

Provision of Employment Land and Premises

Employment Land Requirements

Employment land should be provided to meet the needs of all employment uses – offices, research and development, light/general industrial and storage/distribution. These uses have varying land requirements. Research comprised within the evidence base identifies that office occupiers are increasingly seeking city centre locations, research and development occupiers often require sites with close links to the universities whilst industrial and storage/distribution occupiers prefer sites which have good access to the strategic highway network and are not constrained by their proximity to neighbouring sensitive land uses such as housing. Sites of varying size are also required to meet the needs of both large and small businesses.

The level of employment sites and premises required over the plan period will be driven by a range of factors. GL Hearn forecast that the housing growth proposed for the plan period will increase the city's labour force by 25,200 generating a gross employment land need for the plan period of 107ha. This figure includes a 58ha 5-year supply margin (see below).

However, in addition to this, regard also needs to be had to the pivotal role of the city in the CWLEP's ambitious growth strategy for the wider sub-region. As a consequence, GL Hearn have also provided employment land demand forecasts based on recent/predicted strong performance in the three key growth sectors of financial and professional services, advanced manufacturing/engineering and logistics/distribution. Overall this forecast generates a gross need, including the 58ha 5-year supply margin (see below), for between 205 and 215ha of employment land for B Class occupiers during the Plan period 2011-2031.

GL Hearn have also provided employment land requirement figures based on the projection of past completions in respect of employment land development within the city. These projections generate need of between 210 and 231ha. The 210ha figure is based on completions over the last 10 years of 10.5ha per annum on average whilst the 231ha figure is based on average annual completions over the last 15 years of 11.6ha per annum.

Overall GL Hearn recommend that a gross employment land need of around 215ha (including the 58ha 5-year supply margin) is provided for in respect of the Plan period 2011-2031.

In order to ensure that a sufficient portfolio of employment land is available to those occupiers seeking new premises at all times throughout the plan period it is considered that a minimum reservoir of land needs to be maintained. As stated above, average completions over the last 15 years in Coventry amount to 11.6ha per annum and therefore GL Hearn recommend a 5 year 'margin' of around 58ha. This also broadly aligns with

total employment land needs for the city when it is disaggregated into 5-year blocks over the 20-year plan period.

In terms of the Coventry & Warwickshire LEP area as a whole the recent CBRE employment land use study undertaken for the CWLEP recommends that between 500 and 660ha of employment land is required up to 2031 across the sub-region in order to meet envisaged demand. They further recommend that for the purposes of planning that sites be identified that can achieve the higher end of this range. The city's employment land supply contributes towards achieving this level of growth. Work through the DtC has sought to ensure that the full level of employment land needs identified through the LEP study and local authority assessments are fully aligned with the housing needs of the sub-region.

Furthermore, consideration must also be given to other qualitative factors in determining employment land requirements. In this regard GL Hearn report that there is a considerable shortfall in the amount of B8 sites coming forward. There is also evidence of limited availability of larger plots for manufacturing activities and a need to identify land for B1 offices and research & development uses. There also remains existing capacity in relation to the city and sub-regional population/jobs growth balance as well as the promotion of above trend reductions in unemployment and deprived households (in Coventry especially) to facilitate the provision of additional employment land within the city.

With this in mind, around 64ha of industrial land across the city is identified in the city's SHLAA as potentially suitable for new housing, whilst since the start of the plan period in 2011 around 90ha of employment land on sites of over 1 hectare in size have been granted planning permission, are under construction or have been redeveloped for non-employment uses due to factors which constrain the continued use of this land for employment purposes. Therefore, overall the city's existing employment land portfolio is likely to be depleted by around 154ha during the plan period. This does not reflect a lack of employment land need or demand but reflects the locational and qualitative issues with the city's existing employment land provisions. As such, it is necessary to ensure that alternative employment sites are provided to compensate for such loss by providing high quality sites which are attractive to the market.

When considering growth needs and qualitative replacements as a whole the city's employment land requirement is 369ha

Employment Land Supply

The city's employment land supply to satisfy the above-mentioned employment land requirement comprises a number of components.

These comprise firstly completions to date during the early part of the plan period during the financial years of 2011/2012 to 2015/2016. Such completions include those at the Ansty Park and Pro-Logis Ryton sites within Rugby Borough Council's administrative area

because these sites lie adjacent to the city's boundary and are therefore considered to form part of the city's employment land supply. Employment land completions for this period total a little over 70ha comprising 26ha of completions on land within the city's administrative area, 30ha at Pro-Logis Ryton and 14ha at Ansty.

The next supply components comprise extant planning permissions for employment development and sites under construction. Some of the proposed employment allocations in Policy JE2 (or part thereof) also benefit from extant permissions and therefore these have been excluded from these components to avoid double counting as allocations also form part of the city's employment land supply. Bearing in mind the above, land with extant permission for B class employment uses totals 70ha comprising 17ha of land within the city's administrative boundary, 27ha at Pro-logis Ryton and 26ha at Ansty.

Finally, proposed employment land allocations comprise part of the city's employment land supply. In determining which land to allocate for employment use, regard has been given to the broad requirements, as identified above, of the different types and size of employment land occupiers. Existing employment sites with extant permissions which have substantial areas of remaining land have also been assessed. Consideration has also been given to more localised factors in determining where employment land can be allocated which has the greatest potential to generate economic growth through clustering linkages with key existing employment occupiers and proposed regional economic growth initiatives.

Bearing in mind all the above it proposed to allocate 8 sites for employment development which in total amount to 107ha.

Firstly, 7ha of previously developed land at Friargate in Coventry city centre are allocated for B1 office development as part of an office led mixed-use redevelopment which already has planning permission. The Friargate site occupies a highly accessible location adjacent to Coventry Railway Station and is identified in the City Centre Area Action Plan as a new business district for the city centre.

The 23.5ha previously developed Lyons Park site at Coundon Wedge Drive in the north west of the city is allocated for a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses in accordance with the extant planning permission covering this site. Construction of 5 industrial/warehouse units on 4.5ha of the site has now been completed. The remaining 19ha of the site either remains undeveloped or has commenced development in early 2017 so is subject to the allocation figure in Policy JE2.

30ha of Greenfield land at Whitley Business Park in the south east of the city are also allocated for a mix of research and development, industrial and storage/distribution uses (B1, B2 and B8) in accordance with previous planning approvals for employment development on this site. The site occupies a key location adjacent to the world headquarters of Jaguar Land Rover at Whitley. The site also lies adjacent to the A45/A46 strategic highway network. Whitley Business Park was allocated as an employment site in the 2001 Coventry Development Plan but has remained undeveloped for many years

with access problems in particular being cited as a constraint to the site's development. However, the attractiveness of the site to occupiers has recently been enhanced by highway improvement works comprising a new vehicle bridge and slip roads which have significantly improved access. Detailed planning approval has recently been granted for a large B8 unit on 12ha of the site with a further 9ha of the site expected to contribute towards the growth aspirations of JLR in association with the land at Whitley South (in Warwick District).

A further 25ha of Greenfield land is allocated at Baginton Fields and South East of Whitley Business Park through removal of land from the Green Belt. It is anticipated that this site will provide further employment land for research and development, industrial and storage/distribution (B1, B2 & B8) occupiers seeking a location immediately adjacent to the A45/A46 strategic highway network and the Jaguar Land Rover World Headquarters site. Any redevelopment of this site will need to safeguard the environmentally sensitive adjacent Sowe Valley river corridor and Stonebridge Meadows Local Nature Reserve and compensatory provision will need to be provided for in respect of those parts of the site currently occupied by the King Henry VIII School playing fields.

15ha of land currently within the Green Belt are allocated adjacent to the A45 at Eastern Green on the western boundary of the city as part of a strategic urban extension which will also provide 2,250 new dwellings and a new Major District Centre. It is envisaged that the site will provide space for research and development, industrial and storage/distribution occupiers (B1, B2 & B8). The site occupies a key location on the A45 strategic highway network within a short distance of the proposed UK Central redevelopment initiative around Birmingham Airport and the NEC associated with the construction of the High Speed 2 rail link.

Finally, a further 11ha of previously developed employment land are allocated on 3 small sites within the city as part of mixed-use developments. These comprise 8ha at Whitmore Park in Holbrooks, 1.5ha at Durbar Avenue in Foleshill and 1.5ha on the Former Electric Power Station site at Aldermans Green. The last of these 3 sites already has planning permission for mixed-use redevelopment with the approved employment element providing 35 small units for light industrial and storage/distribution occupiers. Overall, it is anticipated that these sites will provide space for smaller scale research and development, industrial and storage/distribution occupiers.

The Prologis Ryton, Ansty, Lyons Park and Whitley Business Park sites referred to above are identified as strategic sites of regional significance in the West Midlands Strategic Employment Sites Study. These sites in addition to Friargate are also referred to as strategic sites of sub-regional importance in the CWLEP Employment Land Use Study.

Table 3.1 below provides a summary of the employment land supply components described above. It can be seen that the supply components total 248ha which relate positively towards the identified needs suggested by GL Hearn for the Plan period. This level of provision both within and adjacent to Coventry also supports the Coventry and

Warwickshire employment Land MoU and the aspirations of the LEP and its Strategic Economic Plan.

Table 3.1 – Supply Components

Supply Components	Site Size (Ha)
Completions 2011-2016 (includes Ryton, Ansty & within Coventry)	70.3
Under Constructions in Coventry (excluding proposed allocations)	3.1
Extant Permissions in Coventry (excluding proposed allocations)	14
Extant Permissions and under constructions at Ryton & Ansty	53.4
Proposed Site Allocations*	107
Total**	247.8

* 57.7ha of land within proposed allocated sites already benefits from planning permission for employment development.

** 4.5ha of the allocated allowance at Lyons Park has been completed in 2015/16 monitoring year. This is captured in the completions row of the above table. The allocations row is reduced accordingly to avoid double counting

Table 3.1 clearly reflects that the city cannot meet its full employment land requirement within its own boundaries. This has already been highlighted through policy DS1 and reflects the importance of the DtC in ensuring the employment land needs of the sub-region are met in full.

Policy JE2: Provision of Employment Land and Premises

1. A total of 107ha of land are allocated for employment development within the city's administrative area. The allocations are as specified below together with details of the type of employment development that will be promoted on each of these sites.

Site Ref	Site	Ward/LPA	Area Ha (Hectares)	Employment Type
JE2:1	Friargate (part of mixed-use site)	St. Michael's	7	Primarily B1a
JE2:2	Lyons Park	Bablake	19	B1, B2 & B8
JE2:3	Whitley Business Park	Cheylesmore	30	B1b&c, B2 & B8
JE2:4	Land at Baginton Fields and South East of Whitley Business Park	Cheylesmore	25	B1b&c, B2 & B8

JE2:5	A45 Eastern Green (part of mixed-use site)	Bablake	15	B1b&c, B2 & B8
JE2:6	Whitmore Park (part of mixed-use site)	Holbrook	8	B1b&c, B2 & B8
JE2:7	Durbar Avenue (part of mixed-use site)	Foleshill	1.5	B1b&c & B8
JE2:8	Land at Aldermans Green Road and Sutton Stop (part of mixed-use site)	Longford	1.5	B1c & B8
TOTAL			107	

2. The Friargate, A45 Eastern Green, Whitmore Park, Durbar Avenue and Alderman's Green Road and Sutton Stop employment allocations are to be progressed as part of wider mixed-use re-development schemes and should be supported by comprehensive Masterplans.
3. A minimum supply of new employment land on a 5-year rolling cycle of 58ha is required to be available at all times in Coventry and on sites outside but adjacent to the city's administrative boundary (the "Minimum Reservoir"). This will be achieved by using a combination of newly allocated and recycled land. A balanced portfolio of employment land supply offering a choice of sites will be maintained, with details of need and supply set out in the Annual Monitoring Report.

In terms of phasing, it is considered that the Lyons Park, Whitley Business Park and Former Electric Power Station sites will be built out in the short term as these benefit from planning permission and development has already commenced on the first two of these sites.

Construction has also commenced on the 1st phase of office development at Friargate but it is anticipated that the majority of this site will be built out in the medium term as will the majority of the other allocated sites – Land at Baginton Fields and South East of Whitley Business Park, A45 Eastern Green and Durbar Avenue which do not as yet have planning permission.

It is considered that the Whitmore Park site is likely to come forward for development towards the end of the Plan period as this site is currently occupied by an existing engineering business and substantial site preparation works would need to be undertaken in redeveloping this site.

