

Report To:	LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Date:	16TH OCTOBER 2023
Heading:	ASHFIELD LOCAL PLAN – EMPLOYMENT LAND SITES UPDATE
Executive Lead Member:	NOT APPLICABLE
Ward/s:	ALL WARDS
Key Decision:	NO
Subject to Call-In:	NO

Purpose of Report

To consider the proposed employment land sites to be taken forward in the Ashfield Local Plan 2023 – 2040 Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Draft. (Identified in the Report as Regulation 19 Plan). This includes consideration of the Green Belt and heritage implications for the strategic employment allocations at Junction 27 of the M1 Motorway.

Recommendation(s)

Cabinet be recommended to:

- a) Approve the amended employment land allocations set out in the Report.**
- b) Authorise the Assistant Director of Planning to making subsequent amendments to the Local Plan 2023 – 2040 Regulation 19 Pre submission to reflect up to date information on employment site allocations.**

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

Additional sites submitted after the preparation of the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan 2021 have been assessed through the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and the Sustainability Appraisal. The sites have been considered in the context of achievability, location, and consistency with the Council’s spatial strategy for growth.

The site allocations identified in the Draft Local Plan have been revised based on more up to date information, including the deletion of sites which have been completed, and changes to the area of land available to reflect development since the Draft Local Plan consultation was undertaken. Where considered appropriate, additional site allocations have been set out in the report.

Alternative Options Considered

To make no amendments to the Local Plan site allocations proposed and consider other site options to be included in the Local Plan. This option is not recommended.

Detailed Information

This Report sets out an update on the Draft Local Plan 2021 proposed employment land allocations. It identifies additional sites that have been submitted to the Strategic Housing Employment Land Availability (SHELAA) and considered through the Sustainability Appraisal. It sets out proposed amendments to the sites to be taken forward in the Local Plan 2023 – 2040 Regulation 19 Pre submission consultation. (Regulation 19 Plan).

Draft Local Plan 2021

Table 2 below identified the sites which were proposed employment allocation or included employment land as part of a proposed allocation in the Draft Local Plan 2021. A number of the proposed employment allocations are anticipated to contribute towards the future strategic logistics requirements including Harrier Park Hucknall, West of Fulwood, Export Drive Sutton in Ashfield and the proposed allocations at Junction 27 of the M1 Motorway. Whyburn Farm New Settlement was a mixed-use site including employment but is not proposed to be included in the Regulation 19 Plan.

Site Reference	Site Name	Comments
S6	New Settlement: Land at Whyburn Farm, Hucknall.	Mixed use site including approximately 13 ha gross for employment purposes. The site is not taken forward.
S8	Strategic Employment Allocations Junction 27, M1 Motorway, Annesley.	Subject to current planning applications V/2022/0246 and V/2022/0360
EM2 S1	Castlewood Business Park, Sutton in Ashfield.	Development substantially completed, one plot under construction.
EM2 S2	Fulwood Road North, Sutton in Ashfield.	Forms part of a substantial industrial park.
EM2 S3	Hamilton Road, Sutton in Ashfield.	Proposed greenfield development site.
EM2 S4	South West Oakham, Sutton in Ashfield.	Fully developed.
EM2 S5	West of Fulwood, Export Drive, Sutton in Ashfield.	Planning applications approved for strategic logistics unit.
EM2 K1	Kings Mill Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield.	Forms part of a substantial industrial park.
EM2 K2	Park Lane, Kirkby-in-Ashfield.	Former colliery sites, which forms part of a substantial industrial park.
EM2 K3	Portland Industrial Park, Kirkby-in-Ashfield.	Former colliery sites, which forms part of a substantial industrial park.
EM2 H1	Aerial Way, Hucknall.	Former colliery sites, which forms part of a substantial industrial park.
EM2 H2	Blenheim Park, Hucknall.	Fully developed.
EM2 H3	Butlers Hill, Hucknall.	Forms part of a small site which has been reclaimed and laid out using grant funding.
EM2 H4	Harrier Park, Hucknall.	Part of the mixed used development of the former Rolls Royce aerodrome.

Table 1: Draft Local Plan 2021, Proposed Employment Allocations

Source: Ashfield District Council

New employment sites submitted to the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)

The Council received a number of additional submissions to the SHELAA for employment purposes subsequent to the preparation of the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan, October 2021. Table 1 below sets out the employment land sites, alongside the SHELAA outcome: 'Red' being unachievable, 'Amber' being potentially achievable, and 'Green' being achievable. This is an assessment of physical, legal or financial constraints and does not necessarily mean that a site is appropriate for allocation in the Local Plan. This is a matter of being sustainably located and being consistent with the Council's strategy for growth.

Site name	Proposed Use	SHELAA Ref.	Gross Area	SHELAA outcome
Land south of Hucknall Bypass A611	Employment	HK052	26.0 Ha	Site is not suitable. Areas of the site are in Flood Zone 2 and 3. Located in the Green Belt.
Land to the east of Lowmoor Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield	Employment	KA027	14.81 Ha	The site is potentially suitable, and potentially achievable.
Land east of Sherwood Business Park A611, Annesley	Employment	KA053	8.97 Ha	Potentially suitable. Mitigation to address access constraints will be very costly. Adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site. Southern boundary adjoins the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden at Annesley Park. Existing infrastructure on site is likely to impact on developable area. Located in Green Belt.
Land south of Sherwood Business Park & North of Mansfield Road, Annesley	Employment	KA054	17.58 Ha	Site is not suitable. Part of the site is within the Grade II* Registered Park & Gardens of Annesley Hall.
East of Pinxton Lane and South of the A38, Sutton in Ashfield	Employment	SA086	33.0 Ha	Potentially suitable but there are a number of issues associated with the site. In relation to ecology, part of the site comprises an ancient woodland and local wildlife sites are located on and adjacent to the site. Significant highway improvements are anticipated to be required including the access into the site.
Nunn Brook Rise, Huthwaite	Employment	SA090	1.2 Ha	Site is potentially suitable. However, a substantial part of site is identified as a local wildlife site.

Table 2: SHELAA sites for employment purposes assessed since the Draft Local Plan consultation 2021.

Source: Ashfield District Council

The following sets out a short description of the SHELAA sites identified in Table 2, which were identified as potentially suitable. It includes a recommendation of whether or not they should be taken forward as an allocation in the Local Plan.

Land to the East of Lowmoor Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield (SHELAA KA027 – employment)

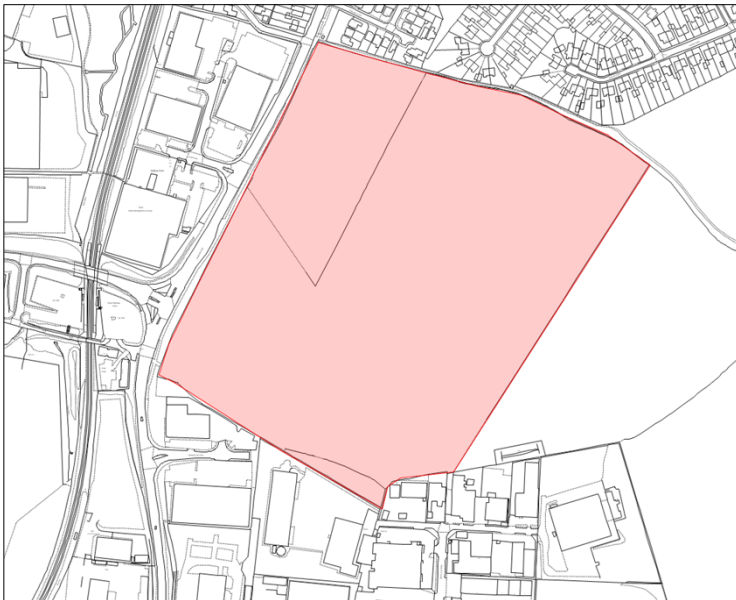


Figure 1: Land off Lowmoor Road, Opposite Sutton Parkway Station.

Source: Ashfield District Council

Land to the East of Lowmoor Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield has been put forward by the landowner through the SHELAA. The land is located adjacent to the Main Urban Area and forms an extension to the Lowmoor Road Industrial Estate. It is opposite Sutton Parkway Railway Station which provides a sustainable travel means for the site to be accessed for employment purposes. The site, comprising an area of approximately 14.81 ha, could include the Advanced Distribution and Manufacturing Centre (ADMC) funded by the Towns Fund Delivery Programme. The ADMC will support the adoption, integration, and expansion of automated technologies for businesses, locally and across the Midlands region in a sustainable manner. It links into the existing Vision West Notts. education facilities locate off Julius Way on Station Park and Oddicroft Lane.

It is recommended that the site is included in the employment land allocations set out in the Local Plan.

Land east of Sherwood Business Park A611, Annesley (SHELAA - KA053)

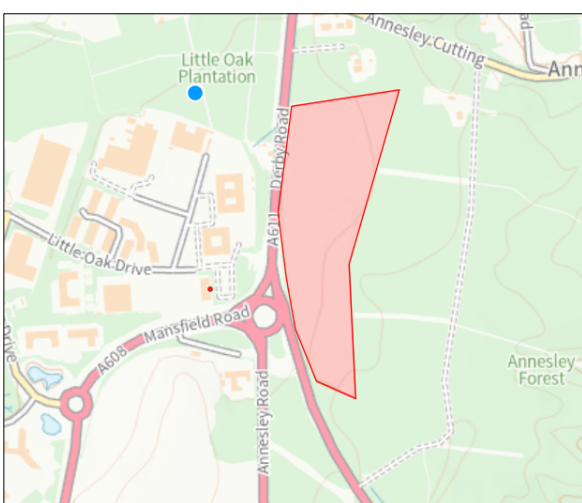


Figure 2: Land east of Sherwood Business Park, A611, Annesley.

Source: Ashfield District Council

The site comprises a gross area of approximately 8.97 ha. It is located in the Green Belt to the east of Sherwood Business Park off the A611, however, it would extend development to the east of the A611 which forms a current defensible boundary to the Green Belt at Sherwood Business Park. The developable area of the site would be further limited by existing infrastructure on site. Adjacent to the site is a Local Wildlife Site and the Annesley Hall Registered Park and Gardens with mitigation measures being required. In this context, due to the size of the proposed site it would make a limited contribution towards the strategic logistics needs along the M1 Motorway.

Recommended that at this time the site is not taken forward as an employment allocation in the Local Plan.

East of Pinxton Lane and South of the A38, Sutton in Ashfield (SHELAA - SA086)

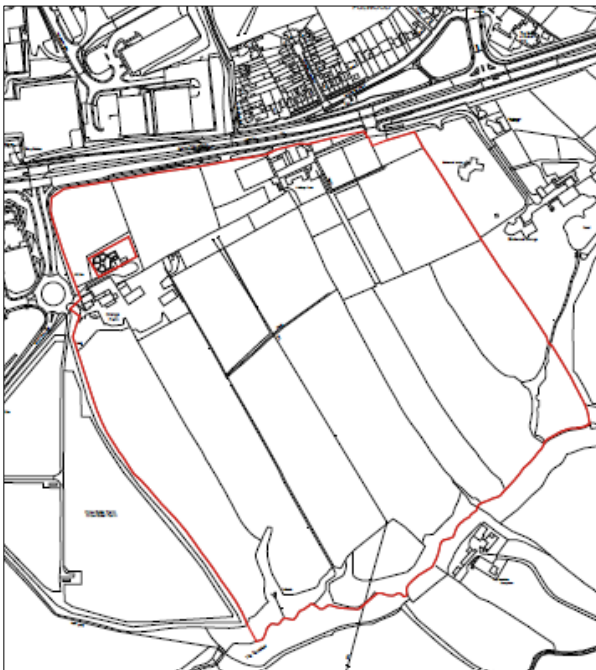


Figure 3: Planning Application Land East of Pinxton Lane, Sutton in Ashfield (v/2023/0023).

Source: Planning application V/2023/0021

SHELAA site SA086 East of Pinxton Lane and South of the A38, Sutton in Ashfield is subject to an outline planning application with all matters reserved other than access (V/2023/0021). The site area is identified in the application as 33 ha. It proposes that it could accommodate up to 80,250 sq. m (863,832 sq. ft) of employment uses in Classes B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) with ancillary offices. The illustrative masterplan identifies a variety of unit sizes could be located on the site including strategic logistics. The application is pending as there are a number of issues associated with the proposed development, including holding objections from National Highways and the Highway Authority.

Based on the potential impact of the development on the highways network, there are significant highway improvements anticipated to be required. These have not been resolved. The development would also have an impact on ecology and biodiversity as part of the site comprises an ancient woodland. Local wildlife sites are also located on a substantial part of the site and also adjacent to the site.

Recommended that at this time the site is not taken forward as an employment allocation in the Local Plan.

Nunn Brook Rise, Huthwaite (SHELAA - SA090)

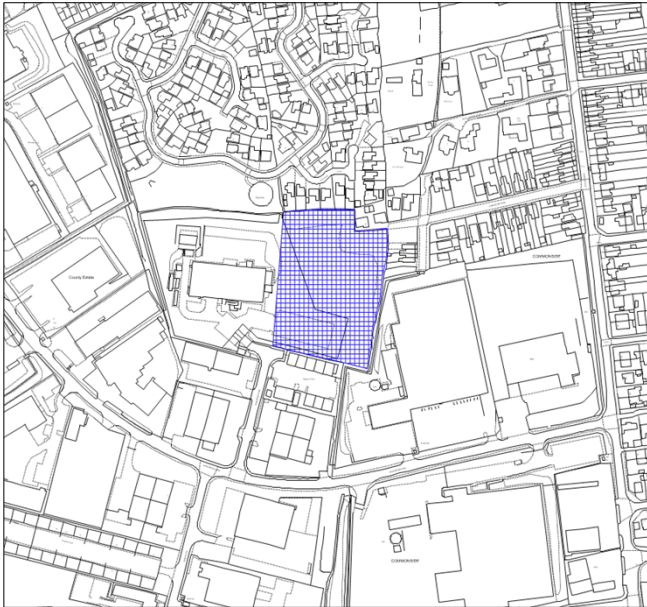


Figure 4: Nunn Brook Rise, Huthwaite

Source: Ashfield District Council

A small site of approximately 1.2 ha on an established industrial estate. While the site has been assessed as potentially available, a significant part of the site is identified as a local wildlife site. It is not considered appropriate to allocate the site without further information on how any ecological aspects will be resolved. As the site is located in the Main Urban Area of Sutton in Ashfield it could come forward as a planning application, but it would need to identify how the ecological aspects have been resolved and how it achieves biodiversity net gain.

Recommended that at this time the site is not taken forward as an employment allocation in the Local Plan.

Strategic Policy S6: Meeting Future Needs - Strategic Employment Allocation at Junction 27 M1 Motorway (Draft Local Plan 2021 Consultation identified as Strategic Policy S8)

The Draft Local Plan 2021 included a strategic employment allocation to the north east and south east of Junction 27 of the M1 Motorway, Figure 5.

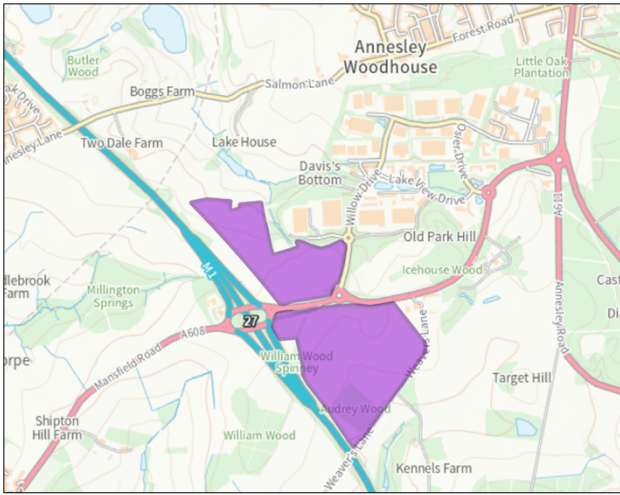


Figure 5: Strategic Employment Allocation Junction 27, M1 Motorway, Annesley. Source: Ashfield District Council

The Draft Local Plan 2021 consultation responses and the evidence base identify there are important considerations that need to be taken into account principally in relation to:

- The Green Belt.
- Heritage.

The sites are both subject to current planning applications for slightly different areas to the proposed allocations, the applications have not been determined at this time.

Green Belt

The NPPF identifies that:

- The Green Belt should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for changes to the Green Belt boundaries.
- Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development.
- Plans should define Green Belt boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

Appendix 1 sets out further information on the assessment of the Green Belt in this location through the Strategic Green Belt Review, 2016 and Addendum 2021 (SGBR) and Background Paper No.4: Green Belt Harm, 2021. Both of these documents are also available on the Council website at [ADC Emerging Local Plan](#).

The assessments reflected the five purposes of the Green Belt as set out in NPPF paragraph 138:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The Green Belt Harm Assessment gives an overall harm rating based on the combined score of all Green Belt purposes. The site to the northeast of M1 Junction 27 was submitted to the SHELAA as reference KA020 has a harm rating of 'Relatively High'. The site to the southeast of M1 Junction 27 was submitted to the SHELAA as reference KA025 has a harm rating of 'High'.

Site Area (ha)	Release Scenario	Purpose 1 (Unrestricted Sprawl)	Purpose 2 (Prevent Settlements Merging)	Purpose 3 (Safeguard from Encroachment)	Purpose 4 (Preserve Historic Settlements)	Purpose 5 (Urban Regeneration)	Overall Harm Score	Overall Harm Rating	Green Belt Assessment Area (* Please refer to Stage 1: SGBR)
20.47	Release of KA020 as a strategic employment site off Junction 27 of the M1	High	Moderate	High	Low	N/A	14	Relatively High	Majority of KA17*

Table 3: Ashfield DC Background Paper No 4: Green Belt Harm. Appendix 4: Kirkby In Ashfield - Assessment Table and Map showing harm rating for each assessed parcel of land

Site Area (ha)	Release Scenario	Purpose 1 (Unrestricted Sprawl)	Purpose 2 (Prevent Settlements Merging)	Purpose 3 (Safeguard from Encroachment)	Purpose 4 (Preserve Historic Settlements)	Purpose 5 (Urban Regeneration)	Overall Harm Score	Overall Harm Rating	Green Belt Assessment Area (* Please refer to Stage 1: SGBR)
36.79	Release of KA025 as a strategic employment site off Junction 27 of the M1	High	Moderate	High	Relatively High	N/A	17	High	M01*

Table 4: Ashfield DC Background Paper No 4: Green Belt Harm. Appendix 4: Kirkby In Ashfield - Assessment Table and Map showing harm rating for each assessed parcel of land

On this basis both sites make a valuable contribution towards the Green Belt. However, it is considered that the sites meet the requirement of exceptional circumstances for changes to the Green Belt boundaries. The reasons for meeting exceptional circumstances also reflect the public benefits set out under the heritage section of the report.

The NPPF in paragraph 141 requires that before concluding there are exceptional circumstances to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries it should be demonstrated that it has examined all other reasonable options for meeting the need for development. Alternative options have been looked at (see heritage) and are not considered to form reasonable alternatives at this time.

Heritage *Planning guidance*

The NPPF requires that Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including development affecting the setting of a heritage asset). This information should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset to minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraphs 199 to 208 outline the consideration of potential impacts of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset. This includes the concept of harm to a designated heritage asset. Under paragraph 199, there are three levels of harm identified to the significance of designated heritage assets:

- Substantial harm.
- Total loss; or
- Less than substantial harm to its significance.

Planning Practice Guidance: Historic Environment, identifies that within each category of harm, the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated. Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the NPPF. The NPPF identifies that great weight should be given to a designated heritage asset (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The NPPF identifies the following:

- Paragraph 200 makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification. It sets out that substantial harm or loss of:
 - a) grade II listed buildings, should be exceptional.
 - b) assets of the highest significance, which includes Scheduled Monument and Annesley Hall Grade II* Register Park and Gardens, should be wholly exceptional.
- Paragraph 201 identifies that “where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.”
- Paragraph 202 sets out “Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”
- Paragraph 203 identifies that the significance of a non-designated asset should be taken into account and a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss.
- The NPPF requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Heritage Impact Assessment

As part of the evidence base for the Local Plan the Council commissioned Rocket Heritage & Archaeology Ltd to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to understand the implications of proposals in the Local Plan on the District's heritage assets. In addition to the HIA, the two allocations at Junction 27 of the M1 are subject to planning applications. The site to the north-east of Junction 27 is planning reference V/2022/0360 and includes evidence in relation to heritage aspects by the RPS Group. The site extends further north than the proposed allocation including additional land to be utilised for landscape purposes. The site to the south-east is planning reference V/2022/0246 with heritage evidence from Locus Consulting Ltd. The site is slightly smaller than the proposed allocation. Historic England have been consulted as part of the HIA, and they have responded to the Local Plan Consultation 2021 and to both planning applications.

A summary of the heritage impact assessments by various heritage parties is set out in Table 3 below. It reflects the Council's Heritage Impact Assessment (undertaken by Rocket Consultants) for the Strategic Employment sites both in relation to the impact on the heritage assets and the cumulative impact from the proposals within the draft Local Plan. The Table includes assessments from the HIA, Historic England and the heritage assessment submitted with the planning applications on the two sites. This report should be read in conjunction the Council's Heritage Impact Assessment in relation to:

- Site Ref.: S8 – (KA020) North-east of J27, West of Sherwood Business Park, A608, Annesley.
- Site Ref.: S8 – (KA025) South-east of M1 Junction 27, Annesley.

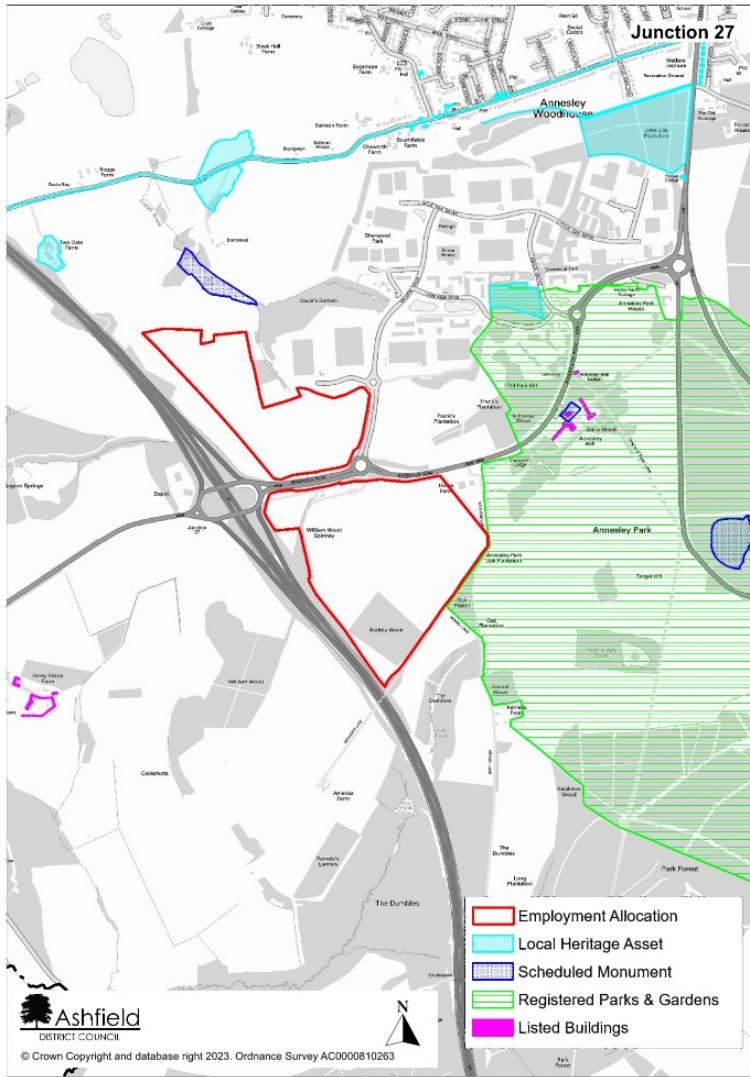


Figure 6: Designated and None Designated Heritage Asset Junction 27, M1 Motorway.

Site	Heritage Asset	Level of Harm to the Historic Environment	Level of Change to the Historic Landscape Character	Recommendation	Level of Harm to the Historic Environment	Level of Harm to the Historic Environment
Rocket Consultants (ADC) - Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)					Historic England	Planning application HIA
S8 – North east of M1 Motorway J27, Annesley	Annesley Hall Grade II* Registered Park and Garden	Less than substantial harm (Cumulatively: substantial harm, if allocated with S8 – Southeast of J27)	Major	Remove allocation	Less than substantial harm.	No impact on the significance
	Damstead Fishponds Scheduled Monument (SM)	Less than substantial harm			Less than substantial harm.	Less than substantial harm, at the lower level following maturing of trees, reducing to no impact with intervening planting.
S8 – South east of M1 Junction 27, Annesley	Annesley Hall Grade II* Registered Park and Garden	Less than substantial harm, at the higher end of the scale (Cumulatively: substantial harm, if allocated with S8 Northeast of Jn 27)	Major	Remove allocation	Likely to be substantial harm – Objects to allocation	Less than substantial harm, at the higher end of the scale
	Annesley Hall Grade II Listed Building and associated designated heritage assets ¹	Less than substantial harm on the higher end of the scale			Likely to be substantial harm – Objects to allocation	Less than substantial harm, at the lower end of the scale.

Table 3: Heritage Impact Assessment Employment Land Sites

Source: Ashfield DC Heritage Impact Assessment 2023, Historic England Responses, Planning Application V/2022/0246 Heritage Assessment by Locus Consulting Ltd, Planning Application V/2022/0360 Heritage Assessment by RSP Group.

The Registered Park and Garden at Annesley Hall, the Scheduled Monuments, and the Listed Buildings are designated heritage assets under the NPPF, which are of national importance for their historic, architectural, and archaeological interest. There are also non designated assets at Two Dales Farm, Annesley to the north of the proposed allocation.

As can be seen from Table 3 above, there is not universal agreement over the specific heritage impact of the allocation.

- For the Land to the North East of Junction 27 all parties identify that there is less than substantial harm to the heritage assets. The Council's HIA identifies that due to the distance of

¹ including the Grade II Listed Gatehouse Range, the Grade II Terrace to the Southwest of Annesley Hall, All Saints Church and Graveyard SM, Annesley Motte, and Bailey Castle SM, and Grade I Listed Ruins of Church of All Saints.

several of these assets, as well as intervening topography and tree screening, the site is not considered to form part of the setting of the following: All Saints Church and Graveyard, Ruins of Church of All Saints, Annesley Hall, Terrace to southwest of Annesley Hall, Annesley Lodge, Gatehouse Range to Annesley Hall.

- For the land to the South East of Junction 27 it is considered that there is less than substantial harm in relation to Annesley Hall Grade II Listed Building and associated designated heritage assets. For the Registered Park, Historic England considers that there is likely to be substantial harm.
- Cumulatively, in allocating the land to the North East and land to the south east of Junction 27, both HIA and Historic England considers there is substantial harm arising from the proposal to the heritage assets.

NPPF paragraph 201 in relation to substantial harm consent sets out that an application should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Under paragraph 202, where the proposal will lead to less than substantial loss harm should be weighed against the public benefits. In relation to public benefits, Planning Practice Guidance Historic Environment (PPG) states that:

“Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social, or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit.”

The PPG applies a broad meaning to the concept of "public benefits". While these may include heritage benefits, the guidance confirms that all types of public benefits can be taken together and weighed against harm.

Public Benefits

The public benefits substantially arise from the economic aspects of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework identifies that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity including addressing the specific location requirements of different sectors with storage and distribution (logistics) being specifically identified.

Under statute, local planning authorities and county councils are under a duty to co-operate with each other and other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross boundaries. The evidence from the Nottinghamshire Core & Outer Housing Market Area Employment Land Needs Study, 2021 (ELNS) indicated there was a significant demand for strategic logistics, particularly along the M1 Motorway. In this context, working with other councils, the following work has been undertaken as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan:

- Nottinghamshire Core & Outer Housing Market Area Logistics Study 2022, and
- A Greater Nottingham Partnership Strategic Distribution and Logistics Background Paper by the authorities comprising Ashfield DC, Broxtowe BC, Erewash BC, Gedling BC, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe BC.

The Logistics Study utilised a floorspace of 9,000 sq. m or more as reflecting strategic logistic requirements. It confirmed that there was a significant demand for strategic logistics with a lack of supply. The evidence from development on employment allocations in Ashfield since 2015/16 is that

a number of strategic logistics units have been brought forward including Castlewood Business Park and Summit Park.

As part of the Greater Nottingham Partnership Strategic Distribution and Logistics Background Paper, the Councils undertook a call for strategic logistics sites. Any interested party was invited to submit land for consideration as a strategic logistics sites, defined as a site of 25 ha or more. Table 2 includes the employment sites that were assessed in the Council's SHELAA since the Draft Local Plan consultation 2021. No additional site to those identified in the SHELAA were proposed in Ashfield through the Strategic Logistics Call for Sites.

In summary, the economic position in relation to strategic logistics is that the ELNS, the Logistic Study and other evidence identifies that there is a substantial demand for strategic logistics. The Strategic Distribution and Logistics Background Paper identifies that there is a requirement for 137 - 155 ha. (Paragraph 10.16). There has been an additional strategic logistics site brought forward through a planning permission in Newark and Sherwood subsequently to the Logistics Study. Applying the same approach as the Logistics Study would result in a slightly smaller requirement of between 131 ha and 147 ha of land required across the study area. From work undertaken with the Nottingham Core HMA authorities it is not anticipated that there will be sufficient sites allocated to meet the logistic need

In relation to the strategic employment allocations in Ashfield at Junction 27 the public benefits are:

- The National Planning Policy Framework identifies that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity including addressing the specific location requirements of different sectors with storage and distribution (logistics) being specifically identified. The Council has adopted a positive approach to sustainable economic growth at a local level which is reflected in the Regulation 19 Local Plan which recognised the need to respond to the wider sub regional demand for logistics. This is reflected in the policy approach which identify the following:
 - Strategic Policy 1: Spatial Strategy to Deliver the Vision sets out the ambition to *“Maximising the economic development potential of key sites including land adjacent to M1 junction 27 and Sherwood Business Park.”*
 - Strategic Policy S6 identifies two strategic allocations at Junction 27 of the M1 Motorway which are identified as being accessible to the strategic road network which will create high quality business space to contribute towards meeting the regional demand for logistics.
 - Strategic Policy S8: Delivering Economic Opportunities identifies that *“The Council is committed to developing a sustainable, diverse and resilient economy, reducing low wages and improving skill levels in order to narrow the difference between District and national figures by: a. Providing for the growth of the local and sub-regional economy by ensuring sufficient and appropriate employment land is available within the District to meet local needs and to contribute towards future regional needs of businesses”.*
- The Logistics Sector makes a substantial contribution the national and regional economy. There is an urgent requirement for meeting the needs of the Logistics Sector along the M1 corridor in Nottinghamshire as demonstrated through the evidence base on employment needs generally and the logistics sector specifically in relation to demand and supply.
- For Ashfield, jobs in the manufacturing sector are predicted to decline. The development of logistics on the allocation contributed toward providing job opportunities for local people, for local

economic growth and value added to the local economy. The multiplier effect of the significant investment at Junction 27, with increased expenditure to support other local businesses. There are anticipated to be positive impacts for Ashfield residents reducing employment deprivation and income deprivation.

- Under statute, local planning authorities and county councils are under a duty to co-operate with each other and other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross boundaries. The evidence from the Nottinghamshire Core & Outer Housing Market Area Employment Land Needs Study, 2021 (ELNS), the Logistics Study and the Greater Nottingham Partnership Strategic Distribution and Logistics Background Paper is that there is a significant demand for logistics space which will not be met. There is an urgent requirement for meeting the needs of the Logistics Sector along the M1 corridor in Nottinghamshire as demonstrated through the evidence base on employment needs generally and the logistics sector specifically in relation to demand and supply. In this context, the site at Junction 27 makes a significant contribution towards meeting this requirement.
- The need to identify sufficient employment land to meet local needs and contribute towards the wider requirements for the economy with the associated benefits from investment, job creation and value added to the local economy. Strategic logistics sites have come forward in Ashfield including land at Castlewood Business Park and land off Common Road Huthwaite. However, these business parks have been substantially completed and currently very limited opportunity to meet the logistics sector requirements in alternative locations in Ashfield.
- Sherwood Business Park at Junction 27 is a prime location for the logistics sector having already developed. The evidence from the Council's Employment Land Needs Study and Logistic Study and the Avison Young report all reached a conclusion that the site is a suitable and prime location for strategic distribution uses which will serve both regional and national market requirements. There are opportunities to expand the Business Park to meeting the on-going economic needs of the logistics sector. The location is close to the motorway junction, therefore potentially reducing the impact on the wider road network.
- The allocation links with Sherwood Business Park which results in the clustering and more efficient working practices for existing local businesses.
- Sherwood Business Park has been developed to the east of Junction 27 of the M1 Motorway. The character of the local area is already defined by a Business Park with its associated existing built form and overall massing of logistic and office units. The area is also influenced by its role as a key transport link to the significant urban areas of Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Hucknall. This will gain more prominence with the development of Top Wighay Farm along the A611. Therefore, the area, particularly the area to the North East, already has a more commercial feel to it rather than rural tranquillity. Consequently, the development of logistics units is not out of character with the local area as it stands.
- Junction 28 has seen substantial development around the Junction, and there is a requirement for long term improvements to Junction 28 reflecting the congested transport system in this location.

Alternative sites

The Court in *Forge Field Society v Sevenoaks District Council* ([2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin)) sets out the "need for suitably rigorous assessment of potential alternatives" where any harm is identified to

the significance of a heritage asset, but there is a need for the type of development to be considered and any alternative site on which such harm can be avoided all together. When the Draft Local Plan 2021 was consulted upon the Council Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) did not identify any alternative sites to meet the anticipated local and the regional need particularly for logistics requirements with a requirement for land close to the M1 Motorway. Subsequently, the following sites have been submitted and assessed as part of the SHELAA. They are located in close proximity to Junction 27 or 28 of the M1 Motorway and potential could be an alternative to provide logistics in Ashfield:

- East of Pinxton Lane and South of the A38, Sutton in Ashfield (SHELAA - SA086). The site is located off the A38 to the east of Castlewood Business Park. There is a current planning application for the site which has not been determined (v/2023/0021). However, at this stage there are issues associated with ecology, potentially air quality and highway access both in relation to accessing the site and to the strategic highway network.
- Land east of Sherwood Business Park A611, Annesley (SHELAA - KA053). The site is substantially smaller comprises a gross area of approximately 8.97 ha and therefore it does not have the same capacity to deliver strategic logistic sites. The site is also subject to constraints which further reduce the capacity. It is located in the Green Belt and adjacent to the Annesley Hall Registered Park and Garden. Consequently, it is not considered to be an alternative to the sites allocated.

Conclusion

The Council's Green Belt assessment identifies that the proposed allocations form part of an area which are assessed in terms of Green Belt harm "Relatively High" and "High". The buildings on the site are anticipated to be logistics units which by their size and scale would have an adverse impact on the spatial and visual openness of the Green Belt. However, the impact is ameliorated to an extent by the proposed structural landscaping and the site location adjacent to the M1 and for the site to the North East by Sherwood Business Park.

From a heritage aspect the Council's HIA recommends the removal of the strategic employment sites Policy S6 (formally S8) comprising land northeast of Junction 27 of the M1 and land southeast of Junction 27 of the M1. The buildings on the allocation would be visible, and there would be harm notwithstanding the landscaping to mitigation anticipated. The planning balance must be weighed in terms of the harm caused to the significance of heritage assets against the public benefits of the proposed use. The NPPF requires that great weight should be given to harm to heritage assets and any substantial harm to Annesley Hall Registered Park and Gardens (Grade ii*) and scheduled monuments should be 'wholly exceptional'.

The economic evidence for the Local Plan identifies that there is a significant demand for strategic logistics, particularly along the M1 Motorway. The evidence identifies that there is a shortage in the supply to meet the needs of major logistics operators. With the substantial development of Castlewood Business Park and the building out of Summit Park, Ashfield no longer has the capacity to significantly contribute towards meeting this requirement. The Council considers that currently there are no sites in the District which would provide a realistic alternative with the necessary attributes the site at Junction 27 possesses. Junction 27 site is well placed to meet demand for logistics in terms of scale, access to the motorway network and deliverability. The strategic proposed allocation provides a major economic opportunity for Ashfield. It provides investment to boost the local economy and jobs opportunities.

There are socio-economic benefits for the Ashfield economy in terms of jobs and help to address local deprivation issues.

The need to weigh competing issues lies at the heart of the NPPF. It is considered, on balance, the public benefits of the proposed allocation in relation to heritage assets and the exceptional circumstances in relation to the Green Belt provide the justification for the allocation to be taken forward in the Local Plan.

Regulation 19 Local Plan Proposed Employment Land Allocations

The proposed employment allocations that could be taken forward into the Regulation 19 Local Plan are set out in Table 7.

Site Reference Draft Local Plan 2021	Site Name	Approximate net area ha
S6 (a & b)	Strategic Employment Allocations Junction 27, M1 Motorway, Annesley.	40.92
EM2 S1	Castlewood Business Park, Sutton in Ashfield.	2.38
EM2 S2	Fulwood Road North, Sutton in Ashfield.	1.37
EM2 S3	Hamilton Road, Sutton in Ashfield.	3.34
EM2 S4	West of Fulwood, Export Drive, Sutton in Ashfield.	5.68
EM2 K1	Kings Mill Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield.	1.99
EM2 K2	Park Lane, Kirkby-in-Ashfield.	1.50
EM2 K3	Portland Industrial Park, Kirkby-in-Ashfield.	1.76
EM2 K4	Land to the east of Lowmoor Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield. (Proposed new allocation SHELAA: KA027)	11.11
EM2 H1	Aerial Way, Hucknall.	0.83
EM2 H2	Butlers Hill, Hucknall.	0.60
EM2 H3	Harrier Park, Hucknall.	13.39
	Total	84.87

Table 7: Local Plan 2023, Potential Employment Allocation.

Source: Ashfield District Council

A number of the employment allocations in the Draft Local Plan 2021 are currently subject to planning applications. Approval is requested for the Assistant Director of Planning to update information in the Local Plan 2023 – 2040 Regulation 19 Pre submission Draft regarding the sites identified in the Report.

Implications

Corporate Plan: Planning, and the Local Plan in particular, has a cross cutting role to play in helping to meet and deliver the 6 priorities identified in the Corporate Plan. In particular, the Local Plan has a key responsibility in delivering the outcomes around the supply of appropriate and affordable homes, improving town centres, maximising economic growth especially around transport hubs and improving green spaces and the natural environment.

Legal: The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out the

legislative requirements in bringing a local plan forward. Under Section 20 of The Act, an authority must not submit a Local Plan unless they have complied with any relevant requirements contained in the regulations and the document is ready for independent examination. [RLD 02/10/2023]

Finance: There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report. [PH 29/09/2023].

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None.
General Fund – Capital Programme	None.
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None.
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None.

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
An additional employment site is proposed to be included in the Local Plan at Lowmoor Road. The site is located in the countryside. The site was not included in the Draft Local Plan and has not been subject to previous consultation. Consequently, there are risks associated with what responses to the Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation could raise.	Two of the proposed allocations in the Draft Local Plan 2021 are now fully development and other allocation site are nearing completing. The additional site is considered to meet future potential employment land needs and ensuring sufficient employment land is allocated to meet those needs.
Some of the proposed employment sites are located in the Green Belt and it will be necessary to establish that there are exceptional circumstances to changing the Green Belt boundaries.	The evidence base will set out the case for the change to the Green Belt boundaries at Junction 27 of the M1 Motorway.
The Strategic Employment Sites will impact on designated heritage assets including a Grade II* Registered Park and Gardens and scheduled ancient monuments. Heritage assets should be given great weight in relation to the asset's conservation. Therefore, there	The Council evidence base will set out the public benefits of the proposed allocations at Junction 27. While additional sites could come forward, they may provide additional sites as there is anticipated to be a shortfall in the need for logistics within the Nottingham Core and Outer Housing Market Area.

<p>needs to be a substantial justification for taking the sites at Junction 27 forward. While it is recommended that the sites are allocated an Inspector on Examination may come to a different conclusion.</p> <p>Alternative sites have been considered but at this time the evidence does not identify that there are any alternatives. However, this position may have changed before or during the Examination as there is an outstanding planning application on land off Pinxton Lane, Sutton in Ashfield.</p>	
<p>An additional employment site is proposed to be included in the Local Plan at Lowmoor Road. The site is located in the countryside. The site was not included in the Draft Local Plan and has not been subject to previous consultation. Consequently, there are risks associated with what responses to the Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation could raise.</p>	<p>Two of the proposed allocations in the Draft Local Plan 2021 are now fully development and other allocation site are nearing completing. The additional site is considered to meet future potential employment land needs and ensuring sufficient employment land is allocated to meet those needs.</p>

Human Resources: There are no direct HR implications contained within this report.

Environmental/Sustainability: Sustainability is at the heart of the planning system and the Plan has been prepared with the aim of delivering sustainable development in the District in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 7 and 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2021. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, which requires the Council to conduct an appraisal of the sustainability of the proposals in Local Plan and prepare a report of the findings of the appraisal.

Equalities: An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the consideration of the Regulation 19 Local Plan Regulation 19.

Other Implications:

None

Reason(s) for Urgency

Not applicable.

Reason(s) for Exemption

Not applicable

Background Papers

Draft Local Plan Regulation 18, and the Local Plan evidence base which is available on the Council's website.

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