

Proposed Employment Site – Representation to Kirklees Local Plan

Land at the former North Bierley Waste
Water Treatment Works, Oakenshaw

February 2016

Turley

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This representation is prepared by Turley on behalf of Keyland Developments Ltd in relation to land at the former North Bierley Waste Water Treatment Works, Oakenshaw (“the site”). The development will provide a range of accommodation, primarily for advanced manufacturing, precision engineering and distribution uses.
- 1.2 The majority of the site is a former waste water treatment works with associated structures, although the boundary also includes undeveloped fields. The redevelopment of the previously developed land is supported both by local and national planning policy. The whole site, however, is situated within the Green Belt.
- 1.3 This report constitutes a formal representation to the Council’s Local Plan consultation process.
- 1.4 Its purpose is to promote the site in its entirety for employment development. It sets out the land owners views on the ‘exceptional circumstances’ which apply in this case to justify release of the site from the Green Belt, in support of the Council’s decision to include this site as a future employment allocation.
- 1.5 The consultation documents against which this representation is made (with respect to the relevant sections in this report) are:
 - Strategy and Policies
 - Allocations and Designations
 - Green Belt Review and Outcomes
 - Sustainability Appraisal
 - CIL Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule
- 1.6 The covering letter that accompanies this representation sets out the elements of this report that are applicable to each of the consultation documents.
- 1.7 It is considered that there is a clear and pressing need for several prime strategic employment sites in Kirklees.
- 1.8 North Bierley, by reason of its location, deliverability and the nature of the employment uses it could accommodate, is well positioned to deliver the City Region’s and Council’s economic aims and objectives, as set out in their respective Economic Strategies. It is not noted as a specific strategic site in the Economic Strategies themselves, but it is a site which is capable of early delivery to meet a gap in provision of high quality employment land in the early part of the plan period.

2. Site Location

- 2.1 The site comprises approximately 23 ha of land at the former North Bierley Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW), to the north-west of the M62 and to the east of the M606 between Oakenshaw and Cleckheaton.
- 2.2 The village of Oakenshaw is to the north-west of the site, with various dwellings along Bradford Road (to the west of the M606). Residential properties are also to the north of the site, along Cliff Hollins Lane and Mill Carr Hill Road.
- 2.3 The Woodlands C of E Primary School is also located in this area, which in part shares the site's access via Bradford Road/Mill Carr Hill Road.
- 2.4 The site is accessed from Cliff Hollins Lane to the north of the site, which is, in turn, accessed from Bradford Road via Junction 26 of the M62.
- 2.5 The location of the site is shown below.



- 2.6 The site slopes gently down from the north to the south, with motorway embankments rising up to the south and west. Agricultural fields exist to the north of the site, whilst the west is bounded by steeply rising woodland, which is noted as being of wildlife interest.

- 2.7 Just over 8Ha of the site is previously developed land, comprising a range of buildings, settling tanks and hardstanding.
- 2.8 The site lies in close proximity to a number of key commercial developments, which provide accommodation for a range of distribution and advanced manufacturing / precision engineering businesses.
- 2.9 These are the Euroway estate, which lies to the north; West 26, which lies to the south; and Low Moor, which lies to the northwest. These developments form part of a “manufacturing arc” which is a recognised and successful local economic cluster which provide for the design, manufacture and distribution of components (or Original Equipment Manufacture “OEM” businesses) primarily for the automotive industry.

Existing Use and Ownership

- 2.10 The site is within the control of Keyland Developments Ltd.
- 2.11 The land is all within the Green Belt. It comprises the structures associated with the redundant waste water treatment works in broadly the central section, along with areas of fields in agricultural use.



Aerial photograph of the site looking north-west towards Oakenshaw, Euroway and Low Moor



Aerial photograph of the site looking southwards across the site, to West 26

Existing development

- 2.12 One of the key features of the site is the existing development, which served the waste water treatment needs of the South Bradford area for over a hundred years before it was made redundant in 2010.
- 2.13 This has left a legacy of structures which already have an impact on the openness of the site. These include:

Existing Site Structures

Type	Location	Footprint (m ²)	Height (m)	Volume (m ³)
Building 1	Above ground	391	7.25	2,835
Building 2	Above ground	436	7.81	2,453
Tanks	Above ground	27,250	-	16,000
Tanks	Below ground	(included above)	-	4,000
Hard standing	Above ground	8,255	-	-
Total	-	-	-	25,288

Opportunities & Constraints

- 2.14 The following table highlights the opportunities and constraints relating to development of the site:

Opportunities	Constraints
<p>Previously developed site with a number of above-ground settling tanks. Development of the site is therefore supported by local and national planning policy.</p>	<p>Green Belt, including both previously developed and currently greenfield land.</p>
<p>Relatively flat site.</p>	<p>A range of development constraints including the existing infrastructure, the need to create development plateaux and the presence of existing utilities within the site boundary</p>
<p>The site is situated adjacent to the Chain Bar roundabout, which has funding for significant improvements to alleviate existing transport problems and open up the economic potential of Huddersfield.</p>	<p>The site will incur potentially significant upfront costs in removing the existing site infrastructure.</p>
<p>The site has excellent access to the M62 corridor, a key east to west transport route across the UK (part of the trans-European network route), linking the Mersey and Humber ports to Europe.</p> <p>The M62 is a focus for regional scale logistics and warehousing development at key development nodes in West Yorkshire and across to Manchester.</p>	<p>Need to retain elements of currently operational Yorkshire Water equipment</p>
<p>The site is situated close to other business uses, which will enable the establishment of key connections and supply chains.</p>	

2.15 These opportunities and constraints inform the case to justify allocation of the site for employment purposes, as set out below.

3. The Proposed Use

- 3.1 It is proposed to use the site for employment purposes, including advanced manufacturing, precision engineering facilities, and higher quality distribution units. There may also be elements of research and development associated with the local cluster of manufacturing expertise.
- 3.2 There will be an emphasis on providing high-quality, environmentally-efficient buildings to support the evolving requirements of manufacturing, engineering and distribution. The design, layout and landscaping of the site will reflect the site's position as the prime strategic employment site in Kirklees.
- 3.3 An indicative site masterplan is provided below, showing the accommodation of 47,466 sqm (512,000 ft²) of employment space.

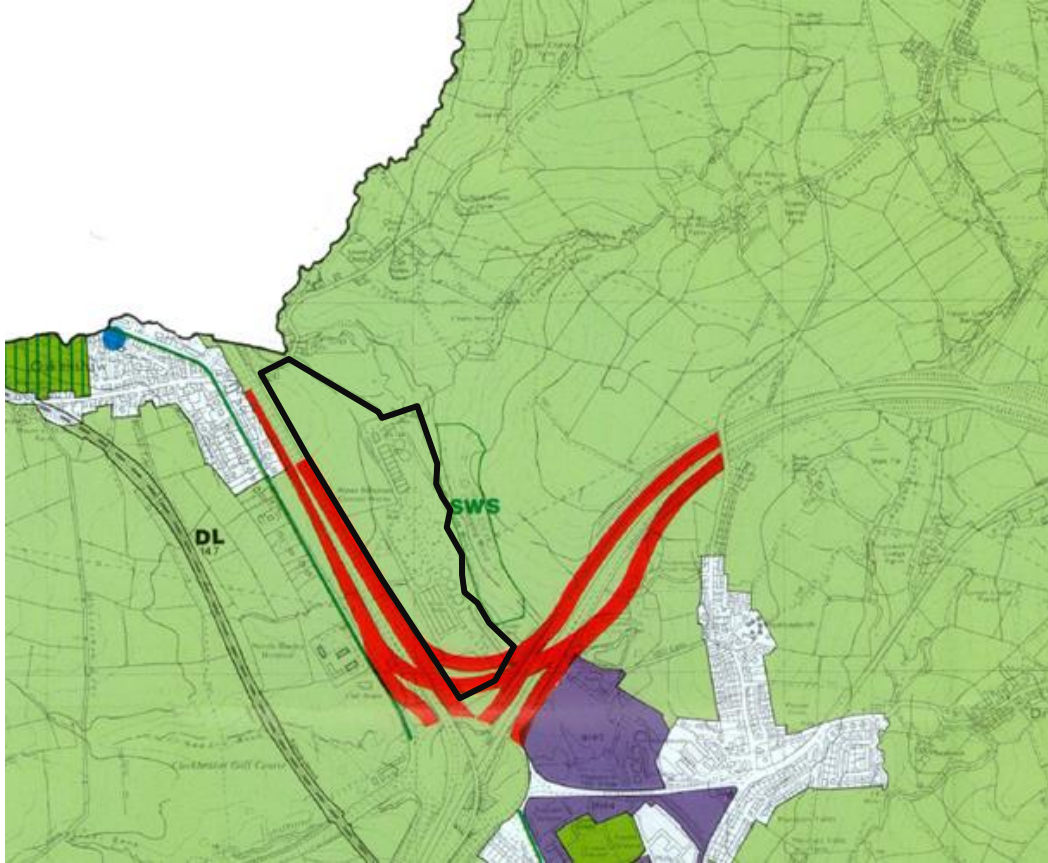


- 3.4 The site is at the heart of West Yorkshire's advanced manufacturing centre, being proximate to both a workforce and consumer population. It is well-connected to the M62 trans-Pennine motorway corridor and is close to the M1. This part of Northern England has become a hub for precision engineering and advanced manufacturing businesses, many of which are looking to relocate or expand existing businesses.
- 3.5 The site has all of the necessary locational characteristics to meet the needs of these businesses which, to date have been frustrated by a lack of suitable land supply.

4. Existing and Proposed Allocations

Kirklees Unitary Development Plan 1999

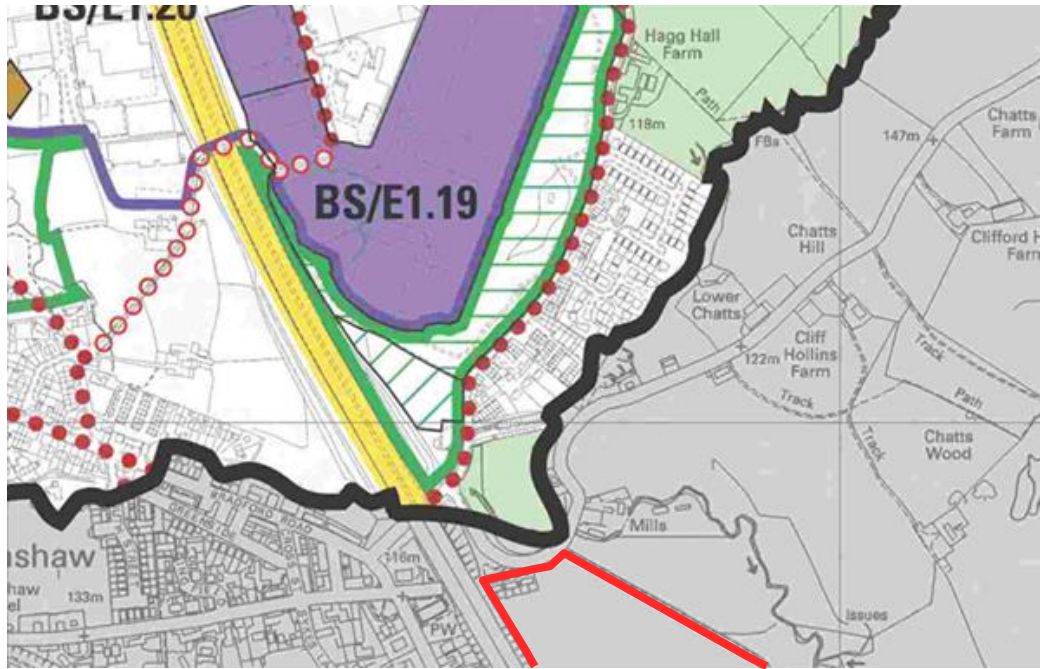
- 4.1 An extract from the adopted Kirklees UDP proposals map, showing the site's location (outlined in black), is shown below.



- 4.2 The site currently forms part of the Green Belt (shaded green). It does not benefit from any specific land use allocations and the general policies of the UDP still apply.
- 4.3 The red colouring of the M62/M606 junction signifies a 'Department of Transport Highway Scheme.' This is discussed in more detail later in this report.
- 4.4 Hanging Wood, a Site of Wildlife Significance (annotated 'SWS' on the Kirklees UDP proposals map) is situated to the east of the site.

Bradford Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2005)

- 4.5 Although the site is wholly within Kirklees district, the northern boundary of the site is adjacent to Bradford district. It is therefore considered relevant to place the site within the context of the Bradford RUDP proposals map (site shown outlined in red, below).

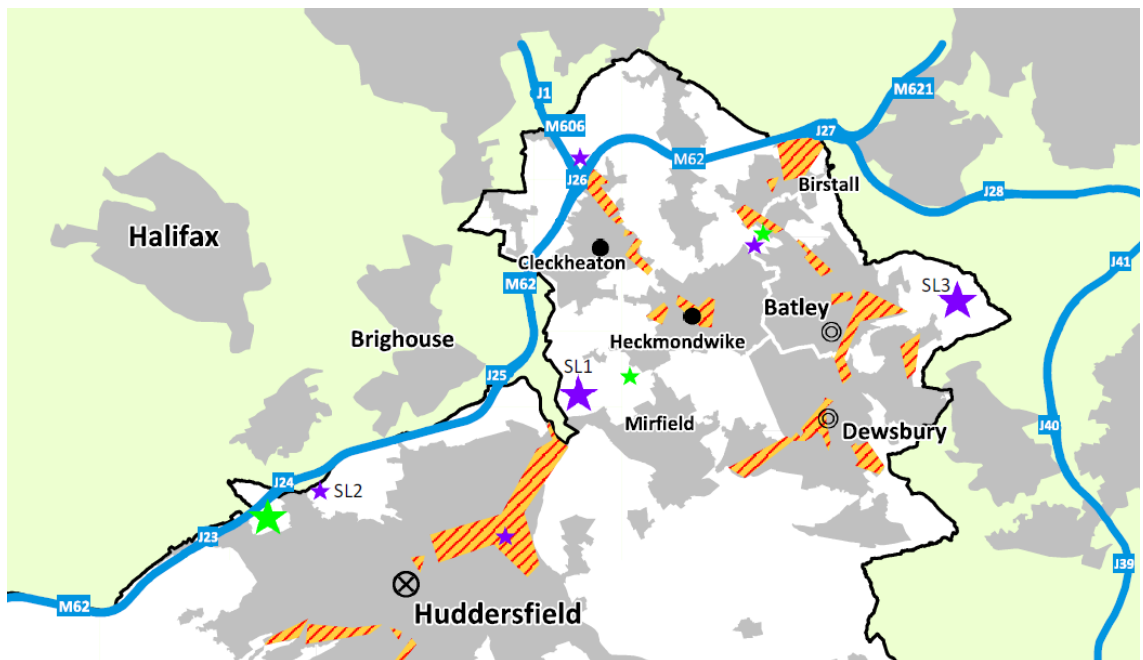


- 4.6 It can be seen that the closest part of the Bradford district to the site is shaded green, signifying Green Belt.

Proposed Allocations

Kirklees Local Development Framework 2012

- 4.7 The Kirklees Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy was withdrawn in 2013. However, the Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document (2012) included the site as a new employment site which is under 30Ha, as shown below:



- 4.8 Whilst the LDF was abandoned, this was for reasons unrelated to the promotion of the land for employment uses. Rather than undermining the case of the release of

employment land from the Green Belt, this has simply hampered economic growth by continuing a trend of the non-release of land suitable for modern employment purposes.

Kirklees Draft Local Plan: Strategies and Policies (November 2015)

- 4.9 The Draft Strategies and Policies document sets out the vision for the plan and sets a number of high level policies designed to guide the overall development strategy and future development management decisions. We generally support the approach taken in this document and set out our views below.

Vision for Kirklees

- 4.10 The following paragraph is supported as it specifically refers to the need to allocate new employment sites in order to aid the economic growth of the District, as set out in the City Region Strategic Employment Plan and the Kirklees Economic Strategy:

Kirklees will be ideally placed to encourage inward investment and stimulate economic growth. This will be achieved through the provision of new prime employment land, sites of strategic importance for employment with a focus on manufacturing and engineering including Cooper Bridge and Chidswell and safeguarded employment land which, as a whole, provide the opportunities to grow businesses, improve economic resilience and increase the district's ability to compete with other areas.

Spatial Development Strategy

- 4.11 The spatial development strategy is supported. It references the need to meet employment needs, including the aspirations of the Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan and Kirklees Economic Strategy. It also recognises that there is a need for new prime strategic employment locations.
- 4.12 The supporting text is also supported, particularly as it recognises that securing sites with key locational characteristics is the primary factor necessary to ensure successful economic development. This can only be achieved, in the current context, by releasing land from the Green Belt as the land in close proximity to the key transport infrastructure in the District tends to be both greenfield and Green Belt. Clearly, if an opportunity exists to make best use of previously developed land in these highly accessible locations, that opportunity should be taken.

Economy

- 4.13 The approach adopted to the allocation of new employment land is supported. The land supply calculations include land in Primary Employment Areas (PEA), and the draft plan suggests allocating additional land beyond that required when the PEA sites are taken into account. It is considered that the PEA sites will not deliver a reliable supply of land. We have analysed several of the better located PEA sites to consider the land which is genuinely available in those locations and whether these are capable of meeting the need for new well located land for the target economic growth sectors. This is set out in section 6 of this report. Whilst the existence of the PEA supply needs to be reflected in the figures, we consider it to be entirely appropriate to allocate more land which is capable of meeting the growth aspirations of the SEP and KES.

Strategic Transport Infrastructure

- 4.14 Policy DLP19 is supported. The provision of improvement works to M62 Junction 26 will have positive effects on the functioning of the junction which will aid access to the site. These works will have an impact on the amount of land available for development on this site although the policy is supported in terms of the principle of improving this junction.

Kirklees Draft Local Plan: Allocations and Designations (November 2015)

- 4.15 The draft Allocations and Designations document identifies the site as 'E1985: Former North Bierley Waste Water Treatment Works, Cliff Hollins Lane, Cleckheaton.'
- 4.16 The draft allocation sets out its gross area as 23.13 hectares, with a net developable area of 15 hectares, as part of the site has been removed due to it being an area of priority habitat (parts of the eastern and southern boundary immediately adjacent to the woodland) and affected by a high pressure gas pipeline and a high voltage power line.
- 4.17 It identifies an indicative capacity (for employment purposes) of 49,000 sq m of floorspace.
- 4.18 The document's site assessment also sets out the constraints of the site, along with a general report/commentary about the suitability of the site. The constraints are set out as follows:
- Site affected by high voltage power lines
 - Part of the site is within a Coal Mining Area
 - 43m stopping sight distance required for site access junction (30mph speed limit).
 - The access road will require widening into the site as well as improvements to its junction with Cliff Hollins Lane
 - Additional mitigation on wider highway network may be required
 - Part of the site is within flood zones 2 and 3a
 - Sequential approach to the location of employment development required within this site to avoid high flood risk areas where possible
 - Detailed surface water drainage and surface water flood risk investigation required
 - Within the outer zone of a hazardous material facility
 - High pressure gas pipeline crosses part of the site
 - Risk of contamination
 - Affected by Hanging Wood Local Wildlife Site to the north [east] of the site

- Land to be safeguarded for M62/M606 widening scheme
 - Landscape character assessment has been undertaken for this site which should be considered in the development masterplan
 - Prevention and mitigation to reflect Water Framework Directive requirements
- 4.19 These constraints are discussed in greater detail in the subsequent sections of this report.
- 4.20 The reports/commentary section of the allocation notes that the following information will be required:
- Flood Risk Assessment
 - Air Quality Impact Assessment
 - Noise Assessment - if B2 or B8 uses proposed
 - Odour Assessment - if B2 use proposed
 - Contamination Assessment Phase 1 and 2
 - Pre-determination archaeological evaluation
- 4.21 A review of technical issues is provided in section 7 of this report.
- Kirklees Draft Local Plan: Green Belt Review and Outcomes Report (November 2015)***
- 4.22 This Draft Local Plan document sets out the findings of the Green Belt boundary review undertaken to inform the plan. It includes a review of the Green Belt edges and the potential re-drawing of the boundaries to add, or remove, land from the Green Belt.
- 4.23 The document sets out various criteria against which the Green Belt edge is assessed ('the Green Belt Edge Review'). These include various constraints and a series of tests which mirror the NPPF "purposes" of including land in the Green Belt. Section 6 of this report sets out the land owners and developers views on these tests.
- Kirklees Draft Local Plan: Rejected Site Options Report (November 2015)***
- 4.24 This report identifies the site options that were put forward for inclusion in the draft Local Plan and have been rejected.
- 4.25 The methodology used by the Council in deciding whether to reject each option is of interest, particularly with regard to the 'Green Belt Constraint' methodology (shown below).

Green Belt Constraint

Green	The site would present a reasonable extension relative to the settlement it abuts, would have little or no impact on the purposes of including land in the green belt and presents the opportunity to create a strong new defensible green belt boundary
Amber	The site is located adjacent to a part of the green belt edge where assessment has shown that development would have some detrimental impact on the purposes of including land in the green belt and/or the site does not present a strong new defensible green belt boundary but opportunity exists that could mitigate this impact, such as the minor alteration to the option boundary or the removal of some additional land from the green belt
Red	The site would not present a reasonable extension relative to the settlement it abuts and/or the site is located adjacent to a part of the green belt edge where assessment has shown that development would have a significant detrimental impact on the purposes of including land in the green belt, and/or it is located adjacent to a part of the green belt edge that is deemed to be significantly constrained and/or the option is remote from any settlement

4.26 The sites that have been rejected due to Green Belt constraints are therefore considered by the Council not to present a reasonable extension relative to the settlements they abut; and/or where the development would have a significant detrimental impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt; and/or it is located adjacent to a part of the Green Belt edge that is deemed to be significantly constrained; and/or the option is remote from any settlement.

4.27 The site has not been rejected and therefore further representations are not proposed to this document. However, it is noted that our support for the allocation is expressed in respect of other documents and we agree that the site does fall within the “Green” category above. This is further expanded upon in our comments against the Green Belt Review Outcomes document.

4.28 The site is included as a draft employment allocation in the Allocations and Designations document, it is also included as a rejected site for a mixed-use development (site reference MX1918) within the Rejected Sites Options Report. The site owner and prospective developer supports the inclusion of the site as an employment allocation.

4.29 In light of the detailed analysis that has been undertaken and presented in this report, it is our consideration that the North Bierley site should be allocated for employment uses.

Community Infrastructure Levy: Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (November 2015)

4.30 This document identifies zones for proposed charging rates for residential uses, which is not relevant to the development proposed in this instance as all employment uses are set at a nil charge.

4.31 It is considered that the proposed nil rate of CIL is appropriate, given the lower levels of revenue generated by employment uses and the other costs associated with developing this site. If CIL is applied, this could risk the site’s viability, which in turn could affect its deliverability and therefore the growth of the employment sector in this location.

4.32 The £0 rate of CIL for employment uses is therefore supported.

5. Sustainability Assessment

- 5.1 The Sustainability Appraisal Report forms part of the emerging Local Plan and assesses the likely effects of a plan on social, economic, and environmental issues.
- 5.2 The Sustainability Appraisal objectives, as set out in the Appraisal Report, are as follows:

SA Objectives	SEA Directive Topic(s)
1: Increase the number and range of employment opportunities available for local people, and ensure that they are accessible.	Population
2. Achieve an economy better capable of growth through increasing investment, innovation and Entrepreneurship.	Population
3. Ensure education facilities are available to all.	Population
4. Improve the health of local people and ensure that they can access the health and social care they need.	Population Human health
5. Protect local amenity including avoiding noise and light pollution.	Population Human health
6. Retain and enhance access to local services and facilities.	Population
7. Make our communities safer by reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.	Population
8. Protect and enhance existing and support the provision of new recreation facilities and areas of open space and encourage their usage.	Population
9. Ensure all people are able to live in a decent home which meets their needs.	Population
10. Secure an effective and safe transport network which encourages people to make use of sustainable and active modes of transport.	Air
11. Secure the efficient and prudent use of land.	Soil
12. Protect and enhance the character of Kirklees and the quality of the landscape and townscape.	Landscape
13. Conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings.	Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage Material assets
14. Maximise opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.	Biodiversity Flora Fauna
15. Reduce air, water and soil pollution.	Soil Water Air
16. Prevent inappropriate new development in flood risk areas and ensure development does not contribute to increased flood risk for existing property and people.	Material assets
17. Increase prevention, re-use, recovery and recycling of waste close to source.	Material assets
18. Increase efficiency in water, energy and raw material use.	Water Material assets
19. Reduce the contribution that the District makes to climate change.	Climatic factors

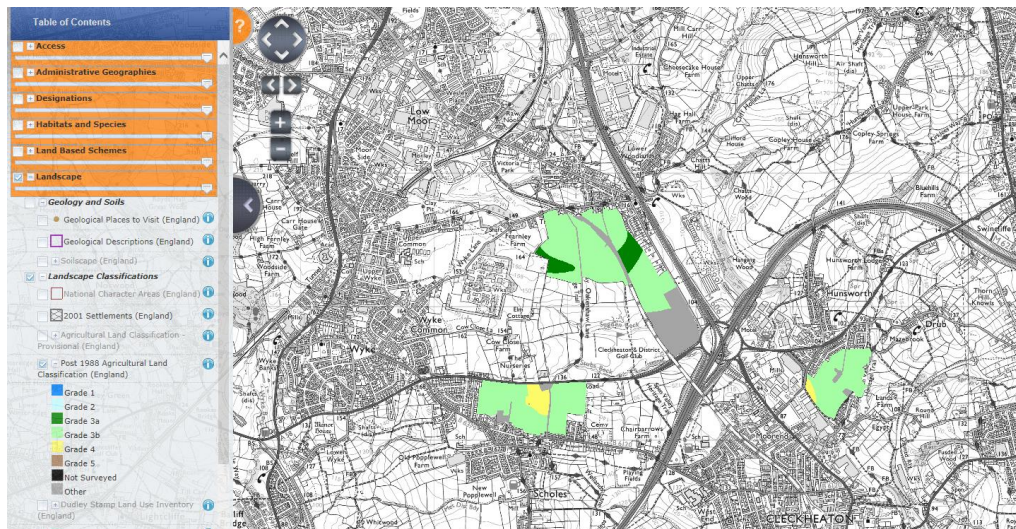
- 5.3 The site has been subject to scoring against the criteria set out in the Sustainability Appraisal above. The summary of the SA findings for site 'E1985: Former North Bierley Waste Water Treatment Works, Cliff Hollins Lane, Cleckheaton' are:

Summary of SA findings: Potential significant positive effect was found in relation to SA objective 1: employment opportunities, 2: economic growth, 10: sustainable transport and 19: climate change. Significant negative effects were identified in relation to...SA objectives 8: recreation and leisure, 11: land use, 12: landscape and townscape and 14: biodiversity and geodiversity. These issues will need to be considered further in terms of mitigation and/or enhancement, which may be achieved through Local Plan policies.

- 5.4 We support the Council's acknowledgement that a potential significant positive effect has been identified for employment and economic growth, sustainable transport and climate change. The site will deliver a prime strategic employment site in Kirklees, with a unique ability of the site to deliver early in the plan period, in an accessible location and making best use of previously developed land.
- 5.5 The majority of the site is privately owned and not open to public access. The site currently has a single footpath at its north eastern boundary, running along the current site access road. The significance of the effect on this footpath will be reduced by retaining the rights of way to ensure that the development can proceed whilst not reducing the ability of the site to contribute to public access across to the wider footpath network to the east.
- 5.6 In relation to objective 8 (leisure and recreation), the SA scoring matrix does not, in fact, simply identify a significant negative effect. The wording of the appraisal is that '*a mixed effect is likely - minor positive and significant negative,*' which is dependent upon the open space and green infrastructure which can be retained/provided as part of the development.
- 5.7 In respect of objective 11, the SA scoring matrix identifies a significant negative effect due to the proposed development being '*a less efficient use of land than development on brownfield sites or sites of lower quality agricultural land.*'
- 5.8 Whilst the western and northern part of the overall site is greenfield land, the majority of the site is previously developed. The greenfield elements of the site are in agricultural use. Agricultural Land Classification data, available on magic.gov.uk, shows that the site is primarily Grade 3 land (shown green) with an element of Grade 4 land (shown yellow) to the north:



5.9 This older and more strategic mapping is not clear whether this site is Grade 3a or 3b land. It is clear that the mapping is too strategic to recognise the previously developed areas of the site as urban land (shown red), although it is clear that much of the site is not agricultural land at all. More detailed mapping is available although there is no data for the site. This does provide data for the land on the opposite side of the M606, and some land to the south. These suggest that the land in this area is more likely to be Grade 3b, as this predominates in the locality. The presence of Grade 4 land in the north of the site also suggest that immediately adjacent land is more likely to be of a lower quality.



5.10 We consider that, as a unique opportunity to make use of brownfield land in close proximity to a motorway corridor, the site ought to be scored higher on this measure.

5.11 The SA scoring matrix identifies a likely significant negative effect in respect of objective 12 (landscape). It states that the site is relatively large and is on greenfield land.

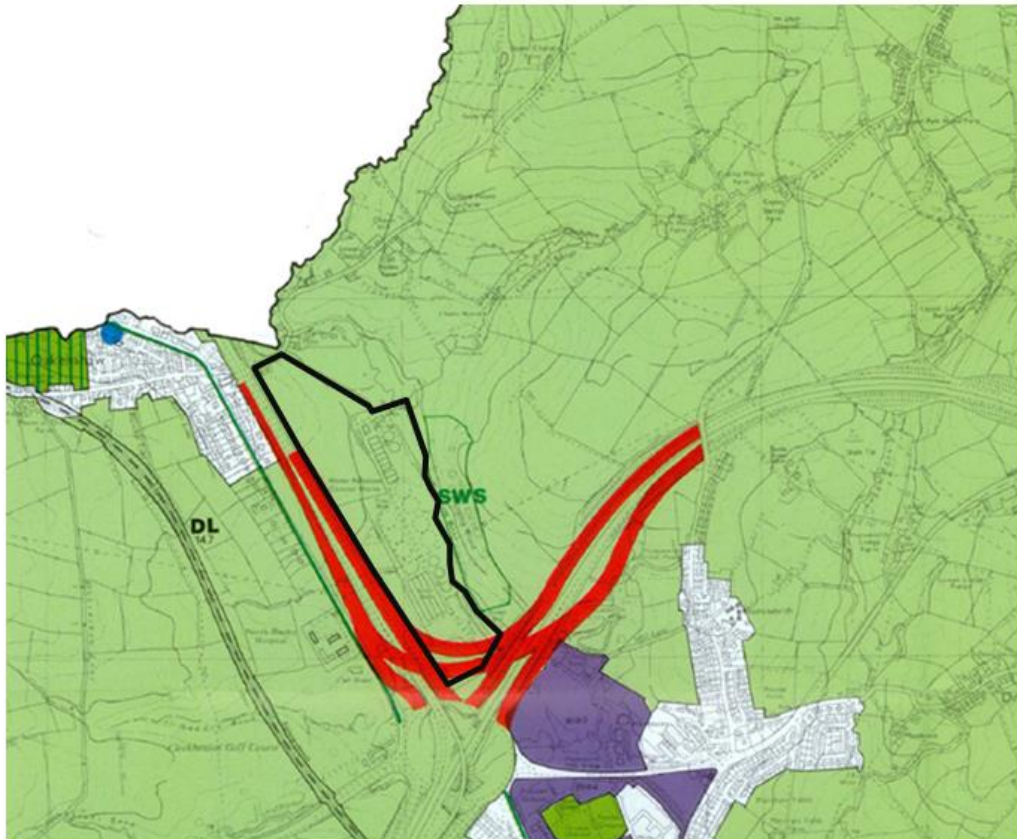
Therefore, a significant negative effect on this objective is likely. It goes on to say that *“this is uncertain depending on the design of the development.”*

- 5.12 It is inevitable that there will be a loss of countryside as a result of developing this site. However, a large proportion of the site is previously developed and already impacts landscape character. The extent to which the greenfield elements of the site harms both landscape character and visual amenity needs to be established through a more detailed exercise.
- 5.13 The master plan put forward to date is illustrative and designed to show the extent of built development which could be accommodated on the site. Any future development proposals will need to be subject to a detailed master planning exercise which reflects the need for connectivity with existing landscape features, and to protect existing visual amenity.
- 5.14 Finally, the SA scoring matrix identifies a *likely* (our emphasis) significant negative effect in respect of objective 14 (biodiversity). It identifies a number of adjacent and nearby wildlife sites and states that “a significant negative effect on this objective is likely.” However, it goes on to acknowledge that *“there may be opportunities to promote habitat connectivity through the inclusion of green infrastructure with any development”* and that *“the effect is noted to be uncertain.”*
- 5.15 Ecological work has been undertaken on this site, and is discussed in more detail in section 7 of this report. There are a number of wildlife sites within 2km of the site, but only the hanging wood local site is within the zone of influence of a development.
- 5.16 There are no protected species on site, although there is a building with potential for bat roosting, although there was no roosting at the time of the survey. The beck which runs to the east of the site is of potential value for wildlife, although again there were no species of importance present in the beck when it was surveyed. The master planning exercise required for this site will take into account the need to protect certain features as well as to provide green infrastructure.

6. Green Belt

Green Belt Policy Review

- 6.1 The site is located in the Green Belt. An extract from the adopted Kirklees UDP, showing the site boundary outlined in black is below.



- 6.2 The Allocations and Designations Local Plan document proposes to release this site from the Green Belt. This is supported. This section of the report sets out the land owner and prospective developers' views on the exceptional circumstances which exist which justify this release. These are set out below.

Need

Exceptional Circumstances

- 6.3 Once a Green Belt has been established, it requires more than general planning concepts to justify an alteration. Essentially, there must be compelling reasons that amount to a "necessity" for the Green Belt boundary to be modified¹. These reasons, or circumstances, have been held in case law to include factors such as 'need' and the planning benefits associated with delivering against that need.
- 6.4 In this case, the exceptional circumstances are considered to include:

¹ Gallagher Homes Ltd v Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

- the need for a prime strategic employment site,
- the need for more employment land generally, and
- the ability of the site to deliver against that need, with reference to its location, deliverability and overall compatibility with Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan and the Kirklees' Economic Strategy 2014.

6.5 These circumstances are expanded below.

Economic Strategy

Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) (2014)

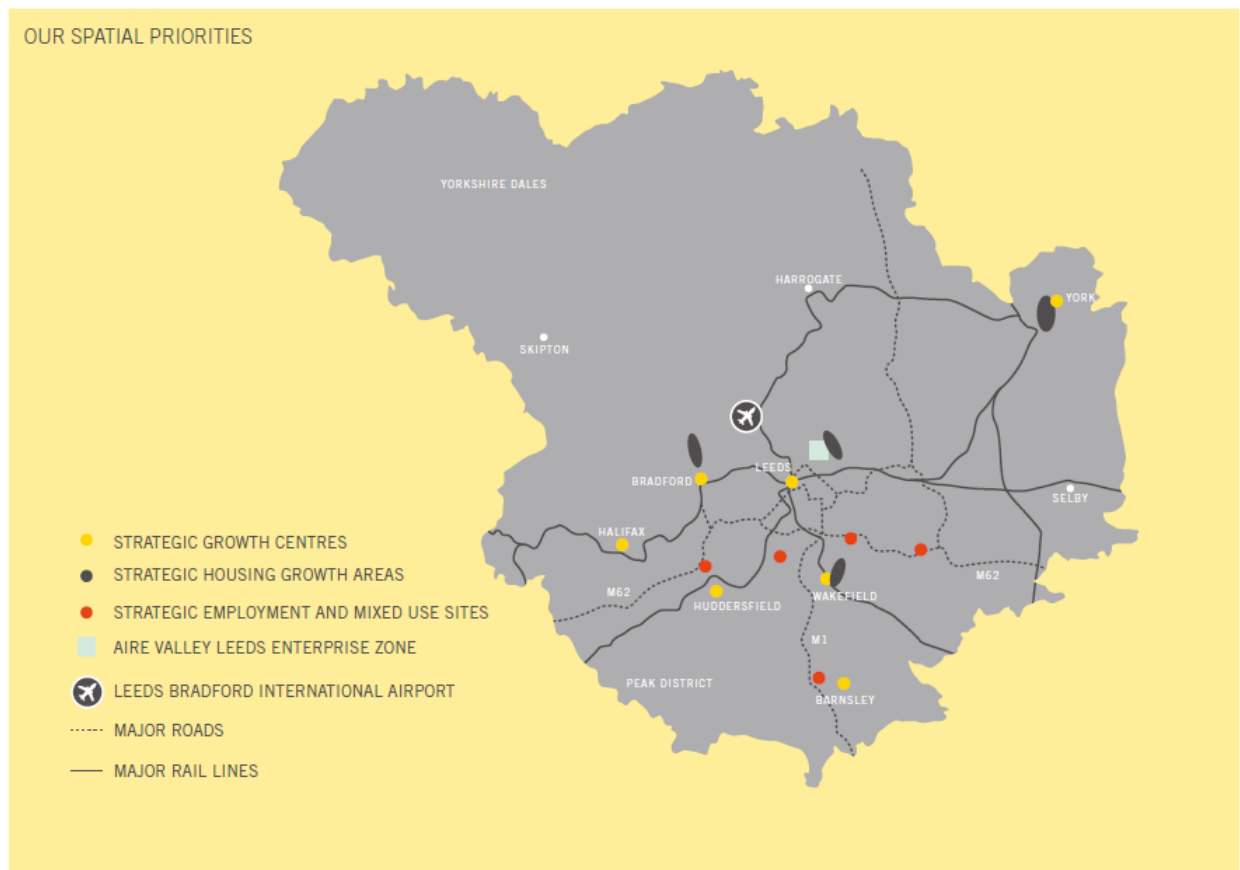
6.6 The Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan (2014) sets the economic vision for the City Region as a whole and is a key document in terms of informing the overall strategy to be taken in the Local Plan.

6.7 The vision of the SEP is to unlock the potential of the City Region, developing an economic powerhouse that will create jobs and prosperity.

6.8 Of note are the 'four strategic pillars' upon which the SEP is founded, which are:

1. Supporting growing businesses
2. Developing a skilled and flexible workforce
3. Building a resource smart City Region
4. Delivering the infrastructure for growth

6.9 The SEP identifies two sites in Kirklees (Cooper Bridge and Chidswell) as regional 'strategic employment and mixed-use sites' along with sites in other Districts (shown red in the extract below). These five major development areas have been identified as strategic opportunities as they combine easy motorway and public transport access with proximity to towns and labour markets.



6.10 The SEP identifies innovative manufacturing as a key industry sector in the City Region, with particular strengths in textile manufacturing and component manufacture, including gears, valves and turbochargers. This is a key growth area for the City Region with a geographic base in the north Kirklees / east Calderdale / south Bradford area.

6.11 Whilst this site is not drawn out as a strategic opportunity, the development of more employment land is clearly required if the objectives of the SEP are to be realised.

Kirklees Economic Strategy (2014)

6.12 The Kirklees Economic Strategy (KES) sets the district wide vision for economic performance.

6.13 The KES also notes that Kirklees has one of the biggest concentrations of manufacturing in England, with world leading expertise in gears, valves, pumps and gaskets, along with process and systems engineering, which cut across markets for energy, water, auto-motives, defence, food production and the low carbon economy².

6.14 However, Kirklees also faces challenges, including a relatively low economic output, below average skills, unemployment and disadvantaged communities³. Kirklees therefore has a successful brand, acknowledged skills and expertise, which sit alongside low economic indicators.

² Para 3.1

³ Para 3.1

- 6.15 On this basis the KES prioritises precision engineering and innovative manufacturing, seeking strength in both depth and excellence⁴. It seeks £500m of additional GVA and increased investment, innovation, exports and embedded local supply chains. To achieve this, a substantial increase in high quality employment land needs to be unlocked⁵. This is supported by a simple analysis of the age of the employment land supply in Kirklees. The UDP was adopted in 1999. It allocated land to meet needs up to 2006. It is therefore 17 years since new land was made available to meet the needs of local and sub-regional businesses, and this includes the last decade where planned needs were not provided for. This is a considerable constraint on supply.
- 6.16 The KES notes that engineering and manufacturing are also pronounced sectors in neighbouring Bradford and Calderdale and that the sector locally is a priority for the Leeds City Region⁶. The KES aims to make Kirklees the heart of a growing manufacturing and engineering cluster which will see the sector grow at twice the rate of the wider economy, targeting the creation of 3,500 jobs by 2020⁷.
- 6.17 The actions to achieve this ambition include taking forward an M62 manufacturing hub concept, linked to supply chains, inward investment, exports and innovation; as well as developing strategic employment sites to stimulate jobs and growth, with a focus on manufacturing and engineering⁸.
- 6.18 Furthermore, the KES notes that businesses locate to Kirklees for good access to transport, quality, size and affordability of premises and an attractive environment⁹. It states that:
- “Ensuring a good supply of employment land is critical to long term economic growth and to the district’s ability to maximise its locational advantage. Many of our businesses tell us that they need more land to grow. It is vital that they are not forced to look outside the district to find the space that meets their expansion ambitions”¹⁰*
- 6.19 The KES clearly sets the requirement for the release of high quality, accessible sites in order to meet the growth needs of the district’s businesses. The KES was released in 2014 and, at that point, the document suggests that businesses had consistently informed the Council of a need to grow. In the context of the constrained land supply noted above, this is unsurprising.
- 6.20 It concludes that:
- “New strategic employment sites are needed to increase the volume of land available for employment and key business sectors. This will unlock significant opportunities for new investment and employment and will strengthen the Leeds City Region manufacturing*

⁴ Para 4.1 Priority 1

⁵ Para 4.3 Headline Initiatives

⁶ Para 5.1

⁷ Para 5.1

⁸ Para 5.1

⁹ Para 8.1

¹⁰ Para 8.1

arc that flows through South Leeds, Dewsbury, Batley, Huddersfield, Brighouse and South Bradford.¹¹

- 6.21 The KES clearly links the future success of priority sectors, with strong accessible locations and notes a lack of current land supply to meet the needs of that sector.
- 6.22 This offers the foundations of the identified need to support the release of the site from the Green Belt.

Draft Local Plan Technical Paper: Employment Needs Assessment November 2015

- 6.23 The Employment Technical Paper notes that the KES target is to achieve 75% employment rate by 2020. This matches Kirklees historic high point for employment and is designed to reflect normal economic growth, plus the effect of policies designed to improve employment rates¹².

Jobs Forecast

- 6.24 It is intended to meet the 75% target primarily through growth of the engineering and manufacturing sector¹³ which it is envisaged can increase employment by 1.5% (to 69.2% of total employment), which is around 1/5th of the increase in employment needed to hit the 75% target¹⁴. Other sectoral growth will be seen in the creative, cultural and digital sector, health and social care, leisure, tourism and sustainable food businesses¹⁵.
- 6.25 The jobs forecast adopted in the plan is based on the output of the Regional Econometric Model, modified to assume a 75% employment rate to reflect the aspirations of the KES.
- 6.26 This scenario sees growth of 32,200 jobs by 2031¹⁶ and limits a decline in manufacturing¹⁷, resulting from increased mechanisation, which was more pronounced in the baseline forecast.

Land Requirements

- 6.27 In terms of translating the job forecast into a land requirement, the total jobs forecast for manufacturing is set to decline as a result of reducing labour intensity¹⁸. However, based on the KES objective and the results of the employers survey, the study concludes that if GVA growth in manufacturing is to be achieved, then new prime sites will need to be released. On this basis 44.5 Ha is proposed for release for manufacturing¹⁹.

¹¹ Para 8.1

¹² Para 2.16

¹³ Para 2.20

¹⁴ Para 2.22

¹⁵ Para 2.24

¹⁶ Para 4.17

¹⁷ Para 4.16

¹⁸ Para 5.6

¹⁹ Para 5.7

6.28 The total land requirement to provide 32,200 jobs, based on this adjusted calculation is 265 Ha²⁰. This comprises the following sectoral land requirements²¹:

Land Use	Requirement (Ha)
Construction	21.8
Finance & Insurance	1.5
Information & Communication	3.1
Manufacturing	44.5
Professional service	12.5
Public Services	23.3
Transport & Storage	60.9
Utilities	6.5
Wholesale	90.9
Total	265.1

6.29 The 44.5Ha for manufacturing is based on a proportion of the two sub-regionally important sites at Cooper Bridge and Chidswell, both of which are intended to help deliver the strategic objectives for manufacturing and engineering and which are referenced in the SEP.

6.30 However, it is noted²² that there will be a need for a mix of uses on these sites in order to support the primary objective of growing the advanced manufacturing / precision engineering sector. On this basis, storage and distribution, R&D and ancillary office elements will also be required on these sites.

6.31 This suggests the need for more, equally well located land to come forward in support of the advanced manufacturing / precision engineering sector. The needs of this sector cannot be met simply on two sites.

6.32 It is also clear that the B8 use classes (Transport, Storage, Wholesale) account for a large proportion of the land required (152Ha) and this sector also has specific locational requirements.

Take Up and Supply

6.33 Historically, take up levels have been relatively low and most development in Kirklees has been on a relatively small scale. The last major development was in Dewsbury and amounted to 6.25Ha, with most development being small extensions and minor new builds.

²⁰ Table 2, para 5.3

²¹ Paraphrased from Table 2, Para 5.3

²² Para 5.9

6.34 There are two extant permissions, at Lindley Moor and Mirfield. Both are in outline and both will see an element of residential development come forward in order to financially enable the employment uses to come forward²³.

6.35 Along with other sites across the District, there is a committed supply of land which equates to around 2 years of historic take up rate²⁴.

Quality of Land Supply

6.36 However, there are issues in terms of the suitability of supply. There is a lack of supply of sites that are of a sufficient size for business needs. The employers survey suggests a need for more land which is:

- in close proximity to motorway junctions;
- avoids of congestion;
- has access to a workforce;
- has expansion opportunities;
- has parking provision; and
- an attractive environment²⁵.

6.37 North Kirklees, where the application site sits, is dominated by industrial demand, with proximity to the M62 being a critical factor which offers the greatest opportunity to attract strategic demand²⁶.

6.38 The technical paper notes that whilst Kirklees current employment stock does provide an important resource for the existing SME stock, it's also restricting other economic growth opportunities for the area²⁷.

6.39 The current land supply:

"offers few opportunities to help achieve the overarching economic objectives for the District....

*...There has been little significant development in recent years, however, this does not imply a market failure but is more an indication that the right opportunities to bring about more significant development do not currently exist."*²⁸

6.40 A further study by Bilfinger GVA²⁹ surveyed local property agents. All of the agents interviewed considered that there is a lack of well-located high quality employment

²³ Para 6.8

²⁴ Para 6.10

²⁵ Para 6.19, presented in bullet point form

²⁶ Para 6.23

²⁷ Para 6.25

²⁸ Para 7.1

²⁹ The Kirklees Employment Market Strength Assessment, 2015

sites³⁰ and that this reflects national trends, where there is a strong preference for quality sites benefitting from good connectivity, particularly to the strategic road network³¹.

6.41 The survey of agents also concludes that there is local and regionally led latent demand for land and property, but that it is difficult to quantify as there are few, if any, “oven-ready” sites³².

6.42 The technical paper concludes that the objectively assessed need for jobs is 32,200 FTE, which will require a land supply of 265 Ha, with a focus afforded to precision engineering and advanced manufacturing. It notes that:

“Some large flat sites, with good access to the motorway junctions and proximity to a skilled workforce will be required to deliver on these objectives”³³

Employment Land Requirement

6.43 The land supply and requirement position in the Draft Local Plan Technical Paper is put forward as:

	Hectares
Requirement	265
Completions (April 2013- present)	-8
Commitments	-21
Employment permissions on non-employment allocations	-3
10% Flexibility	+23
Windfall from Primary Employment Areas (PEA)	-60
Residual Required	196
Amount to be allocated	262

6.44 This shows that a total amount of 196 Ha of land is required to meet the objectively assessed need, taking into account land carried forward from the earlier plan and committed schemes. It suggests that 262 Ha is taken forward for allocation in the emerging Local Plan.

6.45 The difference between the residual requirement and the amount proposed for allocation is a result of the inclusion of 60Ha of supply from the Primary Employment Areas (PEA). These are existing employment areas which are either largely or completely developed out.

6.46 As such they present a limited opportunity for new land to be developed. Many of the sites do offer potential for small new buildings, or small scale expansion of firms

³⁰ Para 7.2

³¹ Para 7.2

³² Para 7.3

³³ Para 8.1

adjacent to gap sites within the PEA and so should form a part of the overall supply. However, many do not share the locational advantages of potential new sites in the area.

6.47 Taking several examples of PEA's close to the Motorway corridors as examples:

- Site B&S3 (Oakwell Industrial Park, Centre 27 Birstall, 63.41 Ha) is proximate to the M62 / M621 and has a vacant site with potential for a separate access onto an estate road. However, it is at the rear of the park and is some 2.3Ha in size. At 40% site density it could accommodate a unit of roughly 100,000sqft (around 10,000sqm), although it is triangular in shape which would limit site efficiencies considerably, meaning that a smaller unit would only be achieved in reality. This is an example of a good available site, in a modern context within the PEA. It could feasibly serve local expansion needs but its contribution would be limited and in line with the normal performance of the employment market in Kirklees. It has been visible to the market for some time.
- Site B&S11 (West 26 / Stubs Beck Lane, Cleckheaton, 11.56Ha) is in an excellent and high profile location, at the junction of the M62 and M606, on relatively flat land with good access to markets and a labour force. This would meet the locational requirements set out in the agent's survey undertaken as part of the plan evidence base. However, there is currently no accessible land within the PEA boundary which could accommodate new development. There is landscaping and scrubland between the built development and the motorway junction roundabout which could feasibly accommodate additional development, but it would need to be accessed through either existing development or directly off a busy roundabout with a sub-optimal access arrangement (eg a left in / left out only access). This land has also been visible to the market for some time.
- Site HUD5 (Mama's & Papa's, Colne Bridge, Leeds Road, 6.25Ha) is in a good location, just off Leeds Road with good access to the M62 via Cooper Bridge. There is vacant land in two areas, one within the curtilage of one of the Mama's & Papa's buildings between the warehouse and car parking, which is only really suitable for a very small scale extension, more car parking or some smaller ancillary building associated with the existing operation. The second area is roughly square and around 1Ha in size. At 40% site density it could accommodate a 4,000sqm / 43,000sqft building. Again, this is a small building in a good and well known location. However, similar to the sites above, it is clearly not adequate to deliver the kind of step change in offer which is needed to transform the market. Again this land has been visible to the market for some time.
- Site B&S1 (Grange Road Industrial Estate, Batley, 14.22 Ha) is removed from the motorway network, but has moderate access to the M1 Motorway via Ossett in Wakefield District. It has one vacant area which is roughly rectangular and bounded to its east and west by industrial development and it north and south by residential development. It has no road frontage

but there is a dirt track which runs between Mill Forest Way and Fort Ann Road, which is not suitable for vehicular access. This site is 0.65 Ha and at 40% site density could accommodate a building of around 2,600sqm / 28,000sqft. Given the access constraints, this building capacity could only feasibly be used as an extension to the adjacent building. Again, this theoretical hectareage could only serve a local / churn based need.

6.48 As can be seen, the PEA sites in good locations are sites which have constraints to development, are well known in the current market and, given the age of the current land supply, do not present a new resource for businesses seeking new accommodation for an expansion or relocation to a prime position. Whilst they add a theoretical capacity to the land supply in the District, they are clearly not suitable to drive forward a transformational policy approach which looks to increase the overall employment rate to 75%.

6.49 As such we consider that the PEA's are:

- (i) Not a reliable source of supply. Many are constrained, small and in remnant locations within the wider sites following development of the better parcels of land.
- (ii) Most suited to the expansion of existing businesses, particularly those within the PEA already. Some are so constrained that they can only meet a direct extension need, whilst others may be suited to smaller businesses in new units, but are still fundamentally constrained sites even within the better located PEA's.
- (iii) Offer nothing new to the market. These are not new employment sites. They have been available to the market for a considerable period of time. Their lack of development suggests that whilst they theoretically exist as supply, they are not likely to be taken up quickly or enthusiastically by the latent demand identified in the evidence base. If they were attractive to that demand, they would have been taken already.
- (iv) Unlikely to help drive the economic change sought by the Council's Economic Strategy. For the reasons set out above, the PEAs will not meet the need for new, strategically located and good quality sites identified as what is needed in order to drive Kirklees' economy forward. The market needs fresh top quality sites, rather than a theoretical supply based on old sites which may be suitable for employment use, but which are not the best available to meet modern requirements. The need for new strategic sites is consistent with the evidence base and a quick analysis of several opportunity sites in the PEA's supports this view.

6.50 On this basis, we consider that the decision to recognise their existence in the technical paper and plan is correct, but that this source of supply cannot be relied on to stimulate the growth which is needed to drives the Kirklees economy towards a 75% employment rate.

- 6.51 A greater choice of top quality sites which will meet industry requirements for large flat sites with good access to the motorway network and a skilled workforce is needed. The proposed allocation of 66 Ha of additional land is considered to offer this choice and flexibility to the market in the absence of such opportunity from the PEA sites.

Market Activity

- 6.52 Following many years of recession, the level of occupier and investor demand for good quality industrial stock within the North of England, particularly along the M62 corridor and within Kirklees, has increased significantly. There is increasing construction activity within the West Yorkshire industrial market, which is particularly evident in the Leeds Aire Valley Enterprise Zone and at Wakefield.
- 6.53 Dove Haigh Phillips who are advising on this project have noted that buildings in excess of 100,000 sq ft are receiving an increasing level of occupier capital investment. In particular, two significant warehouse developments have been approved in Wakefield – one at Trinity Farm (approximately 1 million sqft) and the other at Normanton Industrial Estate (approximately 600,000sqft). Companies are also resorting to installing mezzanine floors in their distribution/warehouse buildings to optimise cubic content, rather than just footprint. This is evidenced by the Marks and Spencer warehouse in Bradford (1.1 million sq ft) and TK Maxx at Knottingley (650,000 sq ft), both of which are capable of expanding by 3 times their floor plate through the use of mezzanines.
- 6.54 Despite this, there has been very little development of quality industrial stock, particularly along the M62 corridor in Kirklees. The employment technical paper notes that this is a result of a lack of land supply, rather than a market failure.
- 6.55 This trend of rising demand is likely to be sustained into the foreseeable future, with no indication that there is likely to be a reduction.

Need Conclusions

- 6.56 It is clear that Kirklees has an existing supply of employment land which is available and in some cases subject to extant permissions. However, that supply is generally old and either does not meet modern requirements or has simply not been delivered. It is known supply to the market and does not offer a new opportunity for economic growth. Other alternative sites are considered further below.
- 6.57 The lack of good quality land supply has constrained economic growth. Low take up has not been a result of a market failure, but reflects the fact that the right kind of land is not available to meet current business requirements. New land is required to address this need.
- 6.58 Market research has suggested that new sites need to be close to the motorway, relatively flat, close to an appropriate workforce, avoid congested routes and be set within an attractive environment, which would include providing for expansion and adequate car parking.
- 6.59 There is a supply of substandard land which will not meet these needs³⁴. It remains appropriate to retain this land for employment purposes as it will allow for the “normal”

³⁴ See our analysis of PEA sites above.

functioning of the local market. It will not, however, achieve the objectives of the Economic Strategy, which should be the primary purpose of the plan.

- 6.60 To allow enough land to come forward to achieve the economic transformation envisaged in the Kirklees Economic Strategy additional land is considered to be needed.
- 6.61 The adjusted economic modelling suggests that this need amounts to 262 Ha in total, with around 44.5ha of this dedicated to precision engineering and advanced manufacturing; and around 152ha dedicated to distribution and logistics space.
- 6.62 These markets are linked and reliant, in part, upon each other. They also share locational requirements.
- 6.63 It is clear that there is an economic need which is not currently being met. It is also clear that this need has not been met for some considerable time. Whilst agent's surveys have not quantified the latent demand in the market, there is consistent messaging from qualitative survey work that a lack of suitable land supply is a considerable barrier to economic progress.
- 6.64 The Core Strategy sought to address this long standing need, but was withdrawn as a result of housing supply issues. This has served to further delay the delivery of a new land supply. The draft Local Plan is seeking to address that now, although it is clear that new land will not be formally released for around 18 months to 2 years from the time of writing³⁵.
- 6.65 We consider that this need has been unmet for a considerable number of years as the UDP allocated land up until 2006, now some 10 years ago. This is a considerable period to have no planned means of meeting the needs of the economy. New land has not entered the market since the UDP was adopted in 1999.
- 6.66 In this context we conclude that there is a clear need to release land to meet economic development needs, both in the short term and during the remainder of the plan period.

Alternative sites

- 6.67 The identified need is for a considerable amount of land, much of which will be required in the motorway corridors in order to meet the locational requirements of the growth markets identified in the SEP and KES. The availability of land in Kirklees is significantly affected by topography, particularly at the western side of the District. With both motorway proximity and topography taken into account the options to accommodate growth for this market are extremely limited.

Availability of Alternative non-Green Belt Brownfield Sites

- 6.68 It is considered that no non-Green Belt brownfield sites in Kirklees are capable of delivering a strategic employment site which fulfils the economic aims and objectives of the Economic Strategy (2014) to the same extent as this site, taking account of its size, location and connectivity with other established employment uses. We have analysed some of the better located Primary Employment Area sites³⁶. These sites are not likely

³⁵ The 2014 Local development scheme envisages adoption of the Local Plan in late 2017

³⁶ See Paragraph 6.46

to offer a reliable source of supply, are not new to the market and are not adequate to meet the identified levels of need.

- 6.69 It is not possible to accommodate the level of growth associated with meeting the KES aims on previously developed urban land. It is therefore necessary to look at greenfield options.

Availability of Alternative Allocated Sites

- 6.70 There are two allocated employment sites which are well located and close to the motorway network. These are at Slipper Lane, Mirfield and at Lindley Moor. Both of these sites have recently approved planning permissions for a mix of employment and residential development.

- 6.71 There is therefore a committed supply of land which is broadly capable of meeting immediate needs. However, on the basis of average take up, these consents will provide only a fraction of the land needed to ensure a steady supply of good quality land to the market.

- 6.72 The Local Plan technical paper notes³⁷ that 10 ha of land has been taken up on average every year since 2004-5. This is a “policy off” average, which reflects the average performance of the market over a 10 year period. Notably, at least 8 years of the monitoring period of 2004-2014 was after 2006, which was the end point of the UDPs planned land supply.

- 6.73 A 10ha take up represents a development footprint for this type of development³⁸ of some 40,000sqm (430,556sqft). These two sites have consent for a total of 36,742 sqm (395,487sqft) of space. These sites therefore represent only 91% of a single years’ supply based on historic take up rates.

- 6.74 However, this calculation represents take up in a “policy off” scenario and notably covers a period when the supply of prime sites has been significantly limited, thus limiting the potential for take up through supply constraint.

- 6.75 To illustrate this, the emerging Local Plan covers the period 2013 to 2031 (18 years) and proposes to allocate 262Ha. On an annualised basis, this equates to 14.5Ha per annum. These sites would therefore only equate³⁹ to 63% of a years’ supply in the “policy on” scenario.

- 6.76 These older UDP allocations are clearly not adequate to meet the identified need. It is therefore necessary to examine a Green Belt release in order to meet needs.

Review of North Bierley

- 6.77 North Bierley is a fairly unique development opportunity in the plan area. Whilst it is not a strategically important site recognised in the City Region Strategic Economic Plan, it is strategically located and of a size which is capable of making a significant contribution to meeting economic growth aspirations.

³⁷ Table 3 at paragraph 6.3

³⁸ 10Ha = 10,000sqm x 10 at 40% site density = 40,000sqm pa / 430,556sqft pa

³⁹ 14.5Ha = 10,000sqm X 14.5 at 40% site density = 58,000 sqm pa / 624,307 sqft pa

6.78 The evidence base for the plan identifies key factors which are absent in the current land supply, and therefore define a good quality employment site. These are motorway accessibility, avoiding congestion, access to a workforce, having expansion opportunities, parking and an attractive environment⁴⁰.

6.79 For a site which is able to attract the key areas of growth, namely advanced manufacturing and logistics, we also consider that a site needs to be deliverable and in the case of advanced manufacturing, to offer a critical mass of similar business activity, on site or within very close proximity.

6.80 North Bierley meets each of these criteria.

Motorway Access

6.81 The site is at the heart of West Yorkshire's manufacturing centre, being proximate to a workforce and consumer population. It is well connected to the M62 and is relatively close to the M1.

Avoids Congestion

6.82 Improvements to the M606 / M62 junction (J26) have been proposed for some time and were included in the 1999 UDP. This improvement scheme is now committed and being programmed by Highways England. This will improve the functioning of the junction which serves this development.

6.83 The site is not on a congested area of network, but it does require access through Oakenshaw. The traffic effects of the development can be managed through localised highway improvements.

Access to a Workforce

6.84 The site has excellent access to the work force located in east Huddersfield, south eastern Calderdale, south Bradford and the range of smaller settlements around the Mirfield / Cleckheaton / Dewsbury area.

Parking, Environment and Expansion

6.85 The site is of a suitable scale to offer good levels of parking and an attractive environment, whilst also retaining expansion opportunities.

Deliverability

6.86 The site is controlled in its entirety by Keyland Developments Ltd. The site does have a number of structures which will require demolition. This will add to development costs, but will not impede the overall delivery of development on the site.

6.87 Market conditions and a lack of supply over a considerable period of time is creating growth in both rental and capital values. Compared to previous market conditions, the

⁴⁰ Paragraph 6.19 of the Employment Technical paper.

value of land on motorway corridor sites is much higher where planning permission is achieved.

- 6.88 The level of certainty associated with landownership and the confidence arising from present market conditions, demonstrates that delivery of the site would be extremely likely should an allocation be forthcoming.

Critical Mass

- 6.89 The site is large enough to accommodate a range and mix of uses and to provide for a localised cluster of advanced manufacturing activity, including for supply chain businesses. The site is also strategically located to sit at the heart of the “manufacturing arc” which will facilitate ease of access for the related businesses which are anticipated to help drive growth during the plan period. The site sits very close to three industrial estates in north Kirklees and South Bradford and has excellent access to each of these.

Other Economic Outcomes.

- 6.90 Based on the floorspace achieved on the indicative site master plan (totalling 161,187m² Gross Internal Area) and on a 50/50 split between B2 and B8 uses, initial calculations indicate that approximately 1,000 jobs⁴¹ could be created on site.
- 6.91 This will offer a meaningful contribution to the calculated need for 32,200 jobs set in the employment land technical paper,

Overview

- 6.92 It is considered that this site is in an ideal location for meeting the identified market need as set out in the City Region and District Economic Strategies, as translated into evidenced local requirements in the Employment technical paper.
- 6.93 It is considered that this site is a high performing site when considered against the identified need. In its own right it is not capable of meeting the anticipated job growth required by the evidence base, As such it will need to form part of a suite of sites which are directed towards the key growth sectors for the plan period.

Green Belt Purposes

- 6.94 The NPPF sets out five purposes⁴² of the Green Belt. These are:
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

⁴¹ Calculated based on 23,783m² of B2 usage at 36 m² per FTE (full time equivalent jobs) and 23,783m² B8 usage at 80 m² per FTE, using the guidance contained within the Employment Densities Guide (2nd Edition) 2010, prepared by OFPAT, HCA and Drivers Jonas Deloitte

⁴² Paragraph 80

- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

6.95 The Draft Local Plan Green Belt Review and Outcomes Report is currently subject to consultation. It assesses sites against physical constraints and criteria which broadly mirror the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, although it does not include the final criterion (to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land).

6.96 The table below sets out further information on the performance of the site against these tests.

Test no.	Green Belt Edge Review Criterion	How North Bierley Complies with those Purposes?
1a	Topographical constraint	<p>The local topography is relatively flat, with slopes up to the M606 and M62. The site is low-lying, settled between the M606 motorway and wooded hillside to the east.</p> <p>It is expected that the site will be levelled by way of cut-and-fill to create suitable development plateaux.</p>
1b	Physical constraint	<p>Hanging Wood, an ancient woodland, runs along the northeastern boundary of the site. Former hedgerows and isolated areas of hawthorn hedging are found to the west of the site with the linear corridors of motorway tree planting forming a strong boundary feature.</p> <p>The buildings and structures associated with the former Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) are in a state of disrepair and in need of demolition. These structures would be removed as part of any development.</p> <p>There are a number remnant mining structures on the site, and it is crossed by a high pressure gas pipeline.</p>
1c	Environmental constraint	<p>The site is not located within or adjacent to Areas of High Landscape Value.</p> <p>Surveys work has not revealed important habitats or species on the site.</p> <p>There are no statutory designated sites within a 2km search radius, although the Hanging Wood Kirklees site of wildlife significance is within the zone of influence of the site.</p> <p>Hunsworth Beck runs to the north and east of the site and is subject to flooding. This can be managed through off setting development and</p>

		providing for surface water attenuation features.
2a	To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.	<p>The site is located to the southwest of Woodlands, east of Oakenshaw and northwest of Hunsworth. It is located in a gap between the main urban areas of south Bradford and the north of Cleckheaton. The urban form in this general area retains strategic gaps but in many cases development has spread along roads, creating points where neighbouring towns already join.</p> <p>Oakenshaw already extends down Bradford Road to the west of the site and Hunsworth / West 26 about the M62 to the south. The M606 is also a significant urbanising influences which visually connects the settlements. The urban forms are very tightly knit in this area.</p> <p>Development of this site will decrease the overall separation between settlements. However, as it is partially brownfield land, its openness is compromised, which already has the effect of decreasing this separation distance.</p> <p>There is necessarily a conflict with this policy purpose, as the development of the site would result in reduced separation distances between neighbouring settlements. However, the extent to which the site performs this purpose at the moment is limited. Accordingly, harm to this purpose is also limited, particularly when compared to other potential development sites which could meet the identified need.</p>
2b	To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.	<p>The site is well-contained and largely previously developed. It already has an urbanising influence on this area and therefore does not currently assist with restricting the sprawl of built up areas.</p> <p>The site is well contained by roads to the north, south and west, and a stream to the east. These are recognisable boundary features which are likely to be permanent, in accordance with NPPF guidance. Topography also limits the extent to which an eastwards extension of development in this area could take place. The land to the east slopes steeply up from the stream which borders the site to the east. It is also woodland and a Site of Wildlife Significance.</p> <p>The site as defined should not lead to further pressure to release additional land from the Green Belt as a result of ill-defined boundaries.</p>

		<p>The site is therefore well defined and as it is largely brownfield land already, the extent to which it performs this function is extremely limited. The development would not represent 'unrestricted sprawl' or undermine the role of the remaining Green Belt in checking sprawl in this area, given the clearly defined physical boundaries.</p> <p>There is necessarily a conflict with this policy purpose, as the development of the site would result in further urbanising development in the Green Belt. However, the extent to which the site performs this purpose at the moment is limited. Accordingly, harm to this purpose is also limited.</p>
2c	To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.	<p>The development will result in a further loss of countryside. However, the site is partially brownfield land and as such already does not perform this function to a high degree.</p> <p>Development of the site would assist in safeguarding the countryside from development. Areas of the site have not been previously developed, although a large proportion has. Securing the same level of development to meet identified needs elsewhere would inevitably lead to a greater loss of more open Green Belt than development of the application site.</p> <p>There is necessarily a conflict with this policy purpose, as the development of the site would result in development in the Green Belt, some of which is not previously developed. However, the extent to which the site performs this purpose at the moment is limited due the brownfield portion of the site. Accordingly, harm to this purpose is also limited.</p>
2d	To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.	<p>There is historic development in the vicinity of the proposed site, but no historic towns. This purpose is specific to settlements like York and Cambridge where compact urban form is essential to their character as historic cities. Therefore, this is not considered to apply to the North Bierley site.</p>

6.97 It is considered that the site does perform Green Belt functions to a degree. However, its development will not materially further erode the strategic gap between Cleckheaton and Oakenshaw.

Green Belt Overview

6.98 This review has found the following key points:

- The City Region SEP sets a framework for achieving economic growth and identified advanced manufacturing as a key industrial sector.
- The KES notes a sub-regional strength in advanced manufacturing, but also found corresponding challenges, including low economic output, poor skills and high unemployment. Growth in advanced manufacturing is considered to be the primary opportunity to reverse these challenges.
- The KES clearly links a supply of good quality accessible land, with the achievement of economic growth.
- The Local Plan technical paper identifies a need to allocate 265 Ha of land for the plan period.
- There is currently a land supply of around 2 years' worth of need, although better quality sites account for less than a year's supply.
- The UDP planned a land supply until 2006, so there has been no means of meeting newly arising or forecast needs since then. It is now already nearly 3 years into the current plan period. The existing land supply does not even meet needs which have already arisen in the current plan period.
- There is therefore a pressing need to release more land for development.
- There are no alternative non-Green Belt brownfield sites which could meet the identified needs in terms of either quantum of land or the required quality.
- There are existing allocated sites, which are non-Green Belt, but these will provide for less than 1 years equivalent of supply. They are not adequate in terms of quantum.
- There is therefore a major shortage of land available to meet the identified need.
- This necessitates the removal of land from the Green Belt.
- The site does perform Green Belt purposes to a limited degree. The separation between settlements would reduce as a result of development on this site. However, it will not result in settlements joining together. Similarly, there will be encroachment into the countryside, but it will be restricted by land form. Having established that there are no alternative non-Green Belt sites which are capable of meeting the identified need, release of this land would not undermine the recycling of urban land.

6.99 On this basis, we consider that the following exceptional circumstances apply, which justify the release of this site from the Green Belt:

- Need for more employment land
- Absence of supply in non-Green Belt locations

- Lack of harm to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

7. Other Planning Considerations

- 7.1 A number of reports and studies have been prepared to enable a full appraisal of the representation site. The findings of these reports are set out below.

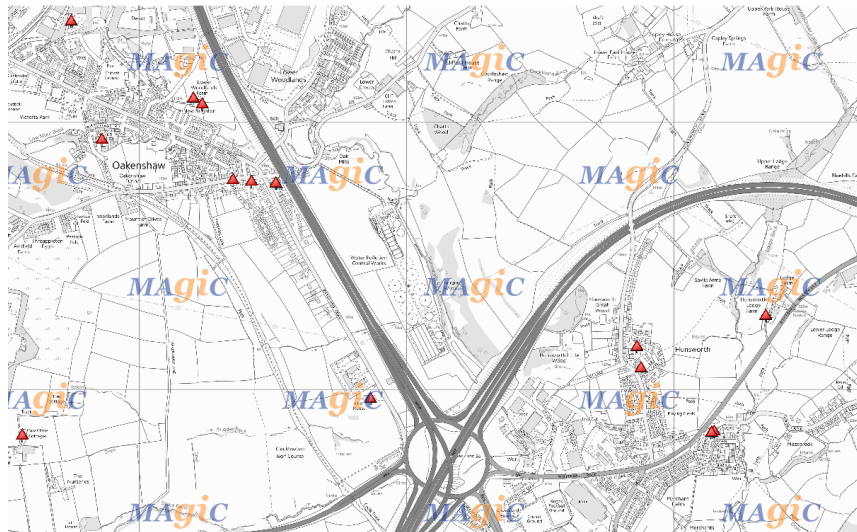
Landscape and Visual Impact

- 7.2 Initial landscape work identifies that the site lies within the “G11 Batley Fringe Incised Valleys” character area, as identified in South Pennines Landscape Guidelines Report to Standing Conference of South Pennines Authorities (SCOSPA) LUC 1999. These valleys support a mixture of pasture and woodland and can have an enclosed, rural, secluded character. They are particularly valued for recreation. Overall the character area is considered to be good quality.
- 7.3 The remnants of the disused WWTW are the dominant components of the site. These elements combined with the surrounding motorways lower the value of the landscape and therefore its sensitivity to future change. The local topography and rolling hillsides combined with the elevated embankment of the motorway and its associated planting blocks some views of the site.
- 7.4 The site is already well screened from most public vantage points, other than the right of way which runs along the north eastern boundary of the site. A landscape strategy will need to be devised which is aimed at mitigating the visual impact of the development; and strengthening the boundaries of the site.
- 7.5 The Motorway junction sits higher than the site with wooded embankments, preventing views from the south. However, the site can be seen from the slip road of the M606 and the bridge of the M62. Other roads include the local road to Oakenshaw but views to the site here are blocked by the M606 and associated tree planting. The footpath that links the current site access road and Hanging Wood will have views of the development from higher ground to the north of Hanging Wood. The Kirklees Way and the footpath to east of the site may have glimpsed views of the development depending on building heights.
- 7.6 Particular consideration will need to be given to the six bungalows and three houses that have views towards the proposed developments on Cliff Hollins Lane and the properties along the elevated section of Cliff Hollins Lane at Chatts Hill. Mitigation measures will need to be incorporated into landscape proposals to address visual change for these houses.
- 7.7 Predicted impacts of the proposed development on landscape character would be limited due to the low sensitivity of the landscape.
- 7.8 Existing screening features within the study area reduce potential visual impacts. Significant impacts are predicted to users of the footpath leading up to Hanging Wood and residents living in the six bungalows and three houses on Cliff Hollins Lane, as well as those that are on the elevated section of Cliff Hollins Lane at Chatts Hill. Establishment of appropriate mitigation measure will limit these potential impacts.

- 7.9 It is considered that a development of the site can be achieved which respects existing views, does not harm visual amenity and which minimises the effect of the development on landscape character.

Historic Environment

- 7.10 There are several listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. None of these will be directly affected by the development and there are not likely to be any indirect effects. The listed buildings closest to the development do not have intervisibility with the site. The four nearest listed buildings / structures which are closest to the transport routes from the site to the motorway are all within Oakenshaw and rely on that context to establish the significance of their setting.



- 7.11 The Church of St Andrew, a building on Wyke Lane and The Cross (see plan extract above) are all set in an urban context. The development will not have any effect on their setting as they rely instead on the more tightly knit urban fabric around them to define their importance. The vicarage is now part of the golf course so its setting has already changed in the move away from open fields to an open leisure use.
- 7.12 IN terms of archaeology, the site has been subject to significant modern disturbance, both through the development of the waste water treatment works, the construction of the two motorways which bound the site and historic mining activity.
- 7.13 The development is therefore unlikely to have a significant effect on the historic environment.

Transport

- 7.14 Initial transport work has been undertaken which shows that the proposed development will result in a slight increase in traffic volume on the surrounding network. It will be necessary to undertake some improvements to the junction of Cliff Hollins Lane / Mill Carr Hill Road and Bradford Road / Mill Carr Hill Road, but no significant highways impacts are anticipated as a result of the development. The site will also be designed to link with the footpath network on Cliff Hollins Lane.

- 7.15 A travel plan will be required which will help to improve access by a range of sustainable modes, which will help to minimise impacts on the surrounding road network.
- 7.16 Highways England are also promoting a scheme to improve the operation of J26 of the M62 by constructing a link between the main lines of the M62 and the M606. This will reduce traffic on Junction 26. Whilst the scheme will reduce the amount of development achievable on the site, it will have benefits in terms of improving traffic flows and increasing the accessibility of the site.

Biodiversity

- 7.17 A range of ecological survey work has been undertaken. There are records of common frog and toad, great crested newt, smooth newt, bluebell, a range of designated bird species, common blue butterfly and bats within 2km of the site. However, none of these records were located within the site.
- 7.18 Hunsworth Beck passes along the site's eastern boundary and is a strong linear feature across the local landscape. Surveys of the beck have been undertaken and no species of note were found.
- 7.19 There are pockets of good reptile habitat on the site, although no reptiles were found during survey work. There is a single building on site which provides bat roosting potential, but again no bats were found.
- 7.20 There are no important habitats or notable species on the site. The development of the site is not likely to have a significant effect on biodiversity.

Air Quality

- 7.21 Initial air quality work has been undertaken. The site is not in an Air Quality Management Area.
- 7.22 The assessment shows that during the construction phase, effects can be adequately controlled with appropriate mitigation measures. Current background pollutant concentrations at the site are well below the annual objective levels. These will decrease in the future due to anticipated improvements in vehicle technology regardless of whether the proposed development goes ahead or not.
- 7.23 Once the development is active, there will be no concentrations in excess of the relevant air quality objectives. The largest impacts due to the development were predicted to be on Bradford Road, near the junction with Mill Carr Hill Road and on Cliff Hollins Lane, near to the site entrance. This is due to increases in traffic. However, once the measures to reduce emissions in the Travel Plan have been implemented, the significance of the impacts is considered to be negligible.

Noise

- 7.24 Initial Noise and Vibration work has been prepared. The noise and vibration effects during construction works can be limited so that they are negligible, provided that best practice measures are employed.

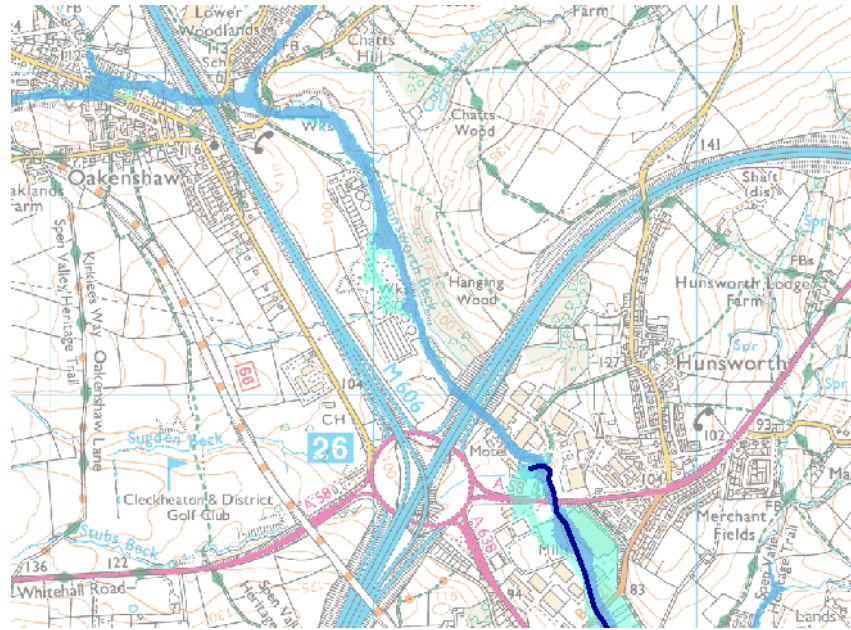
- 7.25 Operational noise can also be controlled through the use of careful design and siting, attenuation measures on plant and the use of barriers around yard areas. Noise effects during operation are also capable of being managed so that they are acceptable.

Ground Conditions and Contamination

- 7.26 The history of the area based on OS mapping indicates that a sewage works was present on part of the site in 1893. The Valley Pit Coal and Ironstone workings were also present in the west of the site at this time, along with an Old Coal pit in the south. By 1908 the pits were reported to be closed and the sewage works had expanded. Subsequent maps show further expansion and changes to the layout up until 2004.
- 7.27 A site investigation has been completed. This found made ground between 0.1m and 8m thick over the majority of the site, underlain by orange-brown gravelly clay and mudstone strata of the Coal Measures bedrock. Standard foundations should therefore be acceptable, provided that any deeper made ground is improved.
- 7.28 Groundwater monitoring shows that it is relatively clean and should not pose a risk to human health for a commercial/ industrial end use.
- 7.29 High concentrations of methane have been found in one borehole to the south of the site, although there is a low flow rate. This is above an area of historic shallow mining. No specific gas protection measures are required for the majority of the site, although buildings in the far south may need some protection.
- 7.30 Further investigation and stabilisation of the areas subject to mining is likely to be necessary for development proposed to the south of the site.
- 7.31 There are ten recorded mine entries on or within influencing distance of the site and only one of the mine entries is noted to have had any treatment. Prior to development the mine entries will require location, investigation and stabilisation.
- 7.32 However, subject to some remediation works being carried out, the site is likely to be acceptable for the future development proposed.

Flood risk and Drainage

- 7.33 Hunsworth Beck runs along the northern and eastern boundary of the site. Areas of the site along the line of the beck lie in the flood zone, as shown on the Environment Agency flood map extract below.



- 7.34 The majority of the site does not flood and it is proposed to balance the flows of water off the site through open attenuation structures. The land will be regraded in order to deliver the development. As part of this exercise the areas subject to flooding can also be rationalised and relevelled so that areas of the site close to the beck flood in a controlled manner, whilst keeping the remainder of the development site out of the flood zone. This will ensure that the site does not flood and does not contribute to flooding elsewhere in the catchment.

Summary of technical issues

- 7.35 A range of technical work has been undertaken to a level appropriate to support the allocation of this site.
- 7.36 None of the reports have found any issues which suggest that the development could not be achieved, provided that suitable mitigation measures are in place. Further detailed work will be needed at later stages of the process to inform the precise form of the development and the need for mitigation.
- 7.37 However, it is clear that development on this site is feasible and deliverable within the early part of the plan period.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 This representation has been prepared by Turley on behalf of Keyland Developments Ltd. It supports the allocation of the site as one of the Kirklees' strategically important employment sites.
- 8.2 The site is an existing redundant waste water treatment works. As an existing developed site, its development for new employment uses would be supported by local and national planning policy.
- 8.3 The site is located within the Green Belt. It has been demonstrated that the following exceptional circumstances justify the release of the site from the Green Belt:
- Need for more employment land
 - Absence of supply of non-Green Belt alternatives to meet the need
 - Relative lack of harm to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.
- 8.4 It is also clear that the site is deliverable within the plan period, as there are no technical constraints to development which cannot be overcome within the plan period.
- 8.5 Overall, it is concluded that the site offers a significant opportunity for the Council to deliver against the aims and objectives of its Economic Strategy 2014. It will form an important part of the mix of employment sites necessary to achieve the growth envisaged during the plan period.

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