

Anca Seaton

From: Nina Stanford <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 12 October 2023 18:19
To: Planning Policy
Subject: Reg 19 Consultation - Submission
Attachments: P22-1929 Pickards Way Reg 19 Reps 061023 FINAL.pdf

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: WIP

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached representations made on behalf of Holt Property Ltd relating to the NBBC Regulation 19 consultation, and which are hereby formally submitted.

Please confirm receipt of this email.

Kind Regards,

Nina
Nina Stanford
Planner

[REDACTED]
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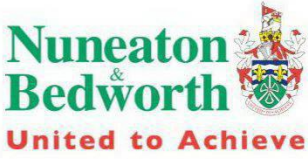


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 <p>Nuneaton & Bedworth United to Achieve</p>	<p>Borough Plan Review Publication Stage Representation Form</p>	<p>Ref:</p> <p>(For official use only)</p>
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Name of the Local Plan to which this representation relates:

Borough Plan Review Publication Stage

Please return to Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council by 16th October 2023 via:

Email: planning.policy@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk

Post: Planning Policy, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Town Hall, Coton Road, NUNEATON, CV11 5AA

This form has two parts –

Part A – Personal details.

Part B – Your representation(s). Please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make.

Part A

	1. Personal details* * If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.	2. Agent's details (if applicable)
Title		Miss
First name		Nina
Last name		Stanford
Job title (where relevant)		Planner
Organisation (where relevant)	Holt Property Ltd	Pegasus Group
House no. and street		5th Floor, 1 Newhall Street
Town		Birmingham
Postcode		B3 3NH
Telephone no.		
Email address		

Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Name or Organisation: Pegasus Group on behalf of Holt Property Ltd

3. To which part of the Borough Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph	Refer to attached Representations - Pegasus Ref: P22-1929
Policy	
Policies	
Map	

4. Do you consider the Borough Plan is:

4.(1) Legally compliant?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.(2) Sound?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.(3) Complies with the Duty to Cooperate?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please mark with an 'X' as appropriate.

5. Please give details of why you consider the Borough Plan is not legally compliant, is unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate. Please be as precise as possible.

If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Borough Plan, or its compliance with the Duty to Cooperate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

Refer to attached Representations - Pegasus Ref: P22-1929

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

6. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Borough Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to the matter you have identified in part 5 above, where this relates to soundness (Please note that any non-compliance with the Duty to Cooperate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why this modification will make the Borough Plan legally compliant or

sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Refer to attached Representations - Pegasus Ref: P22-1929

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

Please note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested modification, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at the publication stage.

After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.

7. If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?


No , I do not wish to participate at the oral examination	
Yes , I wish to participate at the oral examination	X

8. If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

Refer to attached Representations - Pegasus Ref: P22-1929

Please note the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt, to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

9.

Signature: (Please sign the box if you are filling in a paper copy. If you are filling in an electronic copy, the box can be left blank)	
Date:	12/10/2023

BOROUGH PLAN REVIEW 2021–2039

**NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

**PUBLICATION DRAFT PLAN – REGULATION 19
CONSULTATION (SEPT 2023)**

Representations on behalf of Holt Property Ltd

Date: September 2023 | Pegasus Ref: P22-1929

Author: DO



Document Management.

Version	Date	Author	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for revision
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Pegasus Group on behalf of Holt Property are pleased to make formal representations with respect to the **Borough Plan Review – Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) 2021–2039** document. The document was opened to public consultation on 4th September 2023, with the deadline being **16th October 2023**.
- 1.2. These representations respond to the policies contained in the Reg 19 LP, having regard to the national and local policy context; and are in support of releasing the land known as north of Pickards Way, Bedworth (“the Site”), as edged red in Figure 1 below, for development which may include commercial or renewable energy. The representations also provide comment in respect of the evidence base that underpins the Borough Plan Review including employment land requirements, as well as making reference to representations submitted on behalf of L&Q Estates at earlier stages in the Borough Plan Review process. The representations also refer to the approach being taken in sub region towards the preparation of Local Plans and especially in Coventry.



The Site is currently within the Green Belt, measures c.3ha and is sited off Junction 3 M6. It is to the north of the allocated site Wilsons Lane (adopted Policy EMP2/ emerging Policy SEA-2) for commercial and residential development. To the east of the Site is a care home. The Site is accessed off McDonnell Drive.

Figure 1: Site Location

- 1.3. The Site appears to have been assessed under the 2021 SHLAA ref: **EXH-4**, where it was proposed for residential/employment/retail use. It was not taken forward because:

“The site is located in the Green Belt. The sites falls within parcel BE5 of the 2015 Green Belt study with a score of 6/20. Reds and Ambers would mean very poor living environment for future residents due to noise and pollution issues. Site size makes it difficult to mitigate against these.”

- 1.4. Although the Site was discounted from a residential use aspect, it is available for alternative forms of development, which could include commercial, renewable sources of energy, or EV charging stations which are important in meeting the national and local aspirations of carbon neutrality. The following representations are framed in the context of the requirements for local plans and spatial development strategies to be legally compliant and sound. The tests of soundness are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”, 2021), paragraph 35. For a development plan to be sound it must be:
- **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
 - **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective and joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
 - **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.
- 1.5. These representations have regard to the NPPF’s emphasis on the role of development plans in providing a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities (paragraph 15).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Borough Plan Review is intended to replace the adopted Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan 2011-2031 (“NBBP”) and extend the timeframe covered by the NBBP until 2039.
- 2.2. The NBBP was adopted in June 2019 and covers the period up to 2031. Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (“NBBC”) committed to undertaking an immediate review of the adopted NBBP following the publication of the updated NPPF.
- 2.3. The Council’s decision to review the NBBP is fully supported by Holt Property to ensure:
 - planning policies and proposals are consistent with the updated NPPF;
 - the housing and economic development requirements are aligned to the most up-to-date information, including household and economic projections and cross-boundary needs; and
 - the local plan is up-to-date, reflecting Government guidance that plans should be regularly reviewed and the evidence base renewed to respond to changing needs.
- 2.4. The Council consulted on a Preferred Options version of the Plan (the “BPR PO”) in July 2022. Representations relating to this site were made to the Preferred Options on behalf of L&Q Estates.

The Council are now consulting of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan (the “BPR Reg 19”). This plan will be the version submitted to the Secretary of State and examined by an independent Inspector. **Joint Green Belt Study (June 2015) & Planning Permission ref: O37237**
- 2.5. The Joint Green Belt Study undertook a comprehensive assessment of Green Belt land across six authorities, against the five purposes of the Green Belt as defined in the NPPF; and formed part of the evidence base to the current (adopted) Borough Plan. It has not been updated as part of the LP review.
- 2.6. The Site formed part of the wider BE5 parcel, which scored **Low** in terms of its overall performance against Green Belt purposes, as shown in Figure 2 below (the Site is outlined yellow). Paragraph 4.24 of the Study recognises the characteristics of this parcel as being segregated from the wider countryside and also contains built development which compromises the openness and urbanises this area of land.

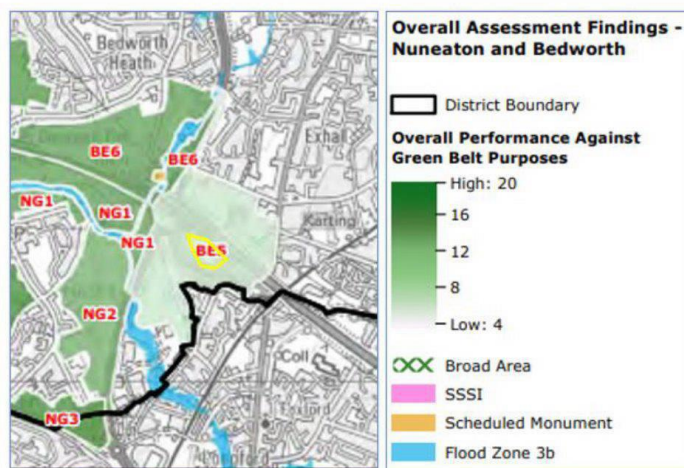


Figure 2: Joint Green Belt Study

- 2.7. Furthermore of significance, the neighbouring site to the southwest over the B4113 was removed from the Green Belt and allocated under **Policy EMP2-Wilsons Lane** within the current (adopted) Borough Plan, and is included for allocation under **Policy SEA-2-Wilsons Lane** as part of the BPR Reg 19. These allocations are for approximately 18 hectares of employment land and approximately 73 dwellings. As a result of this allocation, only a very small area of Green Belt remains between the B4113 and south of the M6.
- 2.8. An outline planning application (ref: **037237**) for up to 55,750sqm of employment/commercial floor space and up to 73 dwellings was approved by Nuneaton and Bedworth Planning Committee on 24 May 2022, and issued on 21 March 2023. The residual land falling within Coventry was granted permission on appeal on 15th September 2023. Any future reserved matters application will be required to accord with the submitted land use parameters plan, and as can be seen in Figure 3 below, this site will largely be covered by development towards Junction 3 of the M6. None of the included within the red line in Figure 3 remains in the Green Belt.



Figure 3: Wilsons Lane Land Use Plan

- 2.9. As mentioned above, the Green Belt Study has not been updated in support of the current Borough Plan and as shown in Figure 3, significant changes have occurred since it was written in 2015.
- 2.10. The adopted NBBP was supported by a comprehensive suite of additional evidence, including a Green Belt Study (2015), an Employment Land Review (2014) and Employment Land Use Studies (2015 and 2016), for which no direct equivalents have been produced in relation to the Local Plan Review process. As stated previously in the L&Q I+O Reps and L&Q BPR PO, Green Belt release at appropriate locations should be considered. An updated Green Belt Study would be appropriate to ensure the most sustainable options are fully explored and the changes that have occurred since the 2015 Green Belt Study are taken into account in assessing potential sites.
- 2.11. The sections below provide Holt Property's commentary on elements of the evidence that has been produced in support of the BPR Reg 19.

HELAA Employment Assessment 2023

- 2.12. The site has been recently assessed in the HELAA 2023. This has raised a number of issues that require clarification. In particular the site scores red as it is located in the Green Belt. However as noted in the assessment the score for the parcel where the site is located is 6/20. This demonstrates that in terms of Green Belt importance the wider parcel is of very limited significance. The actual site off Pickards Way has even less importance being surrounded by road infrastructure or the adjacent large nursing home. It is in effect an island surrounded by existing development. It fulfills no significant role in Green Belt terms.
- 2.13. In terms of other elements of the assessment, it is scored red in terms of neighbouring use. However, in view of the fact that the assessment should be considering the suitability of the site for employment development, it is unclear how employment development is likely to be affected due to the adverse impact of neighbouring uses. This concern, that the assessment has not actually considered the site for employment development, is reinforced by the concluding comment that 'Reds and Ambers would mean a very poor living environment for future residents due to noise and pollution issues.' Clearly as the site is being promoted for employment development these comments would not apply. In a similar vein the site is scored as red for pollution when ordinarily employment uses are not sensitive to issues such as noise etc. On this basis we would question whether the site has been properly assessed for employment development at all.

In view of the issues highlighted above it is considered that the site needs re-assessing as an employment site, recognising its location immediately adjacent to the strategic highway network.

Coventry & Warwickshire Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (November 2022)

- 2.14. The HEDNA report provides an assessment of development needs including for employment land across the sub-region. The sub-regional HEDNA considered data only to 2019 as this was the only timeframe for which consistent data was available for all of the HMA authorities.

- 2.15. Section 6 of the sub-regional HEDNA considers economic growth potential. It utilises economic forecasts developed by Cambridge Econometrics (CE) for the Coventry and Warwickshire economy. It then moves on to consider the future growth potential of different local economies having regard to the baseline forecasts, using a focus on potential demand-side drivers (rather than land supply).
- 2.16. The HEDNA considers anticipated employment growth in each local authority area and concludes that relative to its existing employment, North Warwickshire is expected to post the strongest proportional growth. The weakest relative growth is expected in Nuneaton and Bedworth (9%).
- 2.17. Similarly to the June 2022 NBBC HEDNA, this sub-regional HEDNA takes the jobs growth from the forecasts for the relevant sectors and the gross completions trends for industrial and warehousing and converts this into floorspace requirements using the following employment densities:
- 14 sqm offices (12 sq.m NIA per FTE)
 - 44 sqm industrial (blend of former B1c and B2)
 - 80 sqm warehousing
- 2.18. The employment forecasts method leads to a floorspace requirement for office space in the Borough of 10,100 sq. m. or 2.0 ha over the period 2021–39. Industrial space has a negative requirement of -22,000 sq. m. (-4.4 ha) and warehousing space has a requirement of 23,300 sq. m. (5.8 ha).
- 2.19. Taking into account all the approaches identified the Sub-Regional HEDNA identifies an overall need for 47.7 ha of employment land to 2041 in Nuneaton and Bedworth.

Table 11.2 Employment Land Needs 2021-2041, ha

	Office	General Industrial	Sub-Total	Strategic B8
N. Warwickshire	5.3	56.1	61.4	
N. and Bedworth	2.2	45.5	47.7	
Rugby	5.2	150.5	155.7	
Stratford-on-Avon	5.2	166.1	171.3	
Warwick	11.4	56.2	67.6	
Coventry	8.5	147.6	156.1	
Total	37.7	621.9	659.6	551

Source: VOA / CE/lceni

- 2.20. The Sub Regional HEDNA uses a range of methods which includes the take up of employment land, but it concludes that the preferred approach is the use of completions data as the best representation of market needs for the next phase of plan making for industrial / warehousing floorspace particularly for the short/medium-term (para 11.10). However, the HEDNA also recognises that there was a relatively constrained supply position for a number of years in Nuneaton and Bedworth prior to the adoption of the Local Plan in 2019, which released a number of sites from the Green Belt. This factor must influence the completion-based methodology which were based on previous take up of sites. This is confirmed by the low



anticipated trend-based requirement for NBBC set out in tables 9.12 and 9.13. It can be seen that whilst the sub regional HEDNA recognised that the past delivery of employment land in NBBC was constrained due to a lack of supply, no allowance was made to reflect this issue. In addition whilst sites are now coming forward as a consequence of the 2019 Local Plan, these will not be factored into the need calculation, due to the data cut off in 2019.

- 2.21. As a consequence, the NBBC figures for employment land set out in the sub-regional HEDNA of 2.2Ha for offices and 45.5HA of general industrial employment land to 2041 have not been adequately justified nor has the approach taken been positive.
- 2.22. In conclusion, the approach taken in calculating employment land requirements has been underpinned by past completion rates and the situation in NBBC has been constrained until very recently by a lack of employment sites coming forward. This must influence the calculation of employment land requirements.

Towards a Housing Requirement for Nuneaton & Bedworth (TAHR) (November 2022)

- 2.23. This report was published alongside the sub-regional HEDNA to provide a more specific consideration of both housing and employment needs in the Borough, taking account of local considerations, with a view to informing the level of provision of each within the Borough Plan Review.
- 2.24. The TAHR recognised that the NBBC area already has the lowest volume of jobs of the local authorities within Coventry & Warwickshire and has a relatively low jobs density with 64 jobs per 100 people of working age compared to an average of 80 across the West Midlands and 84 per 100 nationally. It also recognised that weaker growth in the Borough relative to the other HMA authorities is also manifest in issues associated with the quality of jobs, and the skills profile of the Borough's population.
- 2.25.

3. REPRESENTATIONS ON THE CONTENT OF THE DRAFT PUBLICATION PLAN

Introduction

Plan Period

- 3.1. The plan period to at least 2039 reflects the *minimum* 15-year period from adoption that should be covered by strategic policies according to NPPF (paragraph 22).
- 3.2. Holt Property maintains that the vision set out in the BPR Reg 19 should be amended to provide a strategy for a 30-year plan period in order to provide greater certainty to the public and development industry for how land will come forward and associated infrastructure planned for.
- 3.3. The NPPF at paragraph 140 is clear that Green Belt boundaries should endure beyond the Plan period. An extended period allows for more strategic considerations of Green Belt boundaries and whether they still serve their intended purposes, as well as whether Green Belt release is required to meet identified needs.

Evidence

- 3.4. The LPAs in Coventry and Warwickshire commissioned a sub-regional Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HEDNA) to inform the preparation and review of local plans in the area. This has been considered in the previous section.
- 3.5. The key difference in the approach of the NBBC HEDNA and the sub regional version in regard to calculating employment land need is:
- 3.6. The NBBC HEDNA took account of more recent completions looking at data to 2020/21, whereas the sub-regional HEDNA considered data only to 2019 as this was the only timeframe for which consistent data was available for all of the HMA authorities. Its preferred approach in drawing conclusions for Nuneaton and Bedworth was to project forward a 5 year completions trend (2016–21) whereas the sub-regional evidence considered a 7 year period (2011–19);
- 3.7. The NBBC HEDNA considered all industrial and warehousing development, whereas the completions trend in the sub-regional HEDNA sought to remove completions related to strategic B8 development which was treated separately. The effect of this was to reduce the completions projection in NBBC by 19%.
- 3.8. L and Q Estates support the general approach in the NBBC HEDNA set out above, however if it is to address the specific issues associated with the low level of historic growth in the Borough, it will need to make a step change in the provision of employment development, rather than still, at least in part, be based on past employment completions.
- 3.9. The Council has not updated the 2015 Green Belt Review to take account of allocations and development which have occurred in the intervening years or taken steps to consider whether exceptional circumstances exist that justify the release of Green Belt sites. This is of particular relevance in association with the Pickards Way site when it had already been

shown to have little or no value in Green Belt terms and in addition the adjacent Wilsons Lane site now had planning permission for largescale employment development. These circumstances along with the potential for the Council to have to allocate additional employment land to meet its needs warranted a review of Green Belt in this location.

Duty To Co-Operate

- 3.10. Paragraph 1.11 of the Reg 19 LP refers to the Council positively engaging with other partner organisations under the Duty to Cooperate.
- 3.11. The NPPF (paragraph 26) confirms that *“effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. In particular, joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere.”*
- 3.12. In the context of the policy framework of the NPPF, comment of other LPA’s in the sub region and in particular the timing of the Borough LP Review relative to others in the sub region particularly Coventry’s, there is concern that the duty to cooperate has not been met.
- 3.13. It is notable that the response of Coventry City Council (CCC) to the BPR PO stated that the Local Plan had yet to comply with Duty to Cooperate and would not be considered sound. CCC also referred to the lack of a Memorandum of Understanding and that there was a need to robustly calculate housing need.
- 3.14. North Warwickshire Borough Council also raised concerns that the Duty to Cooperate has not been adequately addressed. In particular NWBC state that they are very disappointed that NBBC is withdrawing from the Memorandum of Understanding, NWBC considered the Local Plan not sound due to a range of factors associated with cross boundary issues.
- 3.15. In view of the above, lack of progress on the Memorandum of Understanding and timing of the Local Plan in advance of others in the sub-region, Holt Property are concerned that the Duty to Cooperate Test will not be met.
- 3.16. Whilst the HEDNA has been prepared to establish potential level of development requirements, the recent publication of the Coventry Local Plan has shown that there are a number of major issues to be resolved in the sub region. In particular, the CCC Preferred Option relies on departing from Government Policy in order to reduce housing requirements. It also relies on employment sites which were previously part of its LP supply but have not come forward to meet current requirements.

Vision and Objectives

- 3.17. The amended vision and objectives are broadly supported by Holt Property, but the vision should be extended to cover a 30-year time period and also include an encouragement for renewable energy. The vision correctly places a focus upon sustainable economic growth with diverse job prospects, housing for all and integrated infrastructure. To achieve this it will be necessary to provide the right number of homes and employment land based on the most up-to-date evidence of local and sub-regional needs.
- 3.18. Holt Property request that Objective 8 should be amended to read, *“To address climate change by driving sustainability in all new development and supporting proposals for*



renewable energy development". As stated in section 4 of these representations, it is considered that the allocation of the Site for development has the potential to meet Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

- 3.19. The vision rightly aims to ensure the Borough is a place of sustainable economic growth with diverse job prospects, housing for all and integrated infrastructure. This is particularly important as growth in the Borough was below that in other parts of the sub region and the West Midlands.
- 3.20. To achieve this vision it will be necessary to provide the right number of new homes to attract and retain economically active residents within the Borough to support the economic growth ambitions. It is also essential that, if employment growth is to increase to compare with elsewhere in the sub-region, the targets for the delivery of housing and economic development land are sufficiently ambitious.
- 3.21. Strategic Objection 2 could be made more specific to the Borough if it emphasised the advantages of the access to the strategic road network the area benefits from and that this should be maximised especially north of Coventry. This would include the Pickards Way site.

Strategic Development Strategy

Policy DS1 – Sustainable development

- 3.22. The revision of Policy DS1 contained in BPR Reg 19 has taken on board the comments made by L&Q Estates, with the Policy being largely rewritten. The policy now makes a number of references to development 'contributing' towards achieving net zero carbon emissions. Although reference is made to development needing to adapt to climate change and to delivering a net zero economy, this objective needs to be supported by wider renewable energy development to assist with this target. The policy should make explicit reference to the need to provide sites to deliver renewable energy such as solar and wind. In light of the national and local ambitions to become carbon neutral, the policy should also make reference to the need for EV charging stations in response to the increase in electric vehicle users.

Policy DS2 – Settlement hierarchy and roles

- 3.23. Holt Property agrees that under the settlement hierarchy Nuneaton, Bedworth, Bulkington and the northern Coventry fringe are the most sustainable locations for growth and supports the identification within the supporting text of the role the Plan has in delivering the wider aspirations of the sub-region.
- 3.24. The policy identifies the northern fringe of Coventry as having "*a supporting role for housing, shopping and local services*". This does not fully reflect the important role parts of the northern fringe play in the delivery of employment land. Land close to Junction 3 of the M6, at the northern fringe of Coventry and south of Bedworth, has consistently been considered an appropriate location for significant employment development, as evidenced by existing allocations EMP2, EMP6 and EMP7.
- 3.25. Employment uses are most appropriately located on the strategic road network, in order to facilitate the requirements of the businesses that occupy such uses but also to minimise conflict with residential dwellings and their impact on the local road network. The M6 transport corridor was identified as a priority area for strategic investment in the Coventry and Warwickshire Sub-Regional Employment Market Signals Study (July 2019) and

programmed improvements to Junction 3 of the M6 will further increase its capacity and enable it to support additional development.

- 3.26. It is recommended that the policy text is altered to reflect the role of this area in providing employment development.

Policy DS3 – Overall Development Needs

- 3.27. The Policy sets out the development needs for the Borough over the plan period as being:
- 9,810 homes based on 545 dwellings per annum.
 - 66.45ha of employment land for local industrial and distribution/warehousing development (including 5.35ha for replacement provision).
 - 2ha of employment land for office space.
 - 19.4ha of employment land for strategic B8 warehousing and distribution development indicative
- 3.28. The evidence behind these development needs is contained in the report 'Towards our Housing Requirement' Concerns are raised about the approach towards calculating employment needs set out in the LP. If it is to address the specific issues associated with the low level of historic growth in the Borough it will need to make a step change in the provision of employment development, rather than still, at least in part, be based on past employment development trends which are recognised as being unduly constrained due to a lack of sites.
- 3.29. In view of the above L and Q Estates consider Policy DS3 is failing to adequately provide for the quantum of employment land needed to provide a 'step change' to economic development as required by the Council's Local Economic Strategy.
- 3.30. Holt Property consider that the most appropriate option for locating development is to prioritise the most sustainable locations no matter whether these are designated as countryside or Green Belt and that the Green Belt should not be utilised in a way which would exclude the consideration of the most sustainable options for the allocation of development. As a result the supporting text to DS3 should be amended.

Policy D56 – Employment allocations

- 3.31. The employment allocations in Policy DS5 identify land for 52.15ha of employment land and associated infrastructure, to address a minimum requirement identified in the HEDNA for 66.45ha of land for industrial and distribution/warehousing development, 2ha for office space to meet NBBC's needs and 19.4 ha to meet the need for strategic B8 warehousing.
- 3.32. As stated above, Holt Property considers that the employment need set out in the HEDNA and planned for through the allocations in Policy DS5 is insufficient to help the Borough increase its long-term employment growth rate.
- 3.33. Holt Property considers that it is necessary for NBBC to identify additional employment allocations to ensure growth rate targets can be met and that further additional allocations will be required to address previous low levels of growth.

- 3.34. As stated elsewhere in these representations, and as previously put forward in the L&Q I+O Repts and L&Q PO, Holt Property maintains that the most sustainable locations for employment development should be prioritised no matter whether they are designated as countryside or Green Belt. The area of land around M6 Junction 3 is appropriately located on the strategic road network within the M6 transport corridor, a priority area for strategic investment according to the sub-regional HEDNA. Additional allocations in this location would represent a continuation of a strategy begun through the adopted NBBP, which allocated sites EMP2, EMP6 and EMP7 in the vicinity of M6 Junction 3 based on the NBBP evidence base including the 2014 Employment Land Review. The land north of Pickards Way represents the last remaining parcel of Green Belt south of the M6 in this general location. It has no Green Belt function and does not perform a Green Belt purpose. Maintaining it in the Green Belt serves no planning purpose.

Policy DS8 – Review

The commitment to early review of the Plan if required by changing circumstances is supported. Holt Property recommend that the list of circumstances in which a quicker review may be required is expanded to include clear evidence of a significant change in the Borough's employment need.

Employment

Policy E1 – Nature of employment growth

- 3.35. The specific focus in Policy E1 on use classes B2 and B8 on strategic employment sites and existing employment sites is supported by Holt Property.
- 3.36. The emphasis within the policy (at E1.2) on favourable consideration for certain employment sectors includes advanced manufacturing, professional services and research and development but does not include logistics development which up-to-date evidence demonstrates is in strong demand within the West Midlands and which can offer excellent opportunities for full-time employment at a range of professional and non-professional skill levels.
- 3.37. Holt Property note that the sectors listed at Policy E1.2 are those identified in the Economic Development Strategy, which dates from 2016. It is recommended that the Plan should also recognise the current strong demand for, and opportunities offered by logistics development and that this form of development should be added to the list of sectors which will receive favourable consideration under Policy E1.2.
- 3.38. Knight Frank's *LOGIC: Midlands 2021 Review* (Knight Frank Research, February 2022) reported record take up in the Midlands industrial and logistics market in 2021, with the distribution sector accounting for 62% of activity. An acute shortage of immediately available space was identified across all size ranges, with very little stock and a speculative development pipeline which remains behind market demand. For 2022, the report predicted that *"the strong fundamentals for logistics, and the key location benefits offered by the region are likely to underpin robust activity in the year ahead"*.
- 3.39. Savills' UK Logistics – January 2022 Big Shed Briefing similarly reported a *"huge uptick in demand"* for warehouse space in the West Midlands during 2021, with the strongest level of take up ever recorded and *"renewed occupier interest from a wide variety of occupiers such as Chinese e-commerce companies and Gigafactories rather than the historically prominent"*



manufacturing and automotive sectors". Only 0.41 years' supply was identified to meet the burgeoning demand.

- 3.40. The latest *United Kingdom Logistics Market Summary (Q1 2022)* from CBRE Research (April 2022) reported a vacancy rate for logistics space of only 1.66% (with available space down 61% year-on-year) and a year-on-year increase in prime rents of 21.43%.
- 3.41. The subregional HEDNA recognised the importance of 4 key corridors within the Borough, including the M6 corridor, in meeting strategic warehousing requirements. It also identified the very substantial need for land to meet requirements.
- 3.42. The delivery of logistics and warehousing development at appropriately located sites would therefore meet a strong existing sub-regional demand, promote inward investment and generate a diverse range of high-quality employment opportunities, in line with Objectives 1 and 2 of the BPR Reg 19 and Policy E1.1 and E1.3. Land north of Pickard Way is clearly located immediately adjacent to Junction 3 of the M6. Although the land north of Pickard Way may not be entirely appropriate for strategic B8 use given the size of the site, it would provide a good contribution to the overall supply of alternative employment land and put less pressure on other larger sites which would be more appropriate for delivering Strategic B8 development. Alternatively, the site is considered to be a suitable location for a potential EV Charging Station in light of the local and national aspirations to become carbon neutral. This would provide essential infrastructure in meeting these targets, especially in meeting the Government's objective to accelerate the roll out of electric vehicles.

Healthy, safe and inclusive communities

Policy HS1 – Ensuring the delivery of infrastructure

- 3.43. L&Q supports the requirement for development to contribute towards supporting infrastructure appropriate to the impacts of the proposed development, subject to viability considerations.
- 3.44. It is vital that any requests made for the delivery of infrastructure are proportionate and evidence-based and that any requests for planning obligations to support infrastructure delivery meet the tests set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 3.45. The Policy recognises a need for new infrastructure to be resilient to climate change and demonstrate how development considers carbon neutral emission by 2050. The Policy should specifically mention the need for EV Charging Station in light of the local and national aspirations to become carbon neutral. This would provide essential infrastructure in meeting these targets, especially in meeting the Government's objective to accelerate the roll out of electric vehicles.

Policy HS2 – Strategic accessibility and sustainable transport

- 3.46. Holt Property broadly supports this policy on strategic accessibility and sustainable transport. The reference to accord with several SPDs is questioned, however, the reference is a less stringent requirement for proposals to "*consider how they accord with*" SPDs. It should also be noted that there is a clear direction in this policy to encourage carbon neutral transport and be resilient to climate change. The necessary infrastructure needs to be provided to achieve these goals and this should be from renewable energy developments. In

addition to this, the policy should recognise the need for EV Charging Stations, especially in light of the Government's objective to roll out electric vehicles. The site's strategic location on Junction 3 of the M6 would make this an ideal location for such essential infrastructure.

- 3.47. The appropriateness of requiring all development to include all of the elements listed under Policy HS2.5 is questioned and a review is recommended. For example, the policy as drafted requires all development to provide easier access to rental-bikes and e-bike hubs, which may not be appropriate for certain categories of development.

Built Environment

Policy BE2 – Renewable and low carbon technology

- 3.48. Holt Property supports that the Council is committed to supporting low carbon developments, and that such schemes will be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. However, this policy should also include that such developments will be acceptable outside of settlement boundaries, as these are the only realistic locations for these types of developments to be located in. Without this assurance, it is unlikely that renewable energy developments will come forward, and thus impacting upon the Council's target of encouraging carbon neutral transport and being resilient to climate change.
- 3.49. Consideration should also be given to identifying specific sites which would be suitable for renewable energy development. These could be outside a development boundary and free from physical constraints, such as being close to heritage assets.
- 3.50. Consideration should also be given to identifying suitable sites for the provision of EV Charging Stations. As mentioned above, EV Charging Stations will soon be considered essential infrastructure in meeting the Government's objective to roll out electric vehicles and become carbon neutral. The strategic location of this site at Junction 3 of the M6 would make this an ideal location for such a facility.

4. LAND NORTH OF PICKARDS WAY

Site Description

- 4.1. As highlighted in Figure 1 above, north of Pickards Way comprises approximately 3ha of land located in-between two strategic road networks, to the west of a care home and to the north of the Wilsons Lane allocated site (EMP2 in the adopted Borough Plan and SEA-2 in the BPR Reg 19). Furthermore, in close proximity to the Site, there is a housing (HSG6) and employment (EMP6) allocation to the northeast of the Site and another employment allocation to the north west (EMP7); as shown in Figure 4 below (the Site is edged red).

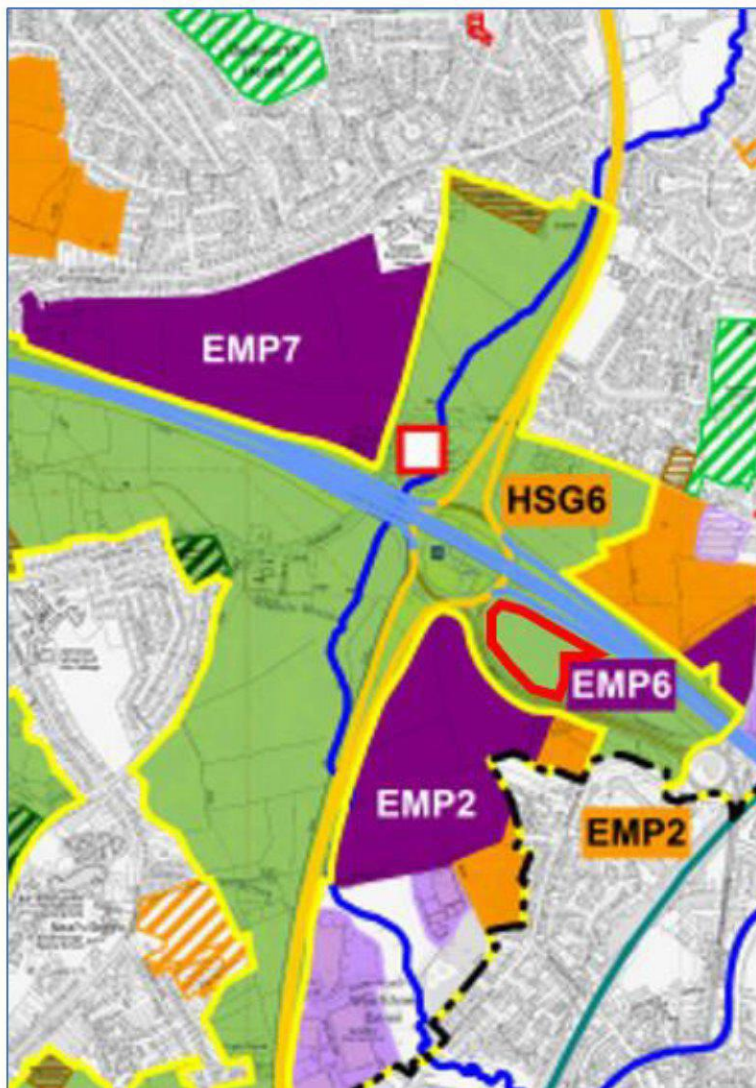


Figure 4: Adopted Local Plan Policies Map

- 4.2. The Site consists of open greenfield land that is bordered by vegetation. In terms of constraints, the Site is within Flood Zone 1 (low flood risk), there are no Listed Buildings or Ancient Monuments on or adjacent to the Site, and no public rights of way through.



Proposed Development and Benefits

- 4.3. The Site is available for development, for uses such as commercial or renewable energy, and there are no over-riding constraints on the land. As recognised in the Joint Green Belt Study, the Site has a Low score for its overall performance against Green Belt purposes. The Site is surrounded by existing development consisting of the M6, the care home, and new employment coming forward on the Wilsons Lane site (allocation EMP2). It does not perform any Green Belt function and part of the land to the east (the care home) is already developed. The Site is readily connectable to the strategic highways network, and is surrounded by strategic allocations.
- 4.4. The Site is ideally located on the strategic highway network to provide for modern employment development, especially logistics. The sub-regional HEDNA has provided an insufficient amount of land to provide for employment development and in particular it has not provided a sufficient contribution towards meeting sub regional need for strategic B8 use. in relation to employment floorspace over the plan period. In view of the increased requirement for employment land, the site's strategically important location on Junction 3 of the M6 and the landlocked character of the Site means it has no Green Belt purposes, and exceptional circumstances exist for its removal from the Green Belt.
- 4.5. The site's strategically important location is also considered to make this a suitable location for an EV Charging Station which would assist in national and local aspirations to roll out electric vehicles and become carbon neutral.
- 4.6. Given the Site's characteristics and location, its allocation for well-designed development has potential to contribute towards meeting the objectives of ensuring new development contributes to improved infrastructure and facilities (Objective 5), improving cycling and walking networks, increasing open space and leisure access and reducing crime (Objective 6), ensuring new development sustains and enhances the historic and natural environments (Objective 7) and addressing climate change by driving sustainability in all new development and the provision of renewable energy generation (Objective 8).In addition, if the Site is allocated for residential development, it would support Objective 4 (to provide a steady and adequate level of suitable housing for all).
- 4.7. The allocation of the Site for employment development has potential to provide economic growth which raises the Borough's profile as a more attractive place to live, work and invest in (in line with Objective 1) and also help support the diversification of the borough's economy and improve job opportunities for residents (in line with Objective 2).



5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. These representations have been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Holt Property.
- 5.2. Holt Property has concerns that the Council is not yet able to demonstrate that the BPR Reg 19 meets the statutory tests of soundness or the duty to co-operate.
- 5.3. Evidence presented within these representations concludes that, the figures in the Council's HEDNA/ TAHR in regard to the employment floorspace planned for in the BPR Reg 19 are insufficient to help the achieve a step change in economic development and to address evidence of record levels of sub-regional demand for and constrained supply of logistics and warehousing development focused particularly around the M6 corridor. Additional allocations of employment land are considered to be needed to provide sufficient employment growth to meet Nuneaton and Bedworth's needs, In the absence of robust evidence, it is not possible to say that the Plan sets out a strategy which meets the area's objectively assessed needs and helps accommodate any unmet cross-boundary needs. Further consideration is also required for the delivery of renewable energy developments. In particular it has been demonstrated that Council are making inadequate contribution to B8 needs. The shortfall in the allocation of employment land in the Reg 19 LP is such that the Council should be considering addition allocations and these should be informed by the strategic requirements of development including strategic B8 and specific uses such as EV charging stations.
- 5.4. As demonstrated throughout these representations, the site is also considered to be a suitable location for the delivery of renewable energy such as solar and wind, as well as an ideal location for an EV charging station in light of the increase in electric vehicle users and policy aspirations to becoming carbon neutral.
- 5.5. The exclusion of Green Belt land from consideration in the strategy for the distribution of development is not justified in the context of employment needs and the ability of well-located sites in the countryside and the Green Belt to deliver sustainable development to meet a range of needs. In these circumstances, and especially the specific circumstances associated with the M6 corridor, it is considered that exceptional circumstances justifying changes to Green Belt boundaries through the Borough Plan Review has been demonstrated.
- 5.6. The land north of Pickards Way is considered an appropriate location for removal from the Green Belt and allocation for development. It fulfils no Green Belt purpose and is particularly well-located with regard to the characteristics required to meet burgeoning demand for B2 and B8 floorspace, potential for renewable energy development or an EV charging station. As a result, exceptional circumstances exist to justify its removal from the Green Belt.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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