

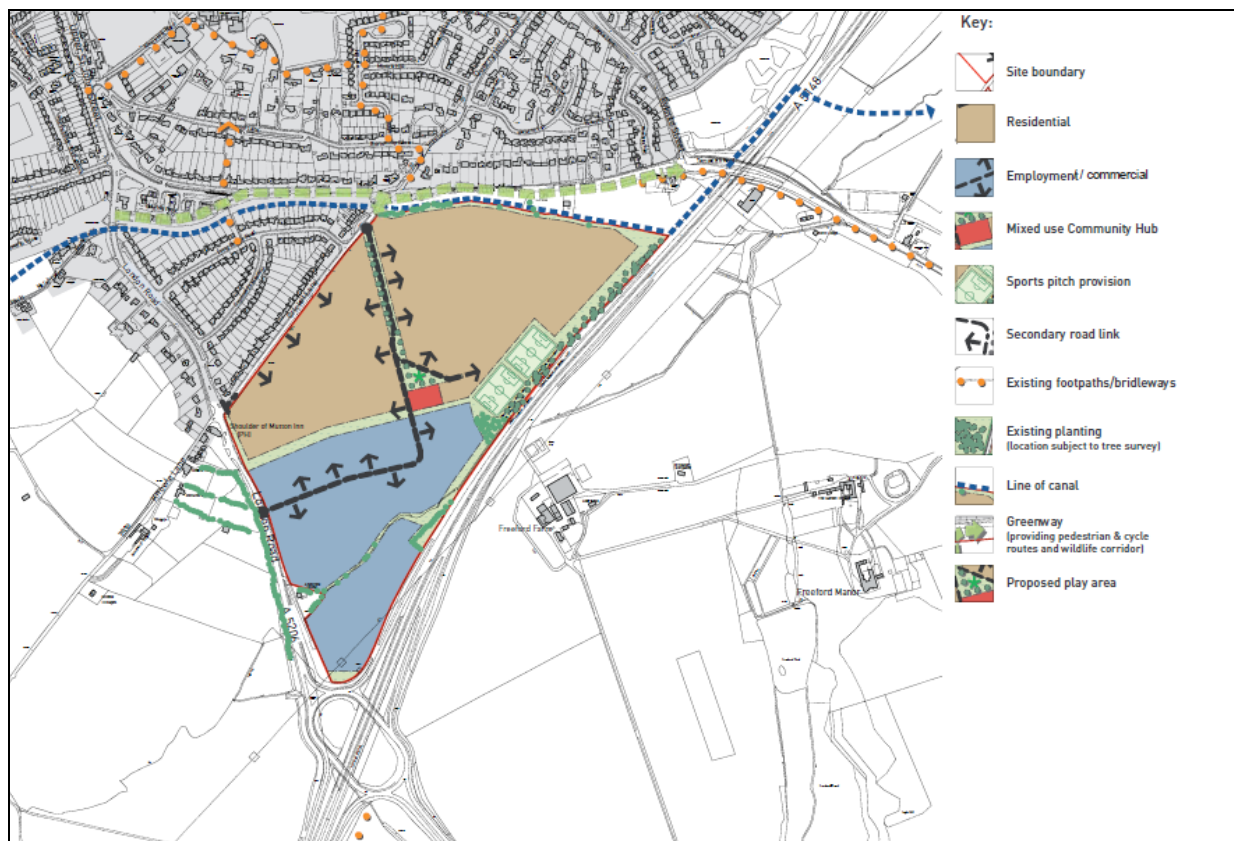
Cricket Lane, Lichfield - Employment Assessment Report December 2013, for Lichfield District Council

Introduction

GVA have been instructed by Lichfield District Council (LDC) to undertake a strategic assessment of the employment land element of the scheme being promoted by Pegasus on behalf of Persimmon Homes at Cricket Lane, Lichfield. As agreed with LDC and to ensure consistency we have undertaken this assessment by applying the same methodology used in the completion of our Employment Land Review (February 2012).

The Site and its Promotion

The site is located to the south of Lichfield town centre adjacent to the east of the London Road (A5206) and the west of the A38, and is part of a wider scheme of 38 hectares of arable land which is designated as part of the greenbelt as below.

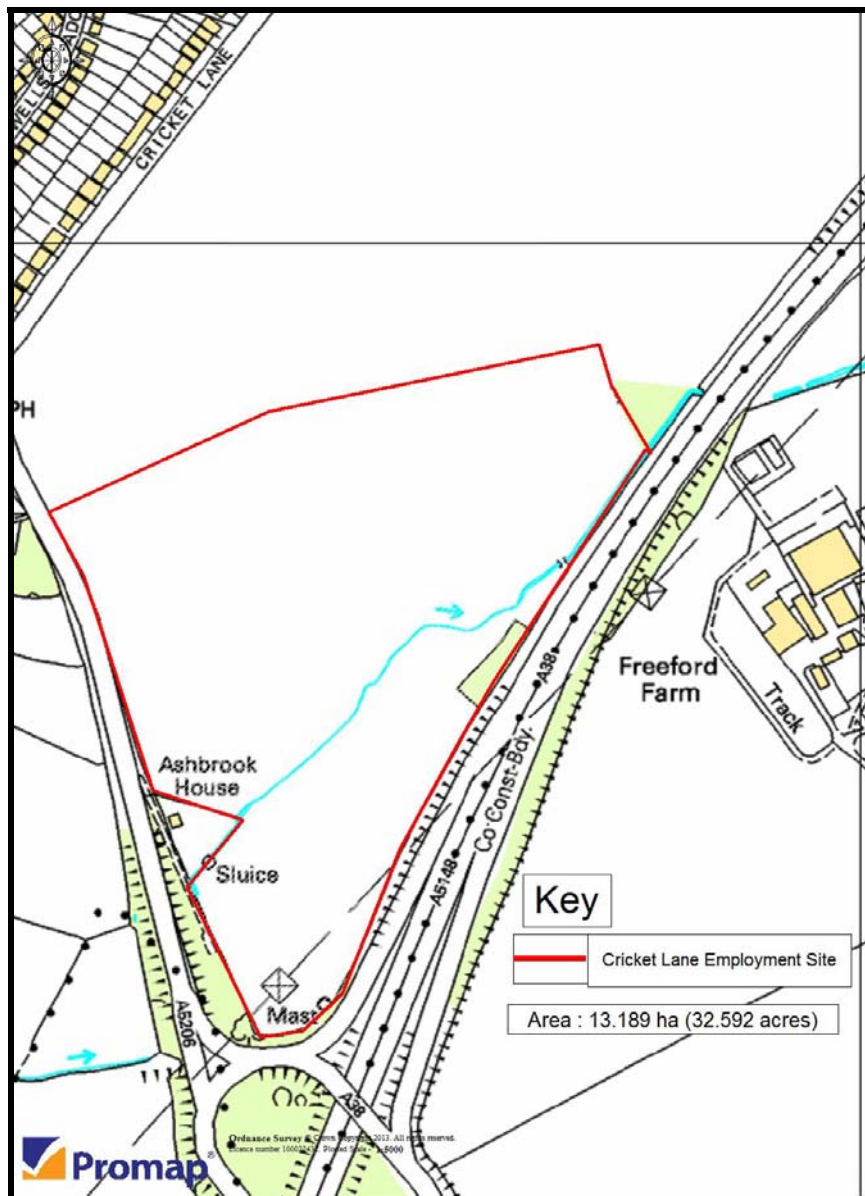


Source: Pegasus, Sept 2012

Pegasus, on behalf of Persimmon Homes is promoting the site for mixed uses including residential, employment and a community hub. Pegasus produced a site promotion background document during September 2012 for the site to support the site's inclusion in the Lichfield Local Plan as a strategic development location. This has helped inform this assessment.

The Pegasus document provides comprehensive detail on site context/description, the nature of the proposed development, landscape, ecology, transportation and cultural heritage matters and is a key document to be reviewed in order to understand the site’s potential.

For the avoidance of doubt the September 2012 site promotion document produced by Pegasus was received some seven months after the completion of the GVA ELR. As a result this site was not included in the assessment work that informed the ELR. In this light, LDC has requested this assessment to inform their ongoing discussion as to its potential to form part of the District’s future employment land supply. The employment element of the site is located to the south of the larger site and provides circa 13 hectares of development land as shown below.



Source: GVA, Dec 2013

Site Assessment

We have continued the numbering from the ELR and have given this additional site the reference P64 – Cricket Lane.

We have undertaken a site visit and provide at **Appendix A** photos from this site visit. At **Appendix B** we provide a copy of the employment sites proforma that formed the basis of the assessment. For continuity this is the same as that provided at Appendix G of our 2012 ELR Report.

We provide the key findings of our employment assessment below (this covers all of the criteria used to inform Appendix H of our 2012 ELR and should be read across as appropriate):

Table 1: Site P64: Cricket Lane – Proposed Employment Site Assessment

Criteria	Score	Notes
Site Area	Circa 13.2 hectares	This is the employment element of a 38 hectare site that will provide, in addition to employment use, in excess of 24 hectares of residential/community uses.
Availability	No	Site is not immediately available but is being promoted by developers for an allocation in the Local Plan.
Ownership	N/A	TBC.
Market Activity	No	Greenfield site that given its strategic gateway location would be attractive to the market, most likely sub-regional companies.
Access	5	Adjoins both the London Road and A38 providing easy access for all vehicles to the strategic infrastructure network.
Public Transport	3	Lichfield town centre bus and train station are approx. 1.5km to the north, the no. 765 service to Nuneaton has a stop 50m to the north of the site and its well served by both pedestrian and cycle routes.
Prominence	5	Gateway site that is visible from both London Road and the A38.
Local Amenities	3	Close to a limited range and quality of basic services including a pub/restaurant and petrol station/mini supermarket, with all town centre facilities within 1.5km of the site.
Layout	5	The site is largely flat with no obvious obstructions.
Character of area	1	Located on the edge of the urban area in a semi-rural setting. No adjacent commercial uses but adjacent to two main roads (A38/London Road) with the site abutting Cricket Lane on its north western edge which has residential accommodation on one side of the road.

Planning status	3	The site has no current planning status and is being promoted by its agents/developers to be included as an allocation in the emerging Local Plan.
Economic constraints	3	The site appears to have only minor obstacles to development. As these refer in the main to bringing forward greenbelt land and providing access off the existing highway network these may be both time consuming and expensive to resolve.
Strategic location	3	The site is in a prime gateway location on the edge of the urban area and is adjacent to the A38 and London Road.
Greenfield/Brownfield	1	The site is on greenfield land.
Market attractiveness	2	Given its strategic location we would expect that the site would be attractive to sub-regional companies who are looking for easy access to the highway network. The site is located approx. 5/10 minutes drive to the north of both the A5 and M6 Toll which provide fast links to the national motorway network.

Source: GVA, Dec 2013

After discussions with our agents it is our view (subject to greenbelt release and planning consent) that this site would be very attractive to the market given its strategic gateway location. We would advise that the majority of demand would come from B8 occupiers with some demand from B1c/B2 end users.

In this light we have moved away from the assumption in Table 4.18 of the 2012 ELR, splitting the quantum of B2/8 land use equally i.e. 50/50, and have assumed that 75% of the land (4,000 sqm per ha as per Table 5.14 of the 2012 ELR) would be for B8 end users and the remaining 25% for B1c/B2 end users (3,500 sqm per ha).

We have then applied the methodology used in Appendix I of our 2012 ELR to rank this proposed employment site as follows:

Table 2: Site P64: Cricket Lane – Proposed Employment Site Assessment (Ranking)

Criteria	Score
Market score	24
Physical score	10
Sustainability score	9
Total score	43
Market ranking	Average
Physical ranking	Excellent
Sustainability ranking	Average
Typology	B1c/B2 or B8
Office/Technology capacity	N/A
Industrial capacity (B1c/B2)	3.2 hectares and 11,200 sqm
Distribution capacity (B8)	9.9 hectares and 39,600 sqm
Total land	13.2 hectares and 50,800 sqm

Source: GVA, Dec 2013

As noted in Table 2 above it is our view, given the site's gateway location and current market demand that this site would be most suited for smaller scale B8 distribution employment uses and ancillary B1c/B2 industrial uses.

As noted elsewhere in this report this site is being promoted as a potential future employment land allocation and so its delivery is dependent upon achieving this. Further, given its location in the greenbelt a key consideration will be whether it receives political support to enable its release from the greenbelt. If this occurs any future planning application will need to clearly articulate the means by which access and egress to/from the highway network will be dealt within the site. The September 2012 Pegasus document provides some initial views on this including separate access for the residential and employment elements which we would support.

Conclusions

The 2012 ELR concluded that whilst there was a slight shortfall in the committed supply for B1a/B1b and B1c/B2 employment uses to meet the identified demand this turns into a substantial surplus when the potential future employment sites are added to the portfolio.

The availability of a further 13.2 hectares of employment land supply for B1c/B2 (3.3 ha) and B8 (9.9 ha) provides a supply surplus, over demand, of circa 34.75 hectares of B1c/B2 space and in excess of 77.1 hectares of B8 space.

The 2012 ELR recommended that LDC allocated circa 10 hectares of employment land from its potential future sites to meet the shortfall in demand from its committed employment sites.

The 2012 ELR also concluded that sites that have scored excellent or good should be considered further by LDC to determine their potential to be allocated to meet the identified shortfall.

It is not the purpose of this assessment to determine whether or not this site is allocated by LDC in its Local Plan. This determination will be for LDC as it assesses its portfolio of all potential future sites to identify those most suitable to meet market demand and provide additional employment space in the plan period.

We are also cognisant of the fact that since the ELR was completed in 2012 the Local Plan has been through its Examination in Public and it is possible that there may have been changes to the employment land supply information relied upon in this report from the 2012 ELR.

We also recognise that since the completion of the ELR the UK property market has slowly emerged from recession and is starting to show signs of growth. As a result LDC will be looking to allocate additional employment sites that meet their needs moving forwards.

It may be that LDC determines to provide additional supply, as a buffer, to the 10 hectares identified in the 2012 ELR. If this were to be the case LDC have sufficient supply to identify the most suitable sites to meet their employment land needs over the plan period.

Appendices

Appendix A – Photos from Cricket Lane Site Visit

Appendix B – Cricket Lane Employment Site Assessment Proforma

*Appendix A - Photos from Cricket Lane, Lichfield – Site Visit
(December 2013)*









Appendix B - Employment Sites Proforma

Site Ref No

P64

Address

Cricket Lane, Lichfield, WS14

Criteria	Score	Notes
Availability	N	Yes – Site is advertised as being available, or there are no obvious obstructions to immediately develop the site. No – Site is not immediately available (please state reason why in space below)
Site Ownership	N/A	Please note Site Ownership Details if available
Market Activity (any in last 5 years)	N	Yes – Evidence of recent development in the immediate surrounding area (e.g. on the same part of an estate or road) No – No evidence of recent development. If the site is a new (Greenfield) site please state below whether it would be attractive to the market at present
Access	5	5. Either adjoining main road or motorway junction with easy site access for all vehicles or access to rail, air and sea networks 4. Close to major road network; easy site access for all vehicles 3. Easy site access for all vehicles; indirect or restricted access to major road network 2. Restricted access for HGVs; restricted access to major road network 1. Restricted access for all commercial vehicles, severely restricted access to major road network
Public Transport	3	5. Close to a station, peak time bus route and cycle route; on a pedestrian route 4. Close to a station or peak time bus route, close to cycle route, on a pedestrian route 3. Close to either a station or peak time bus route or cycle route; on a pedestrian route 2. Not near a station, peak time bus route or cycle route; on a pedestrian route 1. Not on a pedestrian route; not near a station, peak time bus route or cycle route NB. "Close" = within about 10 minutes walk NB2. Peak time bus routes defined as more than 2 buses per hour
Prominence	5	5. Gateway site to a prominent estate, visible from major road network 4. Visible site, on a main road or prominent estate 3. On a main road or prominent estate, tucked away from view 2. Visible, on a minor road or estate 1. On a minor road or estate, tucked away from view
Local Amenities	3	5. Close to a town centre with a wide range and quantity of services 4. Close to local centre with a reasonable range and quantity of services 3. Close to a limited range and quantity of basic services 2. Close to one or two services 1. No services in close proximity NB1: Employment related services such as banks, travel agents, shops, leisure/recreation, pubs/restaurants NB2: "Close" = within about 10 minutes walk
Site Layout	5	5. Clear plot, no obstructions 4. Regular shaped plot, obstructed 3. Regular shaped plot, fragmented 2. Irregular shaped plot, obstructed 1. Irregular shaped plot, fragmented
Character of Area	1	5. Well established commercial area 4. Established commercial area, with residential area or rural area nearby 3. Mixed commercial and residential area 2. Mainly residential or rural area with few commercial uses 1. Mainly residential or rural area with no existing commercial uses
Planning Status	3	5. Detailed planning permission 4. Outline planning permission 3. Published development brief 2. Local Plan allocation 1. Allocation in Deposit Draft Local Plan, or reserve site
Economic Constraints	3	5. No obstacles to development 4. Minor obstacles to development; relatively easy, quick and cheap to resolve 3. Minor obstacles to development; more difficult, expensive and time-consuming to resolve 2. Major obstacles to development; very difficult, expensive and time-consuming to resolve 1. Major obstacles to development; extremely difficult, expensive and time-consuming to resolve NB: Obstacles to development would include access difficulties, infrastructure requirements, contamination remediation costs, multiple ownership etc.
Strategic Location	3	4. Motorway Corridor 3. Other Strategic Roads 2. Elsewhere in Built up Area 1. All other sites
Greenfield / Brownfield	1	1. Site is on Greenfield Land 2. Site is on Brownfield Land
Market Attractiveness	2	3. Site attractive to National companies 2. Site attractive to Sub-regional companies 1. Site attractive to Local companies