

HAVERHILL BUSINESS PARK
Outline Planning Application



Planning Statement on behalf Hammond Rutts Investments Limited

Stutchbury Associates Limited

November 2015

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Hammond Rutts Investments Limited acquired the undeveloped land at Haverhill Business Park in May 2015. While it is the case that development of some of the plots at the Business Park has taken place in the past since the original planning permission was granted in 2002, no further development has taken place since 2008. As part of the development process undertaken to date, large volumes of earth have been relocated onto vacant plots so as to enable the development platforms to be constructed for development that has now taken place. The undeveloped sections of the Business Park are now characterised by areas of cleared earth and earth mounds, some of which are large and dominant.
- 1.2 An application for the formation of the new development platforms has now been submitted to both St Edmundsbury and Braintree Councils (refs: 15/2056 and 15/01274), and those applications are now under consideration. This application is now seeking permission, in outline, for the development of the remaining plots on the Business Park.
- 1.3 This Statement has been prepared by Stutchbury Associates Limited on behalf of Hammond Rutts Investments Limited and is a resubmission of the Statement submitted with the earthworks application, with amendments and additions as are appropriate. The Planning Policy and background for both applications remain the same.
- 1.4 The application seeks permission for:

Erection of up to 46,000 sq m of floorspace for uses within B1,B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order, road side uses (petrol filling station and restaurant/s Use Class A3/A5), car dealerships (sui generis), ancillary lorry park for Business Park occupiers, together with landscaping, car and HGV parking and associated works and facilities including access. Access to be determined
- 1.5 The Business Park lies within the administrative boundaries of both St Edmundsbury Borough Council as well as Braintree District Council. In the case of the current proposals, it is only a relatively minor proportion of the land that falls within Braintree; two plots located off Phoenix Road and west of Bumpstead Road. It has been agreed with officers that St Edmundsbury Council will act as lead Authority, but application papers will be sent to both and that two Decision Notices can be issued so as to cover all of the application site.

1.6 Supporting Planning Application Documents

In addition to this Supporting Statement, the planning application comprises the following documents:

- Application forms and Certificate
- Application Plan, Location Plan, Site Access Drawing to Plot NW2, Braintree administrative area plan
- Planning Statement
- Ground Condition Statement (Environmental and Earthworks Material Suitability) resubmission
- Flood Risk Assessment /Drainage Statement
- Ecology Statement (Phase 1 Desk Study, Phase 1 Habitat Survey) resubmission,
- Reptile Translocation Report
- Design and Access Statement, Framework Plan
- Transport Assessment / Workplace Framework Travel Plan
- Sustainable Design and Construction Statement
- Environmental Noise Assessment
- Air Quality Statement
- Utilities Statement

The applicant has held discussions with both Authorities as part of the preparation and submission of the application, and comments made as part of that have been incorporated in developing the proposals. A Screening Opinion has been requested under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2011 has been submitted on 23 September 2015. The Council confirmed their opinion on 2 October 2015 that the proposed development is not EIA Development requiring the submission of an environmental statement.

- 1.7 The purpose of this Statement is to set out the relevant aspects of the proposal, including the planning policy framework, and to show that the proposed development for employment related development is in accord with both local and national policy and will bring back into effective use the remaining vacant areas of the Business Park.

2 Site Description and Planning History

- 2.1 The application site comprises some 12.6 ha of vacant land located either side of the Bumpstead Road close to the roundabout junction with the A 1017 Haverhill Bypass. The land forms part of the well-established Haverhill Business Park which in turn forms part of the wider industrial / commercial areas located on the south east edge of Haverhill. The site is accessed from, and is bounded to the south by the bypass
- 2.2 To the north of the site are predominantly commercial / industrial uses with residential further to the north and Haverhill town centre beyond. Adjoining the Business Park on the north east boundary (Plots NE1 and NE2) is a wooded area that is also within the ownership boundary. Residential properties are located on the lower slope fronting the B1057 Bumpstead Road.
- 2.3 Further industrial areas are located to the east of the site, beyond the disused rail line, with access from the A143. Commercial and industrial development is located to the west with access from Helions Bumpstead Road.
- 2.4 A good deal of development on the Business Park has already taken place since the original permission was granted in 2002 and the following have been built and are occupied:
- Harvester Restaurant and Days Inn Hotel
 - Culina Logistics
 - Stagecoach
 - HiD
 - Buildbase
 - Percy Dalton
 - Terence Barker Tanks
- 2.5 Access to the Business Park is from Bumpstead Road linking to Phoenix Road to the west and to Iceni Way to the east. Neither of those roads have been adopted. The Haverhill Bypass connects to Cambridge and the M11 to the north with Braintree and then Felixstowe to the east.
- 2.6 The application site relates to part of the original Business Park which covers some 26 ha (65 acres) in total. The Business Park was originally granted permission by both St Edmundsbury Borough Council as well as Braintree District Council for development for uses in B1,B2,B8 as well as a restaurant, hotel and Petrol Filling Station in 2002 (refs E/97/2834/P and

97/01576/OUT). Those permissions were subsequently renewed (SE05/1089/P and 03/01493/OUT). An application for residential development on land in the north eastern portion of the site was withdrawn prior to any determination.

- 2.7 Reserved matters applications have been submitted to the respective authorities for the development set out in para 2.4 above as well as the road links – Phoenix Road and Icen Way. No development has taken place since 2008.

3 Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 In considering the application it is necessary to have regard to the primary legislation set out in Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. This requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is further emphasised in Government guidance given in the National Planning Framework (NPPF); para 196 states that the planning system is plan led. It is the case therefore that the application has to be considered in the context of the adopted development plan.
- 3.2 The adopted development plan, in the case of St Edmundsbury Borough Council, is made up of the Core Strategy 2010, the Haverhill Vision 2031 (adopted September 2014) and the Joint Management Policy Document (February 2015). In the case of Braintree Council, the Core Strategy was adopted in 2011. The Braintree District Local Plan Review (2005) is a part of the Development Plan but a new Local Plan is now being prepared to cover the period up to 2033.

National Guidance: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

- 3.3 National Guidance is set out in the NPPF (March 2012) and Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014). The Framework advises that Planning Authorities should seek to promote sustainable development and through both plan making and decisions on applications, should aim for high quality development; to always seek high quality design and good standard of amenity; and of particular relevance to this application - to encourage the effective use of land and to promote mixed use developments.
- 3.4 NPPF also advises that Planning Authorities should look for solutions rather than concentrating on problems. Authorities should aim to work in a proactive way in promoting developments that enhance the economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area.
- 3.5 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF makes clear the presumption in favour of sustainable development and that LPA's should positively seek opportunities to meet the needs of their area. This translates in approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay. Paragraph 17 sets out 12 Core Planning Principles. These include – the objective to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, businesses and industrial units as well as the infrastructure that the country needs.
- 3.6 The Planning Practice Guidance sets out advice that covers a range of matters in preparing, submitting and considering applications. In developing this application, regard has been given to that guidance in, for example, engaging with the Authorities as part of a pre application consultation.

4 The Development Plan

- 4.1 The Development Plan for St Edmundsbury Borough Council is made up of the Core Strategy, Haverhill Vision 2031 and The Joint Management Policies Document. The Core Strategy recognises the need to make use of opportunities created by Cambridge, the road network as well as Stansted Airport. This ambition is reflected in ‘Strategic Objective B’, namely to *‘secure economic vitality and growth by delivering an adequate and continuous supply of land for employment’*
- 4.2 Policy CS9 sets the target of creating at least 13,000 jobs by 2026 and sees Haverhill (as a ‘Town’ under Policy CS4) as being a key component in being able to meet this need. Haverhill Vision 2031 identifies the Business Park as laying within HV9 General Employment Area where B Class uses are considered to be acceptable in order to increase employment opportunities and increase the range of jobs in the area.
- 4.3 The Joint Development Management Policies Document (February 2015) is seen as providing day to day guidance in considering planning proposals, against the background set by the Core Strategy. Policy DM1 sets a presumption for Sustainable Development, in line with the NPPF so as to improve economic, social and environmental conditions. Policies DM 7,10,11,12, and 14 cover matters relating to sustainable design, biodiversity, protected species and pollution. Policy DM30 seeks to protect existing employment sites.
- 4.4 Turning to Braintree District, it is evident that the Policy Framework sets out a similar objective in relation to employment uses on the Business Park site. The Local Plan Review 2005 will be superseded as part of the Local Plan but as of September 2014, the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan is adopted for development management decision making. The Council consider that document to be a material consideration.
- 4.5 The Core Strategy 2011 – 2026 aims through Policy CS4 ‘Promotion of Employment’, to increase job opportunity and to support the local economy through ‘developing existing employment sites’ in the main towns which includes Haverhill. The Site Allocation and Development Management, includes within Map 59, the site within an Employment Policy Area where, inter alia, employment development is seen as being acceptable.
- 4.6 It can be concluded that the current proposals are in accord with the policy objectives of both Council’s as well as National planning policy.

5 The Proposals

- 5.1 The application seeks permission in outline, but with means of access to be determined, for up to 46,000 sq m of floorspace for a range of B Class uses as well as also allowing for car dealerships, a Petrol Filling Station, road side restaurant/s and an ancillary lorry park for Business Park occupiers. The application proposes a ‘development ceiling’ based on capacity calculations taking into account the development platforms that are the subject of the earthworks application. However, an integral element of the application is the incorporation of flexibility of uses, within the application description, so as to allow development proposals to respond to market requirements as well as detailed site considerations.

- 5.2 As part of the Design and Access Statement, the Framework Plan illustrates how development totalling some 46,000 sq m could be accommodated. It is important to recognise that in arriving at this figure it is based on the layout assumption that all space is B8 warehousing or other 'large space' buildings, and that may not be the case. It is envisaged that a range of building unit size will in fact be developed and that could include smaller buildings across the range.
- 5.3 The uses would be complementary to those already developed on the business park. The application seeks, in essence, to renew the outline permission granted some years ago, but through the effluxion of time, it is no longer possible to submit reserved matters applications.
- 5.4 The application includes provision for a possible lorry park, but this would only be for use by HGV's associated with occupiers located on the Business Park. It would therefore be 'ancillary' to the principal uses on the site; the existing issues of HGV parking in the area are well known.
- 5.5 Access to the development plots remains as existing; namely from Icen Way and Phoenix Road, but with one additional access from Bumpstead Road to serve Plot NW2. This additional access is proposed so as to enable a better and more efficient layout.
- 5.6 Ecology
- The Reports and Habitat Surveys undertaken by Delta Simons Environmental Consultants confirm that there are no protected plants, birds, or mammals that are affected by the proposals but that slow worms, common lizard and grass snakes were found in the east of the site. The report recommended a programme of translocation to the area adjoining to the north, and that recommendation has been taken up by the applicant. Translocation work to move the reptiles to a specifically created receptor site, within the applicant's ownership, has taken place over August – October 2015. This has involved scrub clearance by qualified ecologists, erection of fencing to ensure that translocated reptiles remain within the receptor area and the placing of some 400 bitumen roofing tiles to attract reptiles. Refugia checks are being undertaken to ensure all reptiles will be translocated from the Business Park site. The November 2015 report by Delta Simons on the Reptile translocation, confirming that the translocation works are complete is submitted as part of the application.
- 5.7 The application is also accompanied by a suite of other reports that have been prepared by experts in their fields- Transport and Highways, Sustainability, Noise and Air Quality, Drainage and Flooding, and Ground Conditions. The conclusions of those reports are that there are no matters that have been identified that should prevent the granting of the outline application by reason of the development giving rise to a material adverse impact – noise, air quality, traffic and highway conditions or drainage regime.

- 5.8 An archaeological assessment of the site was undertaken by Suffolk Archaeological Services in 2006, as part of the earlier applications on the site. A number of trenches were dug across the site and it was concluded that no further investigation work would be required. It is proposed that a suitable condition can be imposed on the current application, if deemed necessary, for a programme of archaeological work in line with previous permissions.
- 5.9 As part of the preparation of the application proposals, discussions have been held with officers of both St Edmundsbury Borough Council as well as Braintree District Council. In addition a meeting was held on 20 November 2015 to discuss the proposals. This was attended by a number of Members of the Town and Borough Councils as well as local residents. Representatives of the applicant and consultant team also were present. A number of matters were discussed – site drainage, size of the proposed development platforms, design of retaining structures and landscaping, HGV parking and footpath provision. The points raised have formed part of the submissions and in general, support for the proposals was expressed.
- 5.10 Notices of the proposals were also distributed to the residential properties along Bumpstead Road in the vicinity of the site.

6 Conclusions

6.1 This Statement has set out the relevant considerations for this application for planning permission for:

Erection of up to 46,000 sq m of floorspace for uses within B1,B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order, road side uses (petrol filling station and restaurant/s Use Class A3/A5), car dealerships (sui generis), ancillary lorry park for Business Park occupiers, together with landscaping, car and HGV parking and associated works and facilities including access. Access to be determined

6.2 The proposals will build upon the earthworks application currently being considered by both Authorities, and will enable future reserved matter applications to come forward on the remaining vacant plots in the Business Park. The site is part of the well located and well established employment area, and development for principally employment and commercial uses are in accord and support the Council's policies as well as objectives at national planning level. The proposed uses are appropriate to the Business Park and will complement the development that has taken place to date. The flexible nature of the application enables development of the prescribed uses to come forward as may be appropriate and in response to market signals, but set within a maximum floorspace level so as to ensure all necessary infrastructure and site wide considerations are properly considered.

- The proposals will help bring forward the opportunities to being able to develop the vacant employment land and as such are acceptable in the context of the adopted Development Plans.
- The works have been carefully considered to ensure appropriate use can be made of suitably located employment land and to make sure that proper use can be made of valuable resources.
- The proposals take into consideration any effects on neighbouring properties by virtue of noise, air quality, drainage and flooding, highways and traffic.
- The works do not adversely affect ecological interests, contamination or drainage.
- The proposals will remove an unsightly aspect for many in the area and will help to bring back into use vacant / brownfield land on a well located Business Park and as such is fully in accord with policy advice and objectives at local and national levels.
- It will help bring forward increased job opportunities for residents of Haverhill and attract businesses into the area.

November 2015

Haverhill Business Park: Outline Planning Application