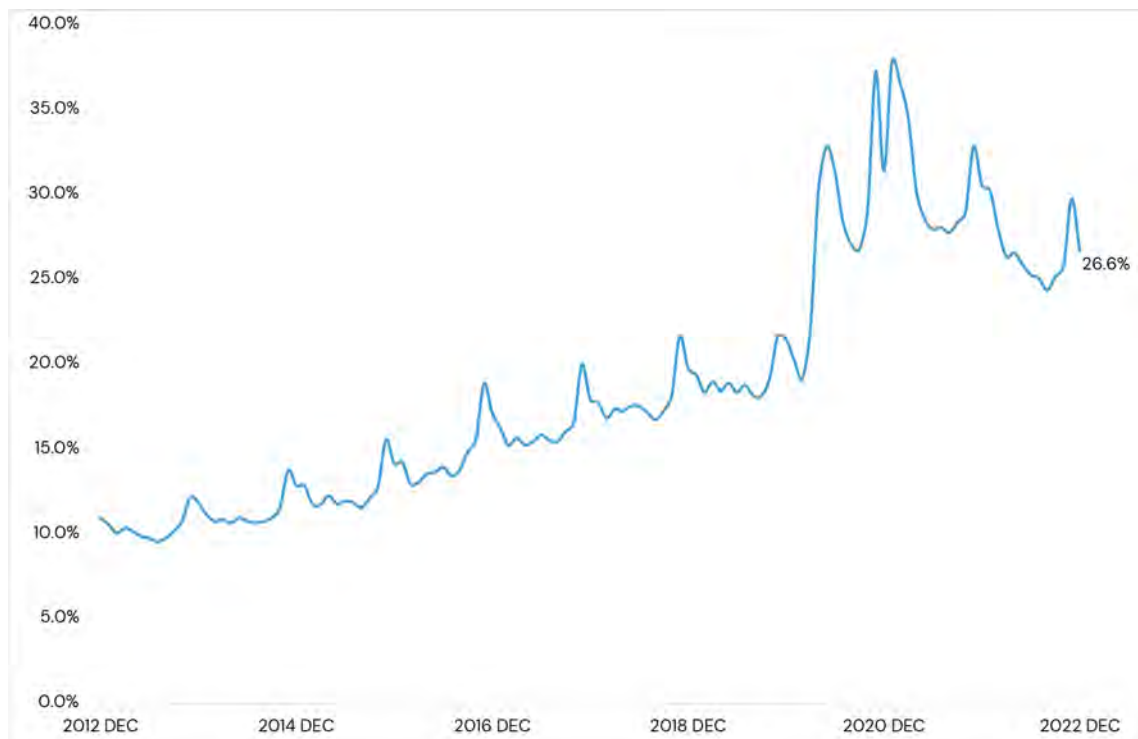
3.3. The sector also makes a significant contribution to economic output, generating an estimated £70.7 billion of gross value added (in 2019 prices) for the UK economy in 2020. The GVA contribution made by logistics has increased significantly over the long-term – by 21.3% (£12.4 billion) since 2010 in current prices.

³ Jobs data sourced from the Office for National Statistics (Business Register & Employment Survey) for the transport & storage sector.

Growth in Online Shopping and its Impact on Logistics

- 3.4. The most recent retail sales analysis published by ONS shows that online sales accounted for 26.6% of all retailing in December 2022. This was up from just 10.9% in December 2012.
- 3.5. To put the rise of online sales into context, Figure 3.2 shows the change in online retail sales as a percentage of total retail sales for the last decade (2012–2022). The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on online retail as between March 2020 and May 2020 during the first national lockdown, online sales increased from 22.1% to 32.8%. This was seen again in November 2020 during a second national lockdown where online sales reached 37.2%. This proportion has decreased as lockdown rules were relaxed; however online sales are still above their pre-pandemic levels at 26.6%. One of the impacts of this rise has been to increase demand for warehousing space across the country.

Figure 3.2: Online Retail as a percentage of Total Retail



Source: ONS

Logistics in the UK

- 3.6. Demand for warehousing space in the UK has increased dramatically in recent years. For example, research by CBRE in October 2022, shows that in 2022 up to Q3, take-up of logistics space was 30.2 million sq. ft⁴. This was above the ten-year full year average of 26.8 million sq. ft. In 2022 Q3 there were a total of 29 deals completed, taking the number of deals for the year-to-date to 109.

⁴ United Kingdom Logistics Market Summary, Q3 2022: CBRE, October 2022.



- 3.7. Productivity in the logistics sector is also projected to increase, with a report from the British Property Federation and Savills⁵ predicting that it will increase by 29% between 2025 and 2029. This compares to a rise of 18% across the UK economy in the same timeframe.
- 3.8. While online retail has been a key driver in the increase in demand for logistics, there have been a number of other factors driving growth in the sector including freight, data centres and near-shoring/re-shoring⁶.
- 3.9. A large contributor to the increase in demand for logistics floorspace has been the Covid-19 pandemic. A change in consumer shopping habits as more people were shopping online as a result of lockdown restrictions, combined with a need for storage space for items such as PPE, has dramatically increased the need for warehousing.
- 3.10. Online food shopping has also increased rapidly during the Covid-19 pandemic. With many people having to isolate or shield, demand for food delivery grew, increasing the need for warehousing space to store food for online orders. There was an increase in online food shopping prior to the pandemic, however when lockdown restrictions were put in place the online grocery sector saw years of growth in the space of a couple of months⁷.
- 3.11. As reported by Reuters⁸, warehousing was having sustained growth before the pandemic with the likes of large companies such as Amazon and smaller businesses wanting warehousing space closer to consumers and areas of growth. This could be further impacted by changes such as Brexit, which has created obstacles for importers and exporters in the form of red tape and increased costs and tariffs as a result of new trading arrangements⁹. These changes could see businesses restructure their supply chains by keeping more stock in the UK close to domestic customers or sourcing materials from local suppliers, further increasing demand for UK logistics floorspace.
- 3.12. An outlook of the logistics market by Cushman and Wakefield¹⁰ reports that this increase in demand for warehousing space is likely to continue into the future for several reasons, which include:

1. Demographics and urbanization

Population growth and economic expansion will lead to increased levels of consumption and alongside the shift to e-commerce there is increasing need for stronger, more resilient, and more diverse supply chains to keep up with demand.

⁵ *Levelling up – the Logic of Logistics*: British Property Federation & Savills, January 2022.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Market Update: United Kingdom Logistics*: CBRE, September 2021.

⁸ *A bigger boom in warehousing on the way? Part 1: Current demand and COVID-19*: Reuters, June 2020. Available at: <https://www.reutersevents.com/supplychain/supply-chain/bigger-boom-warehousing-way-part-1-current-demand-and-covid-19>

⁹ *Scaling New Heights*: Lambert Smith Hampton, March 2021.

¹⁰ *2021 Global Logistics Outlook*: Cushman and Wakefield, May 2021.



2. E-commerce expansion and growth

The increase in online retail and the increasing number of people having access to smart phones has accelerated growth in e-commerce. Many retailers are now looking into reassessing their store networks and how they can grow their logistics capabilities.

3. Trade policies

The recent changes in trade policies resulting from the likes of Brexit and the previous friction between the US and China has resulted in the logistics industry reassessing their supply chains and possibly wanted to move supply closer to domestic customers.

4. Supply change resilience

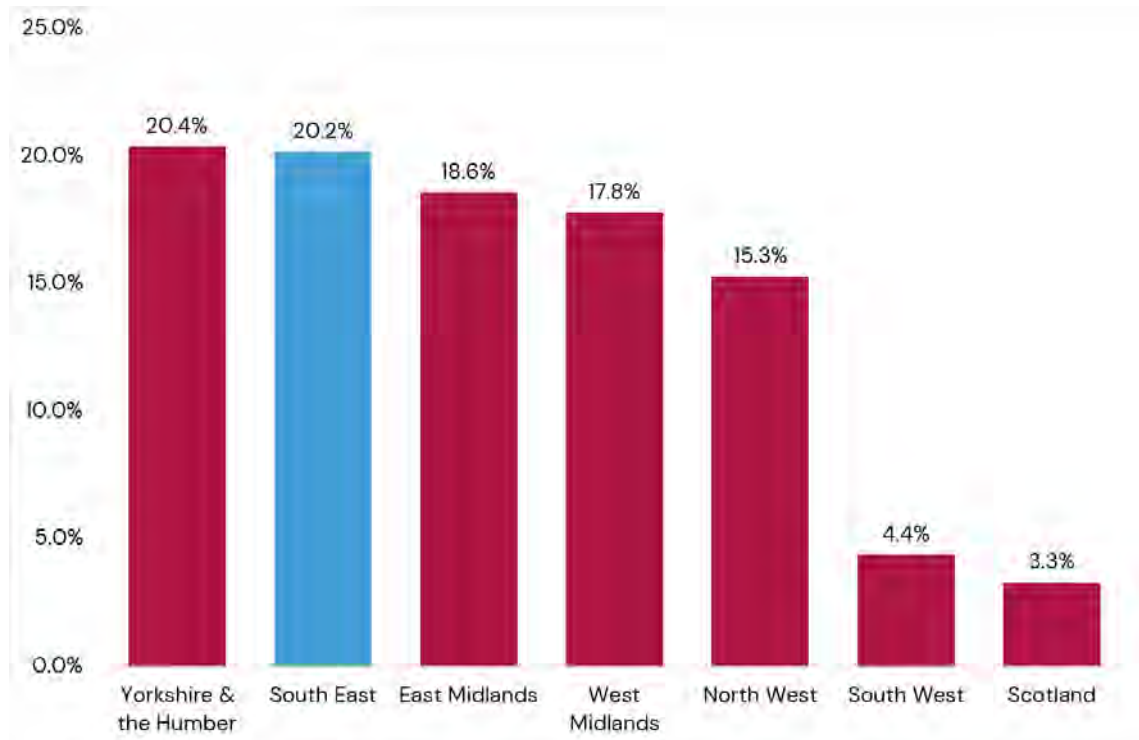
Heightened geopolitical risk, increasing wages, changing trade agreements and Covid-19 have forced companies to reassess their supply chains and are moving to look at sourcing products and raw materials closer to customers and increasing reliance on regional manufacturing. Many suppliers are also likely to increase levels of inventory to protect from supply shocks such as those associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, which will further increase demand for logistics floorspace.

Logistics in the South East

- 3.13. Research by CBRE¹¹ shows that in 2022, the South East had the second highest take up share in the UK at 20.2% (see Figure 3.3) with take up in the region totalling 2.6million sq. ft. in Q4 2022, the largest take up of any region. Total take up in 2022 in the South east reached 7.7million sq. ft.
- 3.14. Availability of space in the East and South East increase 74% year-on-year to reach 5.1million sq. ft., a result of an increase in speculative activity. The vacancy rate in the south east also increased in Q4 2022 to 2.63%, increasing from 1.79% in Q4 2021 driven by an increase in newly complete speculative space.

¹¹ *United Kingdom Logistics Market Summary Q4 2022*: CBRE, January 2023.

Figure 3.3: Logistics Take-up Share by Region, 2022



Source: CBRE, UK Logistics Market Summary Q4 2022

Summary

- 3.15. In summary, logistics is becoming an increasingly important contributor to the UK economy being the fastest growing sector between 2015 and 2021 with employment increasing by 16.7%. The sector also makes a significant contribution to economic output in the UK, generating an estimated £70.7billion in GVA in 2020, a 21.3% increase since 2010.
- 3.16. As of December 2022, online sales accounted for 26.6% of total retail sales. Up from just 10.9% in December 2012. This rise has increased demand for warehousing space with take-up of logistics spaces in Q3 2022 at 30.2 million sq. ft. Take-up of logistics spaces is also high in the South East, with the region having the second highest rate of take up in England.
- 3.17. The Proposed Development will provide additional industrial floorspace in West Berkshire and the South East and support a growing sector within the UK.



4. Review of Local Plan & Employment Land Reviews

- 4.1. This section provides a review of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review, which was published in January 2023 as part of the regulation 19 consultation process. Information is also provided on the Employment Land Review published in 2020 and the Employment Land Review addendum published in 2022 which are used to inform the Local Plan Review.

West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022–2039

- 4.2. The regulation 19 consultation of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review¹² was published in January 2023 and identifies the development that is required to meet local needs until 2039. The review sets out a strategy for distributing development within the District and the policies for protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment and enabling sustainable development.
- 4.3. The vision of the West Berkshire Local Plan is to provide the space and environment for sustainable development, that retain and attract creative and sustainable business growth with training and employment opportunities. West Berkshire Council aim to have a variety of different sectors together with a combination of larger businesses and small and medium-sized enterprises that will ensure a resilient and sustainable economy. This sustainable local economy will help to create benefits for the environment, culture and social well-being.
- 4.4. The West Berkshire Local Plan has 11 strategic objectives, including ensuring sustainable and quality development, economic growth and sufficient delivery of infrastructure. The objectives are outlined below:
- **Sustainable and Quality Development:** to ensure the provision of sustainable developments of high quality design, construction and efficiency which contribute to an attractive, safe and accessible environment for all.
 - **Economy:** to facilitate and support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base across West Berkshire, including the provision of employment land which provides for a range of local job opportunities.
 - **Infrastructure:** to ensure that infrastructure needs arising from the growth in West Berkshire are provided to support and keep pace with development in accordance with the detail set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 4.5. The spatial strategy in the Local Plan sets out the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development across West Berkshire and seeks to deliver the spatial vision and objectives for the District and has been informed by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and other plans and strategies including the West Berkshire Vision 2036, the Environment Strategy 2020–2030, the Employment Land Review, the Retail and

¹² West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022–2039: West Berkshire District Council, January 2023.



Commercial Leisure Assessment and the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.

- 4.6. The NPPF says that Local Plans should provide a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities. The Local Plan should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and plan positively for development and infrastructure in co-operation with neighbouring local authorities.
- 4.7. The spatial strategy of the Local Plan was also informed by the West Berkshire Vision 2036, prepared by the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board which contains five strategic aspirations which are outlined below:
1. A West Berkshire where everybody has what they need to fulfil their potential.
 2. A West Berkshire with a housing mix with something for everyone.
 3. A West Berkshire that welcomes business, enterprise and industry into a productive, growing and dynamic local economy.
 4. A West Berkshire where the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages and backgrounds is good.
 5. A West Berkshire with both beautiful and diverse natural landscapes and a strong cultural offering.
- 4.8. Other strategies and evidence used to inform the spatial strategy are:
- Environmental Strategy 2020-2030 which aims to deliver carbon neutrality in the district by 2030.
 - The local housing need conducted using the standard method from national planning guidance.
 - The Employment Land Review which sets out the provision needed for future business and industrial floorspace in the District.
 - The Retail and Commercial Leisure Assessment which sets out the need for comparison and convenience retail floorspace in West Berkshire.
 - The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) which identifies potential land for development and assesses its suitability for, availability and achievability.
- 4.9. Section seven of the Local Plan Review looks at fostering economic growth and supporting local communities and outlines the Council's strategic approach to employment land. Paragraph 7.8 of the Review states that the provision of industrial space has been consistently strong over recent years and both the trend-based projections and economic forecasts indicate the growth in industrial space up to 2039. With this projected growth, the 2022 Employment Land Review recommends a minimum industrial requirement of 91,109 sq. m. of land to 2039 to meet the identified employment needs.



- 4.10. Policy SP20 of the Local Plan Review outlines how the Council aim to facilitate the growth and forecast change of business development over the plan period through site allocations and by promoting the supply of office and industrial space across the District to meet the identified shortfall. Paragraph 7.11 of the Local Plan Review looks at the location of business development and outlines how West Berkshire seeks to support and build upon its strong and resilient economy through continued business development in sustainable locations. To maintain this strong economy and retain existing businesses and attract new ones into the District the supply of sites and premises of the right quality, size and type in the right location is essential.
- 4.11. Paragraph 7.13 of the Local Plan Review highlights that the industrial market across West Berkshire is performing well, with low vacancy rates and tight supply for smaller units with more demand for larger B8 distribution warehouses near motorway junctions.
- 4.12. Policy SP21 of the Local Plan Review outline the sites allocated for employment land to facilitate the growth and forecast change of industrial land over the plan period to 2039. The sites allocated for employment land is summarised in Table 4.1. The Local Plan allocates 68,781 sq. m. of employment land for industrial space across six sites including part of the Proposed Development in Policy Reference ESA2. As mentioned above, the Employment Land Review in 2022 recommends a minimum requirement of 91,109 sq. m. of industrial employment land up to 2039 to meet the employment needs of the District. Combined, the allocated sites fall 22,328 sq. m. short of the recommended requirements. Part of the Proposed Development (on the airstrip at land west of Ramsbury Road) will deliver a further 21,419 sq. m. of industrial floorspace which would bring the allocated industrial sites in the Local Plan Review almost in line with the recommended requirement of 91,109 sq. m. in the Employment Land Review.

Table 4.1: Sites Allocated for Industrial Employment Land

Policy Reference	Site Name	Approximate Floorspace (sq. m.)	Use
ESA1	Land east of Colthrop Industrial Estate, Thatcham	20,400	B2/B8
ESA2	Land West of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands	10,381	B2/B8
ESA3	Land to the south of Trinity Grain, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands	5,200	E(g)(iii)/B2
ESA4	Beenham Landfill, Pips Way, Beenham	14,000	B2/B8
ESA5	Northway Porsche, Grange Lane, Beenham	6,400	E(g)(iii)/B2
ESA6	Land adjacent to Padworth IWMF, Padworth Lane, Padworth	12,400	B2/B8
Total	-	68,781	-

Source: West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039



Employment Land Review 2020

- 4.13. The West Berkshire District Council Employment Land Review¹³ was published in 2020 and considers the requirements and national policy and how local policy should respond. The study was prepared to achieve the following objectives:
- i) An assessment of future demand for employment floorspace.
 - ii) An assessment of the existing and committed future supply.
 - iii) Identification of a floorspace/land requirement to address unmet need.
- 4.14. To meet these three objectives, a socio-economic baseline of West Berkshire was produced and found that West Berkshire had a strong performing economy. The industrial market is performing well with low vacancy rates and limited supply of smaller units.
- 4.15. The net demand for employment land (generated from employment growth) was derived by comparing projections based on past take-up with economic forecasts, with the latter using a specially developed population and jobs scenario aligned with the Government's Standard Method for housing need. For industrial floorspace, the two approaches closely align.
- 4.16. The net demand figures were converted into gross demand by taking into account the floorspace losses and existing under provision in the market. This gave an overall floorspace requirement for industrial space of 62,000 sq. m.

Employment Land Review 2022

- 4.17. The West Berkshire Employment Land Review¹⁴ that was prepared in 2022 provides an update to the 2020 West Berkshire Employment Land Review and considers the latest forecasts to see if the impact of Covid and Brexit change the findings and recommendations set out in the 2020 Employment Land Review.
- 4.18. The 2022 Employment Land Review uses past trends data for industrial floorspace from the 2020 Employment Land Review and adds in data for 2019/20 to 2021/22. This leaves the average net change in industrial floorspace per annum virtually unchanged at 6,286 sq. m., with all years being positive except 2017/18.
- 4.19. Based on the past trends approach, the gross demand for industrial floorspace between 2022 and 2039 will be 154,976 sq. m., whereas the total supply of industrial floorspace in this time is 63,867 sq. m. This gives an under-supply of 91,109 sq. m. of industrial floorspace which is above the land allocated for employment in the Local Plan.

Employment Background Paper

- 4.20. The Employment Background Paper¹⁵ published in January 2023 explains the approach taken by West Berkshire Council to employment land within the Proposed Submission West

¹³ *West Berkshire District Council Employment Land Review*: Stantec, August 2020.

¹⁴ *West Berkshire Employment Land Review Addendum*: Stantec, December 2022.

¹⁵ *Employment Background Paper*: West Berkshire Council, January 2023.



Berkshire Local Plan Review to 2039. The relevant policies that have been used to inform the West Berkshire Local Plan review include the following:

National Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Local Policy

- West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991–2006.
- West Berkshire Core Strategy (2012).
- Housing Site Allocations DPD.
- Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- Thames Valley Berkshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2015/16–2020/21.
- Recovery and Renewal Plan (2020).
- Berkshire’s Local Industrial Strategy.
- West Berkshire Council Strategy 2019–2023.
- The West Berkshire Vision 2036.
- West Berkshire Council’s Economic Development Strategy.

Summary

- 4.21. The West Berkshire Local Plan review identifies the development that is required to meet local needs in the District up to 2039. The vision of the Local Plan is to provide the space and environment for sustainable development, that retains and attracts creative and sustainable business growth with training and employment opportunities.
- 4.22. The Local Plan allocates 68,781 sq. m. of employment land across six sites. However, the recommended requirement of employment land from the 2022 Employment Land Review is 91,109 sq. m. The allocated land therefore falls short of meeting that recommended requirement.
- 4.23. The proposed expansion of Walker Logistics on the airstrip could deliver a further 21,419 sq. m. of industrial floorspace, which would bring the allocated industrial sites in the Local Plan Review almost in line with the recommended requirement.

5. Construction Phase Benefits

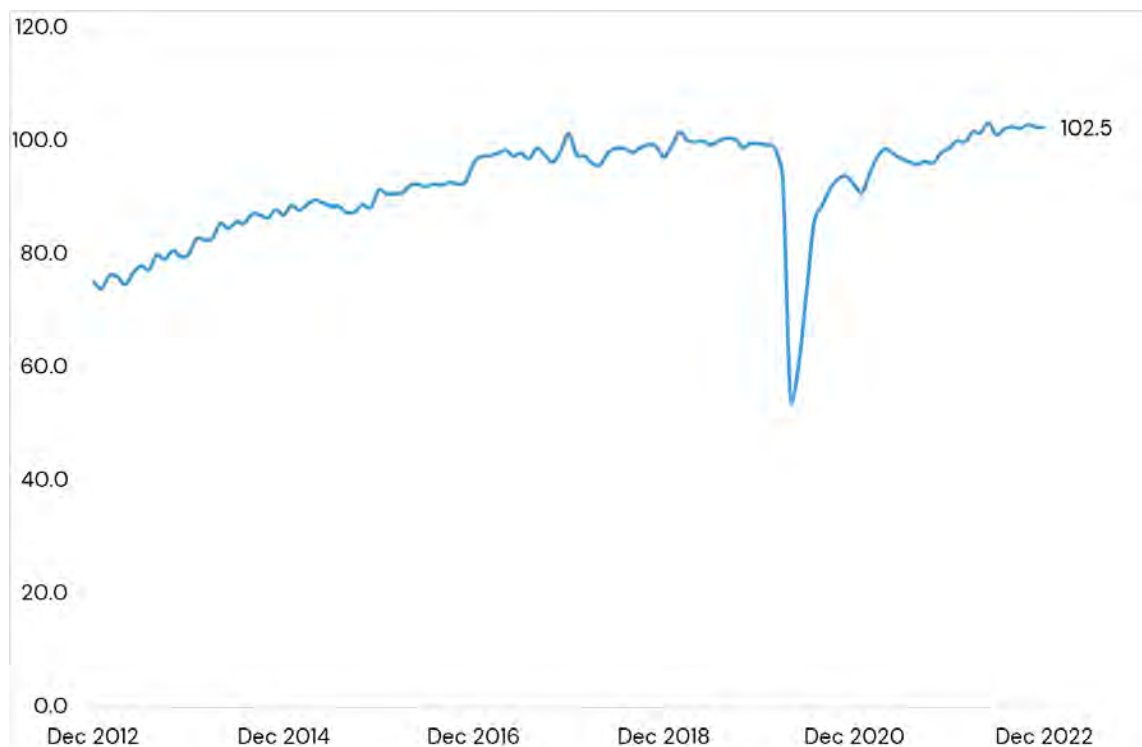
Introduction

- 5.1. Developing the proposed scheme will generate a significant number of jobs in West Berkshire and the wider area during the construction phase. This section presents data on construction output in the UK, alongside the job estimates associated with the construction of the Proposed Development Both on-site jobs and jobs supported in the wider economy via supply chain impacts are presented. It also presents data on the estimated gross value added of the scheme during the build phase.

Construction Output

- 5.2. Data from ONS show that in January 2023 CPI inflation hit 10.1%, a fall of 0.4 percentage points on the previous month. In a time of high inflation and no growth in the UK economy, investment is needed to ensure economic growth. This includes investment in the construction sector.
- 5.3. The construction industry was severely affected by the pandemic, with a sharp decline in construction activity in April 2020 following lockdown restrictions. Construction output experienced no growth between November and December 2022 (see Figure 5.1). This compares to a 0.5 percentage point decline between October and November 2022. The Proposed Development will generate much needed jobs and investment in construction during the build phase.

Figure 5.1: UK Monthly Construction Output Index (2019=100)



Source: ONS



Dakota Building

Employment Impact

- 5.4. To calculate employment supported during the construction phase of the Dakota Building that already has planning permission, costs have been provided by the client and the build phase is estimated at 12-months.
- 5.5. To estimate construction employment supported during the build phase, the total construction cost has been divided by the average turnover per construction employee in the South East of £177,767¹⁶. Over the estimated 12-month build programme, 68 construction jobs could be supported on-site per annum.
- 5.6. It is widely recognised that construction has knock-on effects for other sectors, which leads to increased demand for building materials and equipment at the construction phase, as well as furniture, carpets etc. following completion. This generates and sustains employment in other sectors. This is known as the 'multiplier effect' and analysis published by the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA – now Homes England) indicates that the employment multiplier for construction activities in the UK is 2.7 – i.e. for every construction job created, a further 1.7 jobs are supported in the wider economy. This suggests that as well as the 68 on-site jobs, development could support a further 116 additional jobs during the build phase.
- 5.7. In total, an estimated 185 temporary direct and indirect jobs could be supported per annum during the 12-month build phase.

Contribution to Economic Output

- 5.8. Another way of looking at the economic impact of the construction phase is to calculate the contribution a development makes to wealth creation, as measured by the increase in the value of goods and services generated within an area. This can be done by looking at the increase in gross value added (GVA), a common proxy for economic output. Using ONS data, it is possible to calculate GVA per employee by sector at a regional level. Applying these estimates to the employment estimates outlined above, the construction of the Proposed Development could generate around £12.9million (current prices) of GVA over the 12-month build timeframe.

Development of the Airstrip

Employment Impact

- 5.9. Using the same method as above and construction costs calculated using data sourced from BCIS Online Tool¹⁷. The proposed expansion to the east of the site on the airstrip is estimated to support an estimated 64 construction jobs on-site per annum over the two-year build phase.

¹⁶ Calculated using data for the South East's construction sector from the 2022 edition of Business Population Estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics.

¹⁷ Costs from BCIS Online Tool are exclusive of external works, contingencies, supporting infrastructure, fees, VAT, finance charges etc.



- 5.10. As well as these 64 jobs, a further 109 additional jobs could be supported during the two-year build phase. In total, an estimated 174 temporary direct and indirect jobs could be supported per annum during the two-year build phase¹⁸.

Contribution to Economic Output

- 5.11. To calculate the gross value added generated by the construction of the proposed expansion, the same method as in paragraph 5.8. Applying this to the employment estimates outlined above, around £24.2million (current prices) of GVA could be generated over the two-year build timeframe.

¹⁸ Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.



6. Economic Impact of the Existing Operations of Walker Logistics and the Proposed Expansion

6.1. This section outlines the current economic impact of the existing operations of Walker Logistics and the impact of the Proposed Development (referred to as the Dakota Building) that has planning permission (Dakota Building), along with developing the adjacent airstrip.

6.2. The impact of existing employment and the Proposed Development in terms of generating permanent employment, economic output, wages and business rates is assessed below. Job numbers are presented in two ways:

- **Gross permanent jobs:** total employment accommodated on-site.
- **Additional jobs:** the number of jobs which the scheme can be expected to support in West Berkshire and the surrounding area. This figure takes into account a multiplier taken from the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA – now Homes England) 2014 Additionality Guide.

Existing Walker Logistics Operations

Employment Impact

6.3. Based on information provided by Walker Logistics, the existing employment on-site is comprised of 112 full-time employees and 9 part-time employees. Under the assumption that a part-time employee accounts for half a full time-equivalent (FTE) jobs, there are a total of 117 FTE jobs supported on-site by the existing operations of Walker Logistics. These employees are largely travelling from within West Berkshire and from surrounding local authorities such as Swindon and Wiltshire.

6.4. The on-site jobs will have knock-on effects in the wider economy, which can be accounted for by applying an economic multiplier. Economic multipliers are defined as 'further economic activity (jobs, expenditure or income) associated with additional local income and local supplier purchases'. A multiplier of 1.29 has been used, which is consistent with the HCA guidance.

6.5. Accounting for the multiplier effect outlined above, an estimated 150 FTE jobs are supported on-site and in West Berkshire and the surrounding area by the existing operations of Walker Logistics.

Gross Value Added

6.6. The contribution of the existing operations to economic output has been calculated by taking the existing employment at Walker Logistics and multiplying this by an estimate of average levels of GVA per employee for the regional economy for transport and storage.



Taking into account multiplier effects¹⁹, the GVA supported by existing employment at Walker Logistics is estimated to be around £7.7million per annum.

Business Rates

- 6.7. Based on information provided by the client, existing business rates generated by existing activities are in the region of £0.3million per annum.

Wages

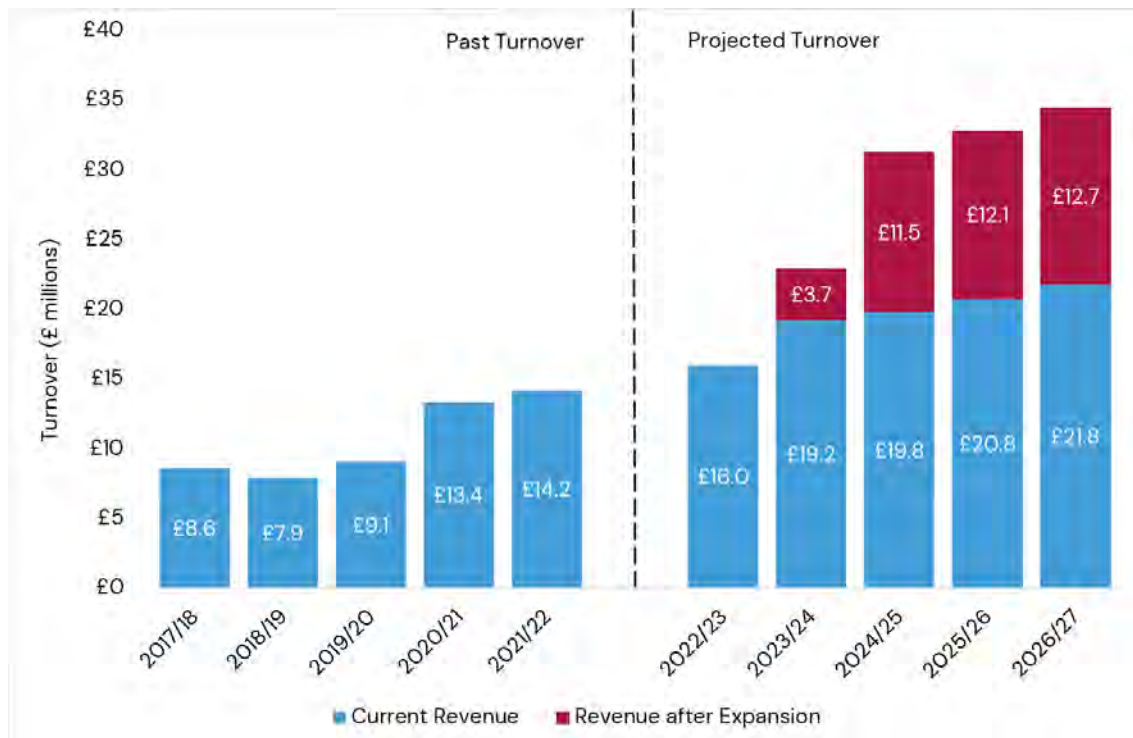
- 6.8. It is a common misconception that jobs in logistics are low skilled and low paid. Data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, published by ONS show that in 2022, the gross median annual salary for full-time workers in the South East in transport and storage jobs (used as a proxy for logistics) was £36,077. This was above the gross median annual salary for all sectors in the South East of £34,432.
- 6.9. The existing wages paid to on-site staff have been calculated by taking the gross FTE jobs supported on-site and multiplying them by the median annual salary for workers in transport and storage in the South East given above. The existing wages paid to on-site staff are estimated to be around £4.2million per annum.

Revenue

- 6.10. Based on information provided by Walker Logistics, the revenue of existing operations of the company in 2017/18 was £8.59million. By 2021/22 turnover from Walker Logistics has increased to £14.2 million (see Figure 6.1). This is projected to increase to £16 million in 2022/23. Assuming the proposed Dakota Building is operational in 2023/24, total revenue for existing operations and those associated with the Dakota Building are projected to be £22.9 million. Revenue is expected to increase year-on-year and is projected to be in the region of £34.5 million in 2026/27 The revenue projections do not account for the development of the proposed expansion on the airstrip.

¹⁹ For the GVA estimate, the same multipliers used are the same as the job multipliers (taken from the HCA 2014 Additionality Guide).

Figure 6.1: Current and Projected Revenue of Walker Logistics, 2017/18 – 2026/27 (£ millions)



Source: Walker Logistics

Dakota Building

- 6.11. The element of the Proposed Development which currently has planning permission consists of 10,381 sq. m. of B8 floorspace and with ancillary office uses.

Employment Impact

- 6.12. The proposed scheme will create permanent employment opportunities once it is built, many of which are likely to prove attractive to residents of West Berkshire. Based on information provided by the client, once fully developed and occupied, it is estimated that the Dakota Building will support 200 gross full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs on-site.
- 6.13. Once allowance is made for the multiplier effect²⁰, it is estimated that the scheme will support 258 additional FTE jobs in West Berkshire and the surrounding area.

Contribution to Economic Output

- 6.14. The contribution of the site to economic output has been calculated the same way as for existing operations. It is estimated that once operational and fully occupied, the additional GVA supported by activities at the Dakota Building is estimated to be around £13.3million

²⁰ For consistency, a multiplier of 1.29 has been applied in line with employment above.



per annum, allowing for multiplier effects²¹. Over a longer period of ten years, the GVA generated could be in the region of £114.2million (present value²²).

Business Rates

- 6.15. High-level calculations indicate that the business rates generated by the scheme could be in the region of £0.3million per annum.

Wages Impact

- 6.16. Multiplying the relevant figures by the gross FTE jobs by the transport and storage wage outlined above, it is estimated that total wages paid to staff on-site could be in the region of £7.2million per annum. It is not unreasonable to assume that a good proportion of these wages will be spent in West Berkshire. This will deliver long-term benefits to the West Berkshire economy, via an increase in spend on goods and services.

Development of Airstrip

- 6.17. Developing the adjacent airstrip could provide up to 21,491 sq. m. of new floorspace for B2/B8 uses. The site could be used by any occupier, not just Walker Logistics.

Employment Impact

- 6.18. Given the development of the airstrip may be used for B2 or B8 uses, a range of jobs is given to account for the different floorspace uses. To quantify jobs, an assumption has been made in terms of the density of employment that would normally be expected for the proposed floorspace type, which in this case would be B2 and B8. This information has been sourced from the Employment Densities Guide (3rd Edition, November 2015), prepared for the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) by Bilfinger GVA. Using this guidance, a density of one job per 77 sq. m of gross external area (GEA) for the B8 floorspace has been used and a density of one job per 36 sq. m gross internal area (GIA) has been used for the B2 floorspace.
- 6.19. Once fully developed and occupied, it is estimated that around 279–567 gross full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs could be supported on-site.
- 6.20. Once allowance is made for the multiplier effect²³, it is estimated that the scheme will support between 360–732 additional FTE jobs in West Berkshire and the surrounding area.

Contribution to Economic Output

- 6.21. Using the same method as above, it is estimated that once operational and fully occupied, the additional GVA supported by is estimated to be between £18.5million and £66.9million

²¹ For the GVA estimate, the same multipliers used are the same as the job multipliers (taken from the HCA 2014 Additionality Guide).

²² Where future benefits are calculated over a 10-year timeframe, they have been discounted to produce a present value. This is the discounted value of a stream of either future costs or benefits. A standard discount rate is used to convert all costs and benefits to present values. Using the Treasury's Green Book, the recommended discount rate is 3.5%.

²³ For consistency, a multiplier of 1.29 has been applied in line with employment above.



per annum, allowing for multiplier effects²⁴. Over a longer period of ten years, the GVA generated could be in the region of £159.4million–£575.7million (present value²⁵).

Business Rates

- 6.22. Given the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) classify B2 and B8 floorspace the same for business rates, the rates generated by the development of the airstrip will be the same for both types of floorspace. High-level calculations indicate that the business rates generated by the scheme could be in the region of £0.6million per annum.

Wages Impact

- 6.23. Multiplying the relevant figures by the gross FTE jobs by the transport and storage wage outlined above and the median annual salary for manufacturing in the south east (£35,735), it is estimated that total wages paid to staff on-site could be between £10million and £20.3million per annum.

Economic impact of current operations of Walker Logistics, the Dakota Building and developing the airstrip

Employment

- 6.24. Once the proposed Dakota Building and the airstrip development are fully built and operational, along with the existing operations of Walker Logistics an estimated 596–884 gross FTEs jobs could be supported on-site.
- 6.25. Accounting for multiplier effects, a total of 768–1,140 FTE jobs could be supported on-site and in West Berkshire and the wider area.

Gross Value Added

- 6.26. The GVA generated from the existing operations at Walker Logistics and the proposed expansion to the site is estimated to be in the region of £39.5million–£87.9million per annum accounting for multiplier effects.

Business Rates

- 6.27. The business rates generated from the proposed expansion to Walker Logistics in combination with existing business rates are estimated to be in the region of £1.1million per annum.

²⁴ For the GVA estimate, the same multipliers used are the same as the job multipliers (taken from the HCA 2014 Additionality Guide).

²⁵ Where future benefits are calculated over a 10-year timeframe, they have been discounted to produce a present value. This is the discounted value of a stream of either future costs or benefits. A standard discount rate is used to convert all costs and benefits to present values. Using the Treasury's Green Book, the recommended discount rate is 3.5%.



Wages

- 6.28. The wages of on-site staff associated with existing operations at Walker Logistics and from the proposed expansion are estimated to be between £21.5million and £31.7million per annum.



7. Occupation and Skills Profile

Introduction

- 7.1. One of the misconceptions about employment in the manufacturing and logistics sectors is that they are low-paid and low-skilled. This section seeks to address the skills issue by looking at the wide range of qualification levels and occupations supported by jobs that will be created by the scheme, and it also highlights how the sectors can help in supporting local communities and skills developments.

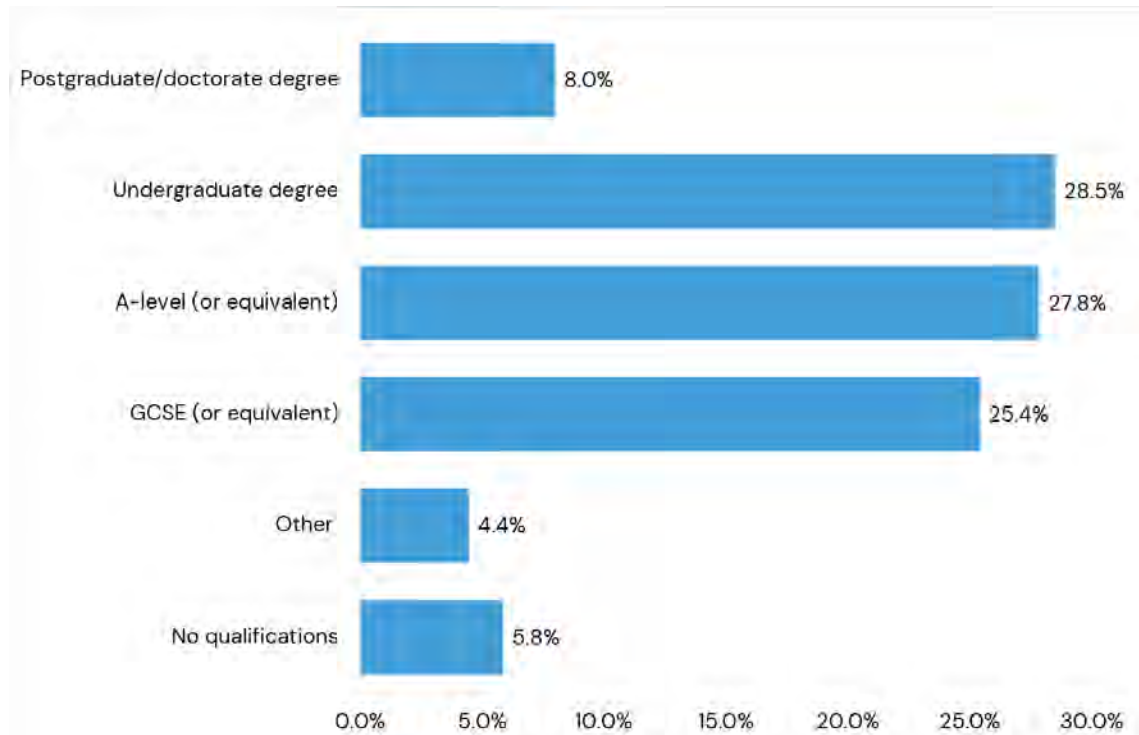
Skills in the Storage and Distribution Sector

- 7.2. As noted in the 2020 report, *Delivering the Goods in 2020*²⁶, a wide range of jobs are supported by the logistics sector. While logistics activities create jobs in elementary occupations, they also create an above average proportion of roles in managerial, administrative and high-tech occupations. The majority of the jobs in logistics are also full-time (85%), above the national average of 32%, according to the report.
- 7.3. The logistics sector is also committed to delivering economic and social impacts, such as upskilling workers through on the job training or working with further and higher education providers to offer qualifications to employees. This will help grow the careers of the workers and improve productivity within the sector.
- 7.4. Figure 7.1 provides an estimate of how the on-site FTE jobs could be broken down by skill level. The approach used to estimate the profile of jobs generated by the development has been to identify the types of employers identified by the Standard Industrial Classification associated with the B2 manufacturing use class and the B8 warehousing use class; and then using official data for the South East²⁷, on the skills mix by industrial sector, to calculate the skills mix associated with the development assuming it matches the profile of the South East.
- 7.5. On the basis set out above, it is expected that the scheme will create a wide range of jobs in terms of skills/qualifications requirements. For example, 8% of jobs could require a postgraduate or doctorate degree, 28.5% will require an undergraduate degree, 27.8% will require A Level or equivalent qualifications, 25.4% will require GCSE or equivalent qualifications, 4.4% will require other qualifications and 5.8% will require no qualifications.

²⁶ *Delivering the Goods in 2020: The economic impact of the UK logistics sector*. British Property Federation, May 2020.

²⁷ Data from the July–September 2022 Quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the South East.

Figure 7.1: Estimated Skills Breakdown of On-Site Jobs²⁸



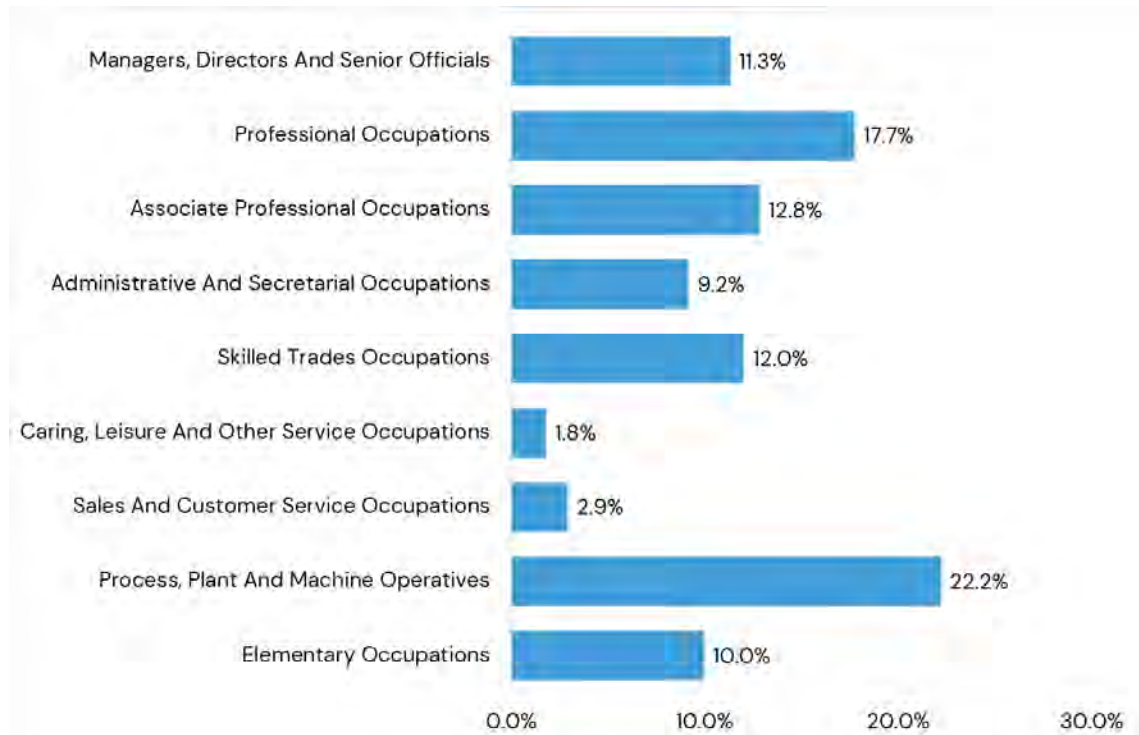
Source: Pegasus Group analysis of ONS Quarterly Labour Force Survey (July–September 2022)

- 7.6. The manufacturing and logistics sectors also provide jobs for a range of occupations. As above, the approach used to estimate the profile of jobs generated by the development has been to identify the types of employers identified by the Standard Industrial Classification associated with the B2 manufacturing use class and the B8 warehousing use class; and then using official data for the South East²⁹, on the occupations mix by industrial sector, to calculate the occupations mix associated with the development assuming it matches the profile of the South East.
- 7.7. Figure 7.2 shows the likely occupation breakdown of jobs generated by the Proposed Development. An estimated 42% of jobs will be in higher value occupations (managers, directors and senior officials, professional occupations and associate professional occupations). There will be a further 12% of jobs in skilled trade occupations and 22.2% in process plants and machine operatives. Figure 7.2 shows the full breakdown of occupations.

²⁸ Note: figure excludes responses of “don’t know”.

²⁹ Data from the July–September 2022 Quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the South East.

Figure 7.2: Estimated Occupations Breakdown of On-site Jobs



Source: Pegasus Group analysis of ONS Quarterly Labour Force Survey (July–September 2022)



8. Contribution to Economic Development Objectives

Introduction

- 8.1. In addition to the quantifiable benefits generated by the Proposed Development, the scheme will make an important contribution to economic development objectives. This section looks at key documents – Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper; Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth; the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership’s (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan; and the West Berkshire Economic Development Strategy – and outlines how the Proposed Development will contribute towards meeting the aims and objectives of these strategic documents.

Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper

- 8.2. In February 2022, the UK Government published their Levelling Up White Paper³⁰. The report outlines how the government plan to ensure opportunities are spread equally across the country and to improve productivity in areas that may be lagging behind. Although a focus of the White Paper is on levelling up areas outside of London and the South East, these areas still need investment to ensure continued economic growth.
- 8.3. The report outlines how investment is being used in the South East to boost living standards, spread opportunity, restore local pride and empower local leaders. Investment has been focussed on boosting productivity, pay, jobs and living standards through improvements to transport and infrastructure that improves everyday life and also through the creation of new local businesses.
- 8.4. To further spread opportunities and improve public services in the South East there has been a focus on kickstart jobs to help young people access training and job opportunities in the local area and to also increase the amount of apprenticeships available to people in the local area.
- 8.5. The Proposed Development will provide further investment to the South East region, ensuring there are new job opportunities and the facilities for new and existing businesses to grow and improve local productivity.

UK Government’s Build Back Better

- 8.6. In March 2021, the UK Government published the Build Back Better³¹ report which outlined a plan to tackle long-term problems to ensure there is economic growth and high quality jobs across the UK following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 8.7. To enable this, the government will build on three core pillars of growth: infrastructure, skills and innovation. The growth achieved will help the government level up the whole of the UK,

³⁰ *Levelling Up the United Kingdom*: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, February 2022.

³¹ *Build Back Better, Our Plan for Growth*: HM Treasury, March 2021.



support the country's transition to net zero and support the government's vision for a global Britain.

- 8.8. The plan places emphasis on the need to support the labour market following the pandemic through job creation and improving the skills of the population. Improving high quality skills and training will drive growth in productivity and ensure employers have access to a highly skilled labour market. To achieve this, private sector investment will be needed alongside the public sector investment. To ensure this private sector investment the right conditions will have to be created to ensure new employment opportunities and economic growth are achieved, both of which will be supported by the Proposed Development.

Thames Valley Berkshire Strategic Economic Plan

- 8.9. The Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) was published in 2014 and covers the period 2015/16 – 2020/21. Although this is now outdated its vision and objectives are still relevant. The vision of the SEP is outlined below:

"By 2021, the vibrancy of our business community will be internationally envied. The ambition and creativity of our established businesses will be energised through strong, knowledge-rich networks. Our workforce will be the lifeblood of our economy: young people will be inspired and older workers valued. Our infrastructure will match the scale of our ambition and potential. And people will choose Thames Valley Berkshire as the place to live and work."

- 8.10. The main priority of the SEP is to secure better access to talented people and bright ideas, and to use both more effectively. The six objectives of the SEP are outlined below:

People

1. Make better use of people already in the workforce.
2. Inspire the next generation and build aspirations and ambition.
3. Ensure that economic potential is not restricted by labour supply.

Ideas

4. Ensure that knowledge is effectively commercialised and grown within Thames Valley Berkshire.
5. Strengthen networks and invest in the "soft wiring" to use ideas better.
6. Make Thames Valley Berkshire's towns genuine hubs in the idea's economy.

West Berkshire Economic Development Strategy

- 8.11. The West Berkshire Economic Development Strategy was refreshed in 2021 and considers the short and long term needs of local people and businesses to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. The vision of the Economic Development Strategy is to recover to pre-pandemic levels as soon as possible and then adapt to the post-Covid 19 environment and emerge stronger than before.



8.12. The four areas of focus for the Economic Development Strategy are people, places, infrastructure and business environment. Some of the actions being taken to achieve the objectives of the strategy are outlined below:

- **Empower everyone to enter the workplace:** Ensure there are no barriers to entry into the workplace, identify critical skills gap in the working population and enhance employability skills of the local population.
- **Put in place employment support for the newly-unemployed and underemployed:** Promote Berkshire Opportunities as a first port of call for the recently unemployed and work with the LEP to influence employers to offer value-added jobs to a wider range of employees.
- **Work with partners to improve careers advice and put employment and skills at the heart of everything we do:** Work with the LEP and Berkshire Growth Hub to develop a 'skills brokerage service' to build resilience within businesses and enhance the provision offered by the Berkshire Careers Hub.
- **Remain business friendly as a council:** Ensure processes are easy to navigate.
- **Foster relationships and create stronger engagement with local businesses:** Enhanced engagement work programme to be developed and establish a West Berkshire Growth Board to develop shared initiatives to promote the area.

8.13. The Proposed Development will support the objectives of the LEPs Strategic Economic Plan and West Berkshire's Economic Development Strategy through creating employment opportunities, improving the skills of the workforce and allowing the growth of existing businesses within West Berkshire.



9. Conclusions

- 9.1. In summary, the Proposed Development will create a number of economic benefits during the build phase and once it is operational. In combination with the existing operations of Walker Logistics, between 596 and 884 FTE jobs could be supported on-site, as well as the generation of additional economic output and business rates revenue.
- 9.2. Jobs in the logistics sector are often thought to be low paid and low skilled, however, in the South East the median annual salary for a job in logistics is above the median wage for all jobs in the South East. Analysis of data from the ONS Quarterly Labour Force Survey (July-September 2022) also shows that jobs in logistics require a variety of skill levels, meaning the job creation associated with the scheme will be for people across the whole qualifications' spectrum.
- 9.3. In addition to the quantifiable benefits generated by the Proposed Development, the scheme will make an important contribution to economic development objectives. This includes the Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper, Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth report, Thames Valley Berkshire Strategic Economic Plan and West Berkshire's Economic Development Strategy. The scheme will also support the growth of a sector recognised by government as playing a critical role in contributing to local employment opportunities.
- 9.4. The Proposed Development will also contribute to the strategic objectives of the regulation 19 consultation of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review. The vision of the West Berkshire Local Plan is to provide the space and environment for sustainable development, that retain and attract creative and sustainable business growth with training and employment opportunities.
- 9.5. The West Berkshire Local Plan Review is proposing to allocate 68,781 sq. m. for industrial employment land over the Local Plan period of 2022-2039. However, the Employment Land Review addendum from 2022 recommends a minimum requirement of 91,109 sq. m. of industrial employment land up to 2039 to meet the needs of the District. Developing the airstrip at land west of Ramsbury Road could deliver a further 21,419 sq. m. of industrial floorspace, which would bring the allocated industrial sites in the Local Plan almost in line with the recommended requirement of 91,109 sq. m. in the Employment Land Review.
- 9.6. From both a quantitative and qualitative perspective, the Proposed Development will therefore make a significant contribution to supporting long-term sustainable economic growth in West Berkshire and the wider South East region. Significantly, developing the airstrip will help meet the current shortfall of industrial employment land.

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SCHEDULE OF APPROXIMATE AREAS									
Job name: Airfield site Option 2									
UHR	Ground sq.m	OEa	First sq.m	OEa	OEa total	% AT 1ST FLOOR	CARS	Parking ratio	
1	3420	36813	378	4069	3798	42882	10	76	50
2	3420	36813	378	4069	3798	42882	10	76	50
3	1426	15349	144	1550	1570	16899	9	21	75
4	1978	21291	189	2034	2187	23326	9	40	54
5	1702	18320	169	2034	1891	20365	10	30	63
6	1702	18320	169	2034	1891	20365	10	32	69
7	925	9967	99	1096	1024	11022	10	20	51
8	925	9967	99	1096	1024	11022	10	20	51
9	310	3337	120	1292	430	4629	28	9	48
10	232	2497	90	969	322	3466	28	6	54
11	232	2497	90	969	322	3466	28	6	54
12	232	2497	90	969	322	3466	28	6	54
13	232	2497	90	969	322	3466	28	6	54
14	711	7653	90	969	801	8522	11	12	67
15	426	4585	90	969	516	5554	17	10	52
16	426	4585	90	969	516	5554	17	10	52
17	687	7356	90	969	777	8354	12	18	49
GRAND TOTAL	18896	204305	2020	26664	21491	231329		390	54

Developable Site Area: 51819 m² 12.805 Acres
 Site Coverage: 36.64%
 Site Density: 41.47%
 Parking bays shown at 5x2.5m



KEY

- Airfield site boundary
- Landscape buffer zone
- Electrical cable route

Rev | Description | Date

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Project Title: **MEMBURY FIELD**

Drawing Title: **AIRFIELD SITE PLAN OPTION2**

Drawing Status: **PRELIMINARY**

Scale: 0 10 metres 80

Drawn By: E D | Scale: 1:1000 @ A0 | Date: 01/09/2022 | Check By: M T

Drawing No: **22021 - SK - 103** | Rev: -

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Landscape Impact Justification for Extended Local Plan Allocation at Membury Business Park

**Representations to West Berkshire Local Plan Review to
2037 Consultation (December 2020 – February 2021) –
Regulation 18 Consultation**

On behalf of Walker Logistics Ltd.
Date: 01st September 2022 | Pegasus Ref: P16-0633EN



Document Management.

Version	Date	Author	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for revision
v0	31/08/2022	RCH	RCH	~
v1	01/09/2022	RCH	KM	Internal review



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2. Visual Amenity, Landscape Character and AONB Landscape.....	2
3. Summary.....	5

Appendices contents.

Appendix 1: 'Airfield Site Plan Option 1' by Cornish Architects

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Environment Team at Pegasus Group have been commissioned by Walker Logistics Ltd. to prepare this 'Landscape Impact Justification for Extended Local Plan Allocation at Membury Business Park'. This is to inform discussions with Planning Policy Officers at West Berkshire (meeting on 13th September 2022), in respect of the Emerging Draft of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review (LPR) and proposed masterplan prepared on behalf of Walker Logistics Ltd (see Plate 1 and Appendix 1).



Plate 1 Extract from a plan by Cornish Architects, see Appendix 1.

- 1.2. The Draft LPR, under its emerging Policy SP 21 'Sites allocated for economic development Extensions to Designated Employment Areas for industrial, storage and distribution uses', proposes to extend the existing 'Designated Employment Area' (DEA) at 'Land West of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands' EMP5.
- 1.3. The Council has not published the updated Policies Map associated with this Regulation 18 consultation. However, it is understood following discussions with Planning Policy Officers that the extent of the draft allocation of EMP5 is likely to reflect the proposed developable area of the site as promoted under 'Call for Sites' (see Plate 2).
- 1.4. The emerging allocation of EMP5 lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The West Berkshire District Council Employment Land Review (August 202) published as part of evidence base to the emerging LPR, states that the

extension of the boundary at Membury Estate, i.e., the proposed draft allocation of EMP5 **"...would need to be considered in the context of the AONB designation"**. This Landscape Impact Justification relates to this emerging allocation of EMP5 and discusses it in the context of visual and landscape character issues and North Wessex Downs AONB.

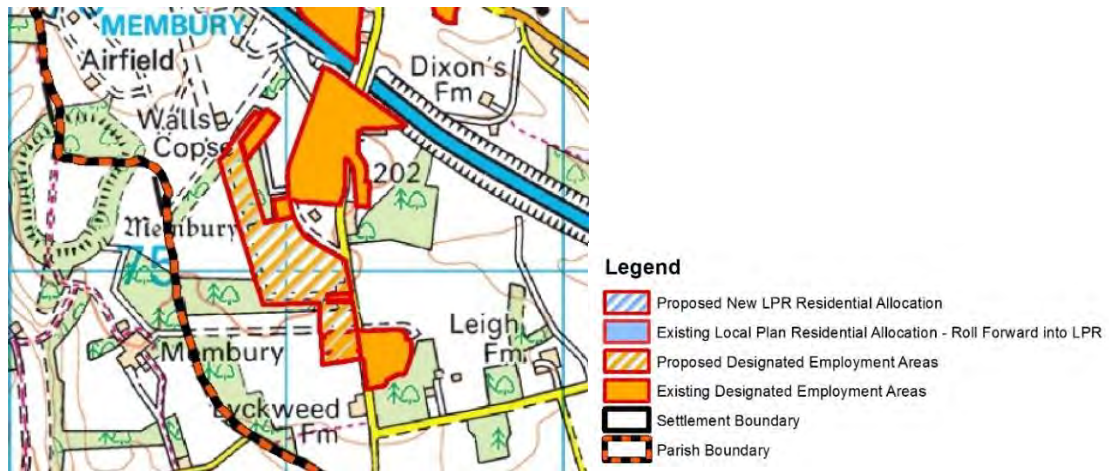


Plate 2 Possible Extent of Site Allocation EMP5.

2. Visual Amenity, Landscape Character and AONB Landscape

- 2.1. It is important to state that the emerging allocation of EMP5 forms a natural and logical extension to the existing business premises of Walker Logistics Ltd. accessed from Ramsbury Road to the south east and Membury Industrial Estate to the north. Most importantly the eastern part of the emerging allocation site EMP5 coincides with the approved planning permission 19/02979/OUTMAJ and recently submitted Reserved Matters Application 22/00897/RESMAJ – Land South Of Tower Works, Lambourn Woodlands. These two applications have been taken into account and incorporated into the currently proposed masterplan prepared on behalf of Walker Logistics Ltd (see Plate 1 and Appendix 1).
- 2.2. The draft allocation site EMP5, and by extension the 19/02979/OUTMAJ site, was subject to a landscape sensitivity assessment prepared by Liz Allen EPLA on behalf of West Berkshire Council – ‘Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment for sites within West Berkshire’ September 2021 (referred to as ‘the Assessment’). The parcel of land, known as LAM6 Site¹ was assessed as having a medium visual sensitivity and medium landscape sensitivity.
- 2.3. Contrary to the published Assessment, the draft allocation EMP5 is considered to have very limited visual relationship and inter-visibility with the surrounding and adjacent areas and indeed wider AONB landscape. The surrounding blocks of woodland and tree belts create a sense of highly compartmentalised landscape. Views from Ramsbury Road are very limited, fleeting and highly localised, which suggest lower visual sensitivity. In addition, apart from road users and people at work at the existing business premises, the additional areas

¹ <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=51532&p=0>



proposed for allocations, beyond the already developed areas or the consented site, are not visible from any of the nearby Public Rights of Ways (PRoWs) as evidenced in the Landscape and Visual Appraisal submitted as part of the approved application 19/O2979/OUTMAJ. Furthermore, where views are gained from Ramsbury Road these are very short range and are influenced by perimeter palisade fencing, various built form within the existing employment site, vehicular access into business premises, and grain silos, which are seen in isolation and without any wider landscape context when looking west. This conclusion is also supported by the photographic evidence included in the Council's published Assessment.

- 2.4. The approved application 19/O2979/OUTMAJ established that the eastern edge of LAM6 Site along Ramsbury Road, would be enclosed by a substantial landscape buffer. This is confirmed and detailed in the recently submitted Reserved Matters Application 22/OO897/RESMAJ, which indicates native hedgerows along Ramsbury Road, woodland scale trees set within open grassland to retain the sense of openness, with native thickets and native woodland planting compartmentalising the area, screening views in and out, and responding to the wooded character of the AONB landscape. Any inter-visibility between the draft allocation site EMP5 and landscape to the east that may be currently experienced is temporary and the introduced change has been accepted by the Council. It is also important to stress that any views from the east would be gained by road users travelling along minor roads with views fleeting and glimpsed, as there are no PRoWs that would offer views of LAM6 Site / draft allocation EMP5.
- 2.5. With regard to the views from the west, the published Assessment states that ***"Part of the western part of the site would be visible from the Scheduled Monument (Iron Age hillfort) located further to the west"*** yet at the same time recognises that the site would not be visible ***"...from the Public Right of Way which straddles the hillfort."*** Except for the aforementioned Public Footpath, the hillfort – Membury Camp is not covered by any Open Access Land arrangement or any other designations that would allow public access across the scheduled monument. The Camp is enclosed by a circular belt of trees and understorey vegetation clearly evident on OS Explorer map 1:25,000 and aerial images with views out towards the draft allocation EMP5 site not available. The LVIA submitted as part of the now approved application 19/O2979/OUTMAJ provided photographic evidence of the existing screening. Therefore, it is clear that the draft allocation site EMP5 does not have any visual relationship with the surrounding AONB landscape or the Membury Camp scheduled monument.
- 2.6. As part of the visual sensitivity analysis, the published Assessment included a number of other criteria such as: skyline, panoramic views, landmark features, and assessed them as not relevant due to the enclosed character of LAM6 Site. It is also important to recognise that visual receptors that gain views of some parts of the draft allocation EMP5 are those travelling along minor roads rather than PRoW users, with views already terminating on belts of trees and built form associated with the existing premises of Walker Logistics Ltd and other nearby businesses located west of Ramsbury Road.
- 2.7. Therefore, it follows that LAM6 Site and draft allocation EMP5 site are of low visual sensitivity.
- 2.8. It is considered that the currently proposed generous woodland buffer located on the western edge of the draft allocation site EMP5 (see Plate 1 and Appendix 1) would perform the same function and be as effective in screening views in and out, as the currently



present maturing woodland that marks the edge of the main north to south landing strip. Given its size it would offset any tree removal potentially caused by development should the draft site EMP5 be allocated, and is likely to bring net gain in the tree and woodland resource.

- 2.9. Given the existing landscape context, and lack of high sensitivity receptors in the locale that would gain views of the undeveloped part of the draft allocation EMP5, given lack of inter-visibility with the publicly accessible locations within the Membury Camp scheduled monument, and when considered in the context of the approved outline application 19/O2979/OUTMAJ and proposed landscape buffer, the draft allocation EMP5 site is considered to be inconsequential in visual terms. The allocation of the EMP5 site within the Emerging Draft of the LPR would not cause any undue harm to the visual amenity or appreciation of the AONB landscape, that cannot be mitigated against.
- 2.10. With regard to the landscape character issues the local AONB landscape has certain characteristics that suggest the local area is of medium sensitivity. The draft allocation site EMP5, however, is strongly influenced by the existing premises and activities at Membury Industrial Estate, Ady Godwin Car Body Repairs, and Walker Logistics Ltd to the east of Ramsbury Road, and is considered to have a low sensitivity.
- 2.11. It is important to note at the outset that the Council's published Assessment considered the eastern part of the site, between the main Membury Industrial Estate and existing Walker Logistics Ltd premises, to have an open and undeveloped character. This area, however, is now subject to approved outline application 19/O2979/OUTMAJ thus the Assessment does not represent the correct landscape character baseline.
- 2.12. The southern and western boundary of the site EMP5 are enclosed by belts of trees, which segregate the additional areas proposed for allocation from the adjacent and indeed wider AONB landscape. The redundant airfield, still evident due to the alignment of tree vegetation is not a heritage asset or locally listed feature. The published Assessment recognises that **"The airfield would have originally been in conflict with this landscape pattern, however the tree belts planted over the last 30 years have integrated the area into the wider partly wooded landscape."** The effectiveness of this screening is evident in situ with views in and out of the emerging allocation site EMP5 not available; or only gained from its currently open eastern edge along Ramsbury Road – which is subject to planting as part of the approved outline application 19/O2979/OUTMAJ.
- 2.13. The current open grassland in the western part of the draft allocation site EMP5 is not considered to have any special or visual relationship with the local landscape. Whilst the grassland present on site represents a typical land cover of the local area, it also falls within the landscape that had been altered in the early 1940s, when the airfield was constructed. None of the historic field boundaries are present or evident within the site, being removed and obscured by the concrete landing strips and strongly linear tree belts.
- 2.14. The published Assessment recognises that **"...areas of woodland/tree belts within the site are part of the landscape character of the AONB..."** thus it follows that additional areas of woodland planting would be in keeping with the character of the AONB landscape. As stated previously, the currently proposed masterplan by Walker Logistics Ltd (see Plate 1 and Appendix 1) for the draft allocation site EMP5 includes a generous woodland buffer to the west of the allocation site. The proposed woodland would terminate along the western edge of the former airfield, linking visually and functionally with the existing belt of trees



that follows one of the runways. This planting would help disintegrate the still evident layout of the former airfield and considerably reduce its influence over the local landscape. Whilst some harm will occur due to additional areas of allocation and potential built form, and removal of the existing maturing woodland along the western edge of the site, the development within the allocation site would not manifest itself in the AONB landscape, given the existing and proposed mitigation planting. The draft allocation site EMP5 falls within the already transformed landscape of the former airfield and the hardstanding of the southern runway could be utilised as building platforms – as illustrated on the proposed masterplan (see Plate 1 and Appendix 1).

- 2.15. In summary, the allocation of site EMP5 for further employment uses would cause only limited harm to the AONB landscape, given the existing context and its strongly compartmentalised character locally. The allocation site EMP5 provides opportunities for further mitigation planting that would have the ability to cloak the layout of the former airfield, reduce its influence over the local landscape, and help integrate the overall site within the landscape. This has been recognised in the Council's published Assessment, which states:

“Opportunities to propose substantial areas of tree and woodland planting as part of mitigation measures would not be out of character. These areas of woodland would in time help to integrate and screen any proposed development as well enhancing the area.” (...)

“Potential to enhance woodland character of the area (...) New mitigation measures therefore could bring enhancements to this area of the AONB.” (...)

3. Summary

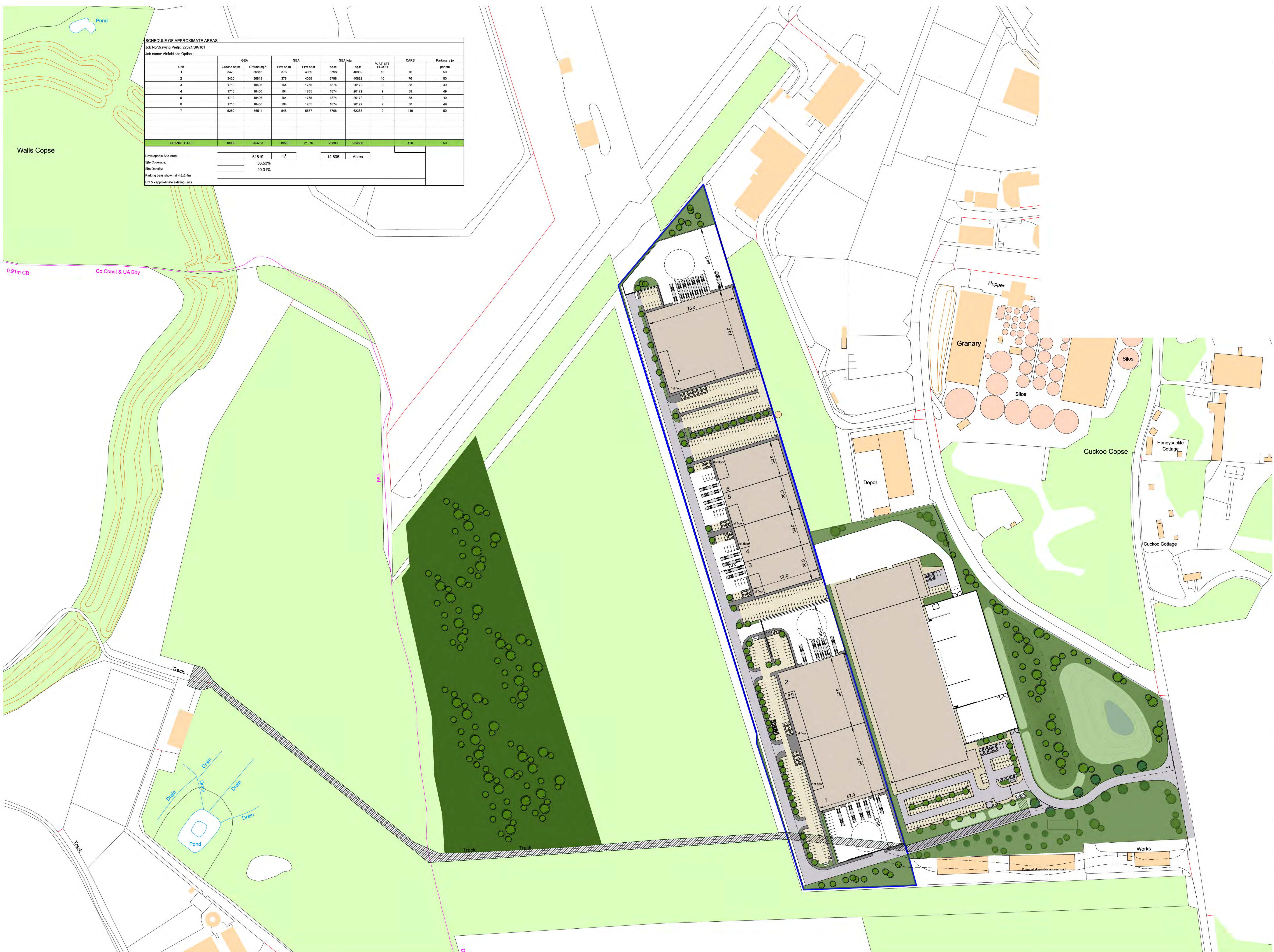
- 3.1. This Landscape Impact Justification for Extended Local Plan Allocation at Membury Business Park' has been prepared in support of the continuing site promotion on behalf of Walkers Logistics Ltd in relation to the draft allocation site EMP5, proposed by the Council as part of the Emerging Draft of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review.
- 3.2. It demonstrates that the draft allocation site EMP5 would not bring any undue harm to the visual amenity or landscape character of the AONB, utilises landscape that has already been transformed and is influenced by the existing facilities nearby, and is well enclosed and integrated into the receiving landscape.



Appendix 1: 'Airfield Site Plan Option 1' by Cornish Architects

SCHEDULE OF APPROXIMATE AREAS
 Job No: Drawing Title: 22021/09/101
 Job name: Airfield site Option 1

Unit	GEA		GEA		GEA		% AT 1ST FLOOR	CARS	Parking ratio per sqm
	Ground sq.m	First sq.m	sq.m	sq.ft	sq.m	sq.ft			
1	3420	36813	378	4059	3798	40862	10	76	50
2	3420	36813	378	4059	3798	40862	10	76	50
3	1710	18406	164	1765	1874	20172	9	38	49
4	1710	18406	164	1765	1874	20172	9	38	49
5	1710	18406	164	1765	1874	20172	9	38	49
6	1710	18406	164	1765	1874	20172	9	38	49
7	5250	56511	549	5877	5795	62388	9	116	50
GRAND TOTAL									
Developable Site Area: 51819 m ² 12.805 Acres									
Site Coverage: 36.53%									
Site Density: 40.31%									
Parking bays shown at 4.8x2.4m									
Unit 5 - approximate existing units									



KEY

- Airfield site boundary
- Landscape buffer zone
- Electrical cable route

Rev | Description | Chk | Date

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RIBA **cornisharchitects**
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Project Title: **MEMBURY FIELD**

Drawing Title: **AIRFIELD SITE PLAN OPTION1**

Drawing Status: **PRELIMINARY**

Scale: 0 10 metres 80

Drawn By: E D | Scale: A0 | Date: 10/08/2022 | Chk'd By: N T

Drawing No: **22021 - SK - 101** | Rev: -

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