

Development Management Plan Regulation 19 Consultation Fact Sheet

Horley Strategic Employment Provision

This note covers:

- Strategic employment site in Horley

DMP Objectives	Strategic Employment Site	Document Ref
Objective PE2: Provide flexibility for local businesses to start up, grow, diversify and prosper. Objective PS3: Allocate sites for development across the borough consistent with the Core Strategy and sustainability principles	HOR9 – Horley Strategic Business Park	Theme 3, Section 3, Pages 145-150

Context

Providing the right conditions for businesses to prosper is important. It helps secure local jobs and minimises the need for people to commute, reducing congestion on our roads and railways. New businesses bring investment to the borough, boosting local supply chains and the service sector.

The Core Strategy envisages that business needs can be met through the reuse and intensification of existing employment sites in our urban areas. However it is becoming increasingly clear that this is likely to be challenging. Recent national rules allowing offices to be converted to homes without formal planning permission have reduced the availability of business space locally; at the same time, the local economy has been growing more quickly than when the Core Strategy was being prepared.

In addition, within both the borough and the wider economic area (known as the Gatwick Diamond), there are recognised gaps in the range, type and quality of premises available for businesses. In order to remain competitive and to ensure the borough, and the wider area, continue to attract jobs and investment, it is important that employment space is provided that meets the needs of businesses.

DMP policy starting point

The starting point for the policy approach to strategic employment provision is:

- [National planning policy](#), which makes it clear that the planning system should do everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Local authorities are required to plan proactively to meet the development needs of business, which may include identifying strategic sites for local and inward investment.

- The Council's [Core Strategy](#), which seeks to plan for a range of types and sizes of employment premises to cater for the needs of established, growing and start-up businesses and to attract new businesses. The Core Strategy focuses on making best use of existing employment sites but also identifies that the Council will work with partners across the wider area, including to explore options for strategic employment development.
- The Gatwick Diamond [Local Strategic Statement](#) recognises that in the wider area there is a shortfall in strategic business provision of the right type and location.
- [Advice on the scope for a strategic employment site within Reigate & Banstead](#) which analyses this potential demand for a strategic employment site in the borough. It identifies the types of employment site which is likely to be most appropriate and the factors which need to be considered to ensure a site is viable and successful.
- The [Strategic Employment Provision Opportunity Study](#) which considers the justification for a strategic employment site in the borough and potential site options around Horley which could accommodate such development.

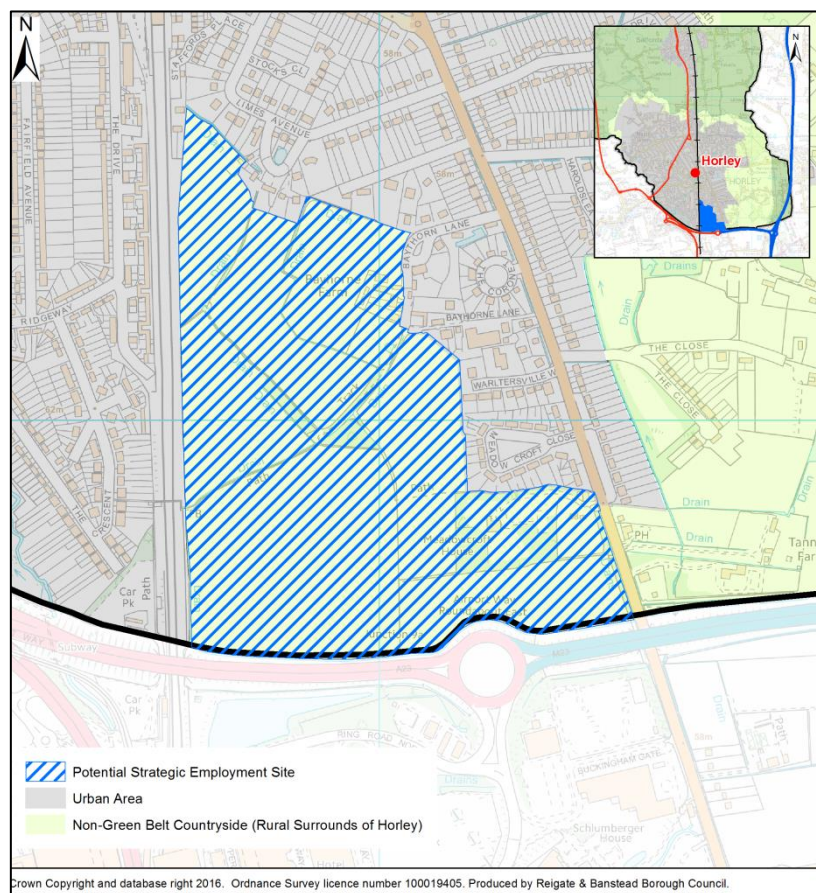
Summary of policy approach

Strategic employment site location: The DMP identifies a site to the south of Horley, on the western side of Balcombe Road as the most suitable location to accommodate strategic employment provision.

Type of development: The strategic employment site will provide a range of new office space, and complementary facilities. Office space will be of a quality and scale that meets the needs of large businesses important to the sub-region as well as local small businesses and start-ups. At least 5 hectares of new high quality public open space will also be provided, including parkland and outdoor sport facilities.

What would be required to support development of this site, should it be allocated?

The DMP proposes a range of planning considerations that would need to be taken into account in the event that the site is developed for employment uses. This includes direct road access from the M23 spur road, the need to avoid areas at risk of flooding, the need to provide public open space, protect trees, and minimise the impact on residential areas, and good pedestrian and cycle connections to Horley town centre and Gatwick Airport.



Frequently asked questions

Why is a large-scale employment site being considered? There is a need for more employment space to meet the needs of existing businesses as they grow, as well as to attract new businesses and investment into the area. There are specific benefits in grouping new businesses together in an enterprise cluster.

Why has this location been chosen? The proximity of Horley to Gatwick Airport, and to good rail and road connections, make the area an attractive location for business and which can offer benefits as a sustainable location to make best use of public transport. A range of sites have been assessed in the [Strategic Employment Provision Opportunity Study](#) which has concluded that this would be the most appropriate location for a strategic employment site to be located.

What about the existing plan designations? There are three existing Borough Local Plan designations that affect the development site. The **Rural Surrounds of Horley** designation recognises that although the land around Horley is not Green Belt, it is important to protect the present rural character of the countryside in this area. There is a need for more **public open space** in Horley. The DMP therefore proposes that any employment development on this site should provide at least 5 hectares of new public open space. The open land to the south of Horley is in the **Gatwick Airport Open Setting** and has a role in preventing the merging of Horley and Gatwick. The DMP recognises that it will be important to retain an appropriate gap between Horley and the airport.

How will the roads in Horley cope with the additional traffic? The DMP identifies that a large scale employment development on the site would need to have direct access onto the M23 Gatwick Spur, to help minimise the number of extra cars using local roads. It also highlights the important of putting in place measures including improved bus services and improved walking and cycling routes to rail stations.

How will the risk of flooding be addressed? Parts of the development site are at risk of flooding. The DMP outlines that no development should be allowed in these areas, but also that any new development should be designed so as to reduce flood risk in the surrounding area.

Hasn't the Council already decided to develop a business park here? The Council is working with a commercial partner to explore options for developing a business park on this development site. The DMP proposes that this site be allocated for use as a business park, but that is not the end of the process – full planning permission setting out what the development will include and the specific details of design will need to be applied for, and will only be approved if the proposal is in line with the planning policies contained within the DMP.

Have your say

If you would like to find out more, or comment on the Development Management Plan Regulation 19 consultation document, please visit www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/DMP where the full set of consultation documents is available, and where you can complete or download a comments form. Alternatively contact the Planning Policy Team at LDF@reigate-banstead.gov.uk or 01737 276178.