
Planning Statement

**Weybridge Business Park, Addlestone Road
Addlestone, KT15 2UP**

On behalf of Bridge UK Properties 7 LP

May 2022

Planning Statement

Weybridge Business Park, Addlestone



Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Site and Surrounding Area	6
3.	The Proposed Development	13
4.	Planning Policy Context	17
5.	Planning Assessment	20
6.	Conclusion	50



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application submitted to Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) on behalf of Bridge UK Properties 7 LP ('the applicant') for the redevelopment of land at Weybridge Business Park, Addlestone ('the site').
- 1.2 The site is located within the administrative area of Runnymede Borough Council. The site measures approximately 3.72ha in size and is split in to two individual parcels separated by Addlestone Road. Both sites contain existing, vacant office buildings with ancillary on-site car parking. For the purposes of this Planning Statement, both parcels will be referred to as 'the site' collectively, unless explicitly stated.
- 1.3 The application proposals comprise the comprehensive redevelopment of the site including the demolition of the existing office buildings across the site and the construction of three employment units; a larger unit on the southern land parcel (Unit 100) and two smaller units to the north (Units 210 and 220), along with ancillary office floorspace to each building. The employment floorspace to be delivered will be suitable for a range of employment land uses which are appropriate to the site's designation as a Strategic Employment Area.
- 1.4 The delivery of high-quality and much-needed modern employment floorspace at the site would fully accord with national and local planning policy. The proposed land uses would achieve a more efficient and optimal use of the site than the currently consented uses, thereby contributing to the function and vitality of the local economy to a greater degree, with the general proximity of the M25 to the site further exemplifying the suitability of the site for redevelopment to bring forward the proposed land uses.
- 1.5 The redevelopment of the site, comprising the demolition of long-vacant office floorspace to be replaced by high-quality employment floorspace which better relates to present-day business needs is also seen to be a significant benefit of the development proposals, according with strategic employment planning policies in the Runnymede Local Plan.

The Applicant

- 1.6 Bridge UK Properties 7 LP is part of Bridge Industrial. Bridge Industrial, founded in 2000, are an industrial real estate operating company and investment manager, who focus on the acquisition and development of industrial properties in core markets.
- 1.7 The company originated in the U.S., with a primary focus on the redevelopment of brownfield sites to provide last-mile logistic operations. In late 2020, the company expanded to the U.K., where Bridge UK Properties 7LP are seeking to replicate this success in delivering high-quality, modern employment facilities which meet the demands of modern-day suppliers.

- 1.8 The applicant is in the process of bringing forward several development sites within London and the wider south-east, utilising creative, nimble, and strategic deal-making to transform complex industrial opportunities into successful, irreplaceable industrial assets.

Description of Development

- 1.9 The applications seek full planning permission for:

“Demolition of existing buildings and the development of three employment units within Classes E(g)ii, E(g)iii, B2 and B8, with ancillary office accommodation, new vehicular access, associated external yard areas, HGV and car parking, servicing, external lighting, hard and soft landscaping, infrastructure and all associated works”.

- 1.10 The above proposals are referred to henceforth within this Planning Statement as ‘the development’.

- 1.11 This Planning Statement assesses the material planning considerations associated with the development in the context of national, regional and local planning policy and guidance.

Supporting Documents

- 1.12 This Planning Statement summarises the application proposals and provides an assessment of the proposed development in the context of the relevant national and local policy guidance and other material considerations. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying plans and drawings submitted as part of the application, in addition to the following specialist technical reports:

- **Planning Application Forms and Certificates** prepared by Savills;
- **CIL Form 1** prepared by Savills;
- **Site Location Plan and Block Plan** prepared by UMC Architects;
- **Existing and Proposed Floorplans, Elevations and Sections inc. Site Levels and Finished Floor Levels** prepared by UMC Architects;
- **Demolition Drawings** prepared by UMC Architects;
- **Topographical Survey** prepared by Interlock;
- **Planning Statement** prepared by Savills;
- **Design and Access Statement** prepared by UMC Architects;
- **Landscape Statement and Landscape Drawings** prepared by LDA Design;
- **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** prepared by LDA Design;
- **Air Quality Assessment** prepared by Air and Acoustic Consultants;

- **Arboricultural Impact Assessment inc. Tree Survey & Protection Plan** prepared by Ligna Consultancy;
- **Biodiversity Net Gain Plan** prepared by MKA Ecology;
- **Outline Construction Environment Management Plan** prepared by Air and Acoustic Consultants;
- **Energy and Sustainability Statement** prepared by SWH and MBA;
- **Flood Risk Assessment and SuDS Strategy** prepared by HDR;
- **Surface Water Drainage Summary Proforma** prepared by HDR;
- **Framework Travel Plan** prepared by Mode;
- **Geo-Environmental Assessment** prepared by TRC;
- **Green and Blue Infrastructure Checklist** prepared by Savills;
- **Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (inc. Heritage and Archaeology)** prepared by Savills;
- **External Lighting Assessment** prepared by MBA;
- **Market Assessment** prepared by Savills;
- **Noise Assessment** prepared by Air and Acoustic Consultants;
- **Construction Logistics Plan** prepared by Mode;
- **Delivery & Servicing Plan** prepared by Mode;
- **Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment** prepared by MKA Ecology;
- **Statement of Community Involvement** prepared by Connect; and
- **Transport Assessment** prepared by Mode.

Structure of Statement

1.13 This Statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** provides a description of the site, its context within the surrounding area, and the planning history of the site;
- **Section 3** provides a summary of the proposed development;
- **Section 4** sets out the relevant planning policy framework for the site;

Planning Statement

Weybridge Business Park, Addlestone



- **Section 5** provides an assessment of the material planning considerations arising from the proposals; and
- **Section 6** presents our conclusions in respect to the proposals.

2. Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 This section provides a brief description of the site and the immediate surrounding area, together with a summary of the relevant planning history at the site.

The Site

2.2 The site comprises two parcels of land at Weybridge Business Park separated by Addlestone Road, located on the eastern side of Addlestone. The site measures approximately 3.72ha in total. A Site Location Plan excerpt is provided below.

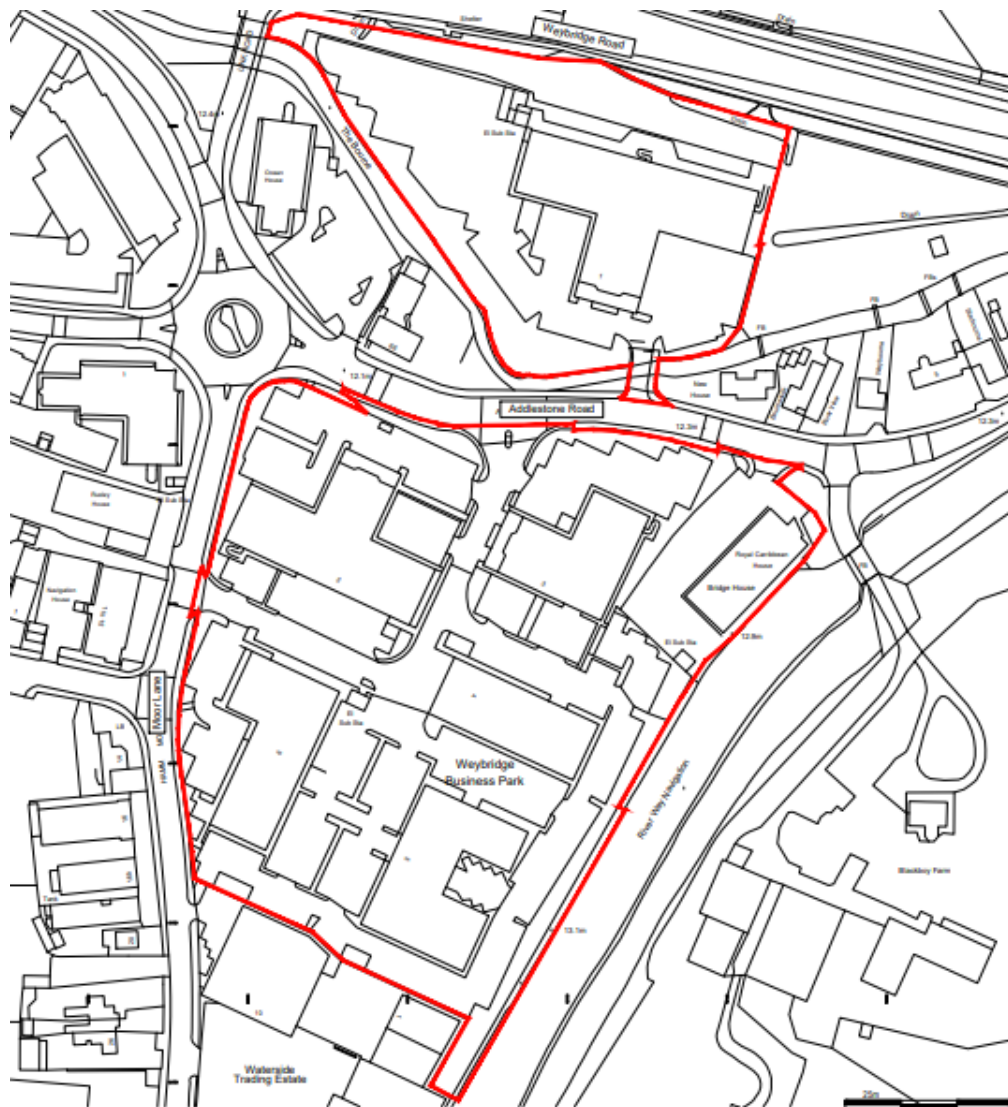


Figure 2.1: Site Location Plan Extract

Planning Statement

Weybridge Business Park, Addlestone



- 2.3 Weybridge Business Park forms part of a wider well-established area of large-scale commercial uses in Addlestone, including the Waterside Trading Estate and Bourne Business Park as well as additional smaller-scale business units on both sides of Hamm Moor Lane.
- 2.4 As stated above, the site comprises two land parcels, north and south of Addlestone Road. The northern land parcel comprises a vacant, T-shaped office building, accessed via a single entrance from Addlestone Road, with the wider site largely comprising hardstanding. The site is bound on all sides by dense trees and vegetation, with the A317 to the north of the site and the River Wey running along the southern and southwestern site boundaries.
- 2.5 The southern land parcel comprises several vacant office buildings of varying scales, with the majority of these buildings of fairly recent construction. Each unit is served by dedicated car parking, with limited amounts of soft landscaping interspersed throughout the hardstanding areas. All the existing buildings are currently vacant and have been vacant for some time.
- 2.6 Access to the Business Park is provided from both Addlestone Road and also from separate access points along Hamm Moor Lane. The site is bound by Addlestone Road to the north, Hamm Moor Lane to the west (with commercial land uses fronting the other side of Hamm Moor Lane) and commercial land uses to the south. To the east of the site sits the River Wey, beyond which there is a large area of Green Belt.
- 2.7 The wider commercial uses in the surrounding area are generally in quasi-industrial use with trade counters, workshops or retail warehouses (i.e., hardware stores, builders' merchants, paint shops, vehicle repairs etc), with further office uses at the Bourne Business Park. Generally speaking, this area on the eastern side of Addlestone has an established character as a location for offices and industrial uses, and this is well recognised in the Council's Local Plan which identifies the site as part of a Strategic Employment Area.
- 2.8 Concerning accessibility, the site is located adjacent to the A317, which provides access further west to the M25 motorway network, providing connections to the north to the M3 and M4 towards London. The advantages of these strategic connections are acknowledged in the Local Plan. Addlestone Rail Station, providing regular South Western Railway services to/from destinations including London Waterloo and Weybridge is located circa 1km from the site (approx. 12-minutes walking distance). The nearest bus stops to the site are located on the A317 (Weybridge Road), providing services to/from destinations including Chertsey and Kingston.
- 2.9 The site itself is not located within a conservation area, nor are there any listed building within the site itself. The Wey Navigation Conservation Area abuts the eastern site boundary of the southern land parcel. The site is located in Flood Zone 2.

Planning History

2.10 There have been a significant number of planning applications submitted for Weybridge Business Park as per RBC online planning records, dating back to 1989. The majority of these applications are minor in nature and thus are not considered of material relevance to this application. However, there are several applications of more relevance submitted in recent years, which are covered in the table overleaf for context.

Application Ref.	Address	Description	Decision / Date
RU.15/0798	Weybridge Business Park Addlestone Road Addlestone Surrey	Refurbishment and extensions to Units 4-8 including their part demolition to provide two separate two storey office buildings; and the demolition and redevelopment of Unit 9 to provide a new three storey B1 office building within the southern part of Weybridge Business Park; retaining the associated car parking (261 spaces) and landscape improvement works. Now k/as Units 4, 5 & 6.	Application Granted with Conditions 06.08.2015
RU.20/1097	Unit 1 Weybridge Business Park Addlestone Road KT15 2UP	Prior notification of proposed change of use from offices (Use Class B1) to residential (Use Class C3) for 58 residential units, under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O.	Prior Approval Refused 28.09.2020
RU.20/1098	Buildings 2 and 3 Weybridge Business Park Addlestone Road KT15 2UP	Prior notification of proposed change of use from offices (Use Class B1a) to residential (Use Class C3) for 70 residential units (42 in Building 2 and 28 in Building 3), under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O.	Prior Approval Refused 28.09.2020
RU.21/0432	Weybridge Business Park Addlestone Road Addlestone KT15 2UP	Hybrid planning application for the demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of the site, consisting of: (i) Outline planning permission with all matters reserved (other than access) for hotel accommodation (Use Class C1), leisure and health club and bar/restaurant with associated vehicle parking, landscaping and associated works; and (ii) Full planning permission for a multi storey car park and surface parking, internal roads, vehicle access,	Application Withdrawn



		landscaping, together with associated and ancillary works including utilities and surface water drainage; and (iii) Full planning permission for replacement plant and new building entrances for Buildings 5 and 6.	
--	--	--	--

Pre-Application Discussions

2.11 The applicant has undertaken detailed pre-application engagement with RBC officers through a bespoke Planning Performance Agreement. Pre-application discussions with RBC have comprised three meetings, preceded by a joint site visit with the appointed case officer and the project team on the following dates:

- Initial Site Visit: Wednesday 2nd February 2022;
- Initial Pre-application Meeting: Monday 7th February 2022;
- First PPA Pre-application Meeting: Wednesday 2nd March 2022;
- Second PPA Pre-application Meeting: Wednesday 20th March 2022.

2.12 Regarding the overall principle of development, RBC officers accepted that the proposed employment land uses at the site would accord with the wider Strategic Employment Area designation encompassing the entirety of the site, in line with national and local policies with regard to maximising economic productivity and growth. The principle of development was considered acceptable from the initial pre-application meeting undertaken on 7th February 2022, subject to wider development management considerations regarding more detailed aspects of the proposals.

Stakeholder Engagement

2.13 Bridge Industrial are committed to undertaking wide-ranging stakeholder engagement, both prior to and following submission of the planning application. To inform the proposed redevelopment at the site the applicant instructed Connect Communications to devise and undertake a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy.

2.14 As noted within the submitted Statement of Community Involvement, Connect Communications were instructed in order to undertake the following actions in relation to engaging with key stakeholders:

- Gain an understanding of local views about the proposals.
- Engage the surrounding community on the proposals for the site and allow for constructive feedback.

Planning Statement

Weybridge Business Park, Addlestone



- Continue to engage with the community up to and beyond submission of the planning application, answering questions and providing further information on request.
- Liaise with key political stakeholders, including Ward Councillors, to obtain further feedback on the development proposals being brought forward at the site.

2.15 As part of the consultation process, Bridge extended invitations to meet with the community's elected representatives.

Ward Councillors

2.16 Bridge invited Addlestone South ward councillors to meet on site with the Bridge Industrial team, to further discuss the proposal.

2.17 Bridge extended invitations on the 31st of March to Weybridge Town Business Group and South East River Trust.

2.18 The project team met with Addlestone South ward councillors, at Weybridge Business Park on the 23rd of March. Councillor Peter Snow, John Furey (also serving as Surrey County Councillor) and Cllr John Wilson were in attendance.

2.19 The project team gave a brief introduction to Bridge Industrial, the history of Weybridge Business Park and an overview of the pre-application engagement to date with Runnymede Borough Council and Surrey County Council, with pre-application meetings held with both and feedback received. They took questions raised from the councillors.

2.20 Overall, the councillors' views towards the scheme were positive and they raised the following specific topics, with the project team responding accordingly:

Topic	Comments Raised	Project Team Response
Traffic	The councillors raised concerns over an increase in traffic in the area, as there are already issues caused by the station. Questions about construction traffic coming along local roads and how disruption could be reduced was also raised.	The project team explained this is currently being assessed by Bridge's highways consultant and the traffic strategy has formed part of the ongoing conversations with Surrey County Council which will ultimately feed into the submitted traffic assessment.



<p>Noise Pollution</p>	<p>Councillors raised questions over the potential effects of noise pollution.</p>	<p>The project team responded that an acoustics consultant had been appointed and initial results were positive, adding that there would be an acoustic fence along the elevations closest to the nearest residential units.</p>
<p>Air Quality Impacts</p>	<p>Councillors raised concerns over potential air quality impacts.</p>	<p>The project team outlined that they would continue to undertake surveys, but initial results received had been positive, showing that any impact on air quality would be minimal.</p>
<p>Parking</p>	<p>The issue of parking was raised, when Councillor John Furey asked that if there were 300 workers at the site, would there be sufficient parking for them.</p> <p>Following on from this question, councillors queried active travel measures, such as cycle parking.</p>	<p>The project team confirmed that there would be sufficient parking for the workers and that this would not detrimentally impact on the local highway network.</p> <p>The project team said this would be provided, as this been found to be successful at other sites of this nature.</p>
<p>Employment Opportunities</p>	<p>Councillor Snow questioned how local firms would be involved in the construction phase.</p> <p>The councillors also asked how it would be ensured that the employment created was advertised locally.</p>	<p>The project team explained that there would just be one main contractor.</p> <p>The project team guaranteed this would be the case through localised adverts and through the council.</p>

2.21 Cllr Furey stated that he was pleased with the proposals. Cllr Snow and Cllr Wilson also sit on the Planning Committee, so explained that they are unable in this capacity to actively assist the team. Bridge will continue to engage with the members of Addlestone South Ward, following the submission of the planning application.

Local Stakeholder Leaflet Drop

- 2.22 A letter was issued to residents, stakeholders and businesses on 8th April. This was delivered to 629 separate properties. A copy of the newsletter can be found in Appendix A of the Statement of Community Involvement, prepared by Connect.
- 2.23 Throughout the open consultation so far, the feedback received has centred around the following themes:
- **Traffic (3):** Concerns were raised about increased traffic generation due to the development. Safety concerns were also cited as Addlestone Road is used as a walking route for children attending school. A resident also noted the potential for workers to use adjacent roads for car parking.
 - **Pollution (2):** One resident raised concerns about the noise and light pollution stemming from a 24/7 logistics facility and the accompanying HGVs. Another resident also mentioned an increase in air pollution from HGV usage.
 - **Site Use (2):** Residents noted that the site and other office space had been vacant for many years and questioned the need for this development. One resident noted that there was a shortage of housing which needed to be addressed.
 - **Scale (1):** While praise was given to the fact that a brownfield site was being revitalised, a resident deemed it too close to residential properties to be considered an appropriate size.
 - **Visual Impact (1):** One resident stated that the development would 'ruin the countryside' and the view of the adjacent river.

3. The Proposed Development

3.1 The applications seek full planning permission for:

“Demolition of existing buildings and the development of three employment units within Classes E(g)ii, E(g)iii, B2 and B8, with ancillary office accommodation, new vehicular access, associated external yard areas, HGV and car parking, servicing, external lighting, hard and soft landscaping, infrastructure and all associated works”.

3.2 A full description of development and design evolution is contained in the Design and Access Statement, prepared by UMC Architects. The key details of the proposed development are summarised in this section.

Redevelopment Proposals

3.3 The applicant is seeking permission for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site to provide high-quality, modern employment floorspace. The design ethos of the development proposals has been guided by the following underlying objectives:

- To create a wide range of job opportunities through the development of high-quality employment floorspace in a recognised employment location;
- To create a commercial development which provides modern, fit for purpose employment facilities to meet existing and future market demand;
- A development which strengthens the economic vitality of the Weybridge and Bourne Business Park and Waterside Trading Estate Strategic Employment Area and Runnymede as a whole, without prejudicing adjoining land uses and the amenity enjoyed by them; and
- To provide a development that seeks to embed the principles of environmental sustainability whilst not prejudicing the effective operation of the business occupiers.

3.4 The redevelopment proposals seek to provide a significant quantum of employment floorspace, enabled by the demolition of the existing office buildings on-site.

Overview of Proposals

3.5 The redevelopment proposals involve the demolition of the existing office buildings at the site, which have sat vacant for an extended period of time despite previous restorations in attempts to enhance their attractiveness to commercial occupiers. These attempts have been unsuccessful.

3.6 In place of the existing office buildings, the proposals seek the construction of three employment units, comprising individual warehouses with a total floorspace quantum of 17,820sqm (GIA). The floor area breakdown across the three units is set out below:

Planning Statement

Weybridge Business Park, Addlestone



- Unit 100 (south of Addlestone Road) – 14,752sqm;
- Unit 210 (located in the northwest of the northern parcel) – 1,407sqm; and
- Unit 220 (located in the northeast of the northern parcel) – 1,660sqm.

3.7 A Proposed Site Layout Plan is shown below in Figure 3.1.



Figure 3.1: Proposed Site Layout Plan

3.8 Unit 100 typically reaches approximately 15 metres (internally) and 18.5 metres to the parapet. Units 210 and 220 typically reach approximately 12 metres internally and 15.5 metres to the parapet. Within all three units, ancillary office floorspace is proposed, located on key façades within the buildings. For Unit 100, the office floorspace sits on the northern building façade fronting Addlestone Road to the north, and for Units 210 and 220, the office floorspace is located on the southward-facing façade, again facing on to Addlestone Road. This

ancillary office floorspace will serve the wider function of the employment land uses to be undertaken on-site, and is not proposed as a standalone office facility for companies to utilise, separate to the site operator.

- 3.9 The positioning of the three units on both parcels comprising the site allows for the provision of a goods and service yard for each unit. For Unit 100, the service yard will serve 10 dock loading doors, with Units 210 and 220 served by 2 dock loading doors each, respectively. The siting and scale of the proposed service yards, and the provision of ample space for operational parking space within the service yards, helps to ensure efficient operations within this area. The buildings and yards are of differing scale, having been designed to suit the vehicle types that would use them.

Design and Landscaping

- 3.10 To ensure the various facades of the three employment units are activated and to reduce the perceived sense of scale and massing, the colour palette used varies from light to dark grey (deployed in a vertical 'graduated' pattern) along all facades in a horizontal banding. To reflect the corporate branding of the applicant, blue clad panels are also inserted on key facades identifying the location of the office premises. Materials have been selected particularly to ensure good thermal efficiencies and contribute towards enhanced energy performance.
- 3.11 The main warehouse unit will primarily consist of cladding and curtain walling, as is typical for a large industrial unit, befitting the wider built form and character of the wider Strategic Employment Area in immediate proximity to the site. The office floorspace (and subsequent facades) across the three units all comprise large glass windows to allow good levels of natural light, juxtaposed against the coloured cladding to add relief and visual interest. The office structures although visually different, seamlessly integrate within the wider built form proposed.
- 3.12 The proposals seek to retain the existing landscaping along all boundaries of the northern parcel, whilst also retaining the existing vegetation along the River Wey, to the rear of Unit 100, and along Addlestone Road along the northern site boundary.
- 3.13 The proposals seek to retain existing soft landscaping where feasible, with additional soft landscaping proposed along Hamm Moor Lane and between the boundary of Unit 100 and the employment land uses immediately south, seeking to further soften the site edge condition and enhance the overall landscape characteristics of the site. This is also achieved through proposed green wall inserts along the outward facing facades of Unit 100, further helping to break up the scale and massing of the building and soften the appearance of the larger employment unit. Boundary fencing will also incorporate extensive green planting, landscaping and new trees to soften the proposals in the context of the surrounding built environment.

Access, Parking and Highways

- 3.14 The site will be accessed by vehicles and pedestrians from three access points at the north and south of Addlestone Road; Unit 100 with two vehicular accesses, and a single access for Units 210 & 220. All vehicular accesses will be located off Addlestone Road.
- 3.15 Two vehicular accesses will be provided along Addlestone Road to serve Unit 100. HGVs will access the service yard via the northern-most access whilst the existing southern-most access will serve a staff car parking area. The segregation of both areas is important. An existing access from Addlestone Road currently serving the southern site will be stopped up as part of the development proposals, as well as stopping up the existing Hamm Moor Lane access.
- 3.16 A total of 180no. car parking spaces will be provided as part of the redevelopment proposals, including 10no. blue badge spaces. EV charging facilities will be provided from the outset with 36no. active charging bays to promote EV usage. Furthermore, a total of 80no. cycle parking spaces are also provided (40no. serving Unit 100 and 20no. serving each unit on the northern parcel). The cycle parking will be provided the form of covered, secured and well-lit shelters thereby encouraging their use.

Energy and Sustainability

- 3.17 The development proposals incorporate a well-considered, holistic energy and sustainability strategy which seeks to not only satisfy planning policy, but also go beyond this and the standards set by Building Regulations. Despite there being no explicit BREEAM target set by the local planning authority, the applicant aims to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good', with aspirations of 'Excellent', as well as achieve a 5-star rating under the Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark (GRESB) scheme. Sustainability is at the core of the design strategy of this development.
- 3.18 The development's sustainability approach has been described in this statement which explains how the scheme seeks to address the specific requirements outlined within Policy SD7 Sustainable Design of Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. The energy hierarchy has been followed to define the appropriate steps to achieve the requirements set out by Building Regulations Part L2A and Policy SD8:
- **Be Lean:** Proposals include for the incorporation of improved building envelope details and enhanced air tightness that seeks to better that of Part L, efficient mechanical plant, and highly efficient lighting to reduce energy demand
 - **Be Clean:** Local heat network sites were reviewed, and the suitability of a community heating network was considered, but the location and lack of constant heat load profile meant these options were not feasible for this development.
 - **Be Green:** The proposed development includes the use of both photovoltaic arrays and air source heat pumps. These solutions have been appraised as the most viable for this development.

4. Planning Policy Context

- 4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when making any determination under the Planning Acts, it should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2. The redevelopment proposals address relevant national and local planning policy; this section of the Planning Statement sets out a brief summary of the relevant planning policy documents considered.
- 4.3. The emerging redevelopment proposals have taken account of the adopted national and local planning policy framework. The statutory Development Plan comprises the Runnymede Borough Local Plan (July 2020).
- 4.4. A number of supplementary documents also support the borough's Local Plan, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Runnymede Green and Blue Infrastructure SPD (December 2021); and
 - Runnymede Design SPD (July 2021).

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 4.5. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021 and replaces the previous national Framework. The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies and is a material consideration in the consideration and determination of all planning applications.
- 4.6. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The importance of the planning system in contributing to sustainable development is set out at Paragraph 10 which states that sustainable development must be pursued in a positive way.
- 4.7. In respect of decision making, policy is clear at Paragraph 11 that proposals which are in accordance with Development Plans should be approved and in other circumstances that development should only be refused where *"...adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework [NPPF] taken as a whole."*
- 4.8. In relation to building a strong, competitive economy, Paragraph 81 states that *'Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.'*
- 4.9. Also of relevance, Paragraph 83 states that *"Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations"*.

4.10. Paragraph 111 states that *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”*

4.11. Paragraph 123 recognises that demand for land uses changes. *“Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs.”*

Local Planning Policy

4.12. The adopted Development Plan for RBC comprises the July 2020 Runnymede Local Plan.

4.13. Within adopted local planning policy, the site is located within the ‘Weybridge and Bourne Business Park and Waterside Trading Estate’ Strategic Employment Area (SEA). Policy IE2 of the Local Plan identifies the 5 SEAs in the borough as being the highest tier of employment sites, and subsequently seeks to protect these areas from non-employment uses “to accommodate existing and future demand”.

4.14. Local Plan Policy IE2 also strongly encourages the redevelopment and intensification of sites for employment uses subject to other policies of the plan, whilst Local Plan Policy IE3 seeks to cater for modern business needs, supporting development proposals which “redevelop outmoded employment floorspace to cater for modern business needs”.

4.15. Local Plan Policy EE1 encourages high quality and inclusive design which responds to the local context including both the built, natural and historic character of an area whilst ensuring an efficient use of land. Development proposals will be expected to take account of a scheme’s design at the earliest opportunity, to ensure proposals contribute to and enhance the quality of their landscape setting.

4.16. Local Plan Policy EE5 states that development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area, including views in or out, should protect, conserve, and wherever possible enhance, the special interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

4.17. Regarding highways and transport considerations, Local Plan Paragraph 3.1 recognises the borough as being “strategically located at the junction of the M25 and M3 motorways” with excellent road connections to the capital and the wider South East region.

4.18. Subsequently, Local Plan Policy SD4 notes that the Council will support development proposals which maintain or enhance the efficient and safe operation of the highway network, and which take account of the needs of all highway users for safe access, egress and servicing arrangements. Development proposals which generate significant traffic movements must be accompanied by a Transport Assessment or Statement which considers the impact of the proposal on the highway network and identifies the measures to mitigate impacts to acceptable levels.

4.19. Concerning energy and sustainability principles, Policy SD7 of the Local Plan states that development proposals will be supported where they:

- a) Incorporate measures for the secure storage of cycles and storage of waste including recyclable waste;
- b) Protect existing biodiversity and include opportunities to achieve net gains in biodiversity as well as greening of the urban environment;
- c) Maximises opportunities for passive solar gain and passive cooling through the orientation and layout of development;
- d) Subject to feasibility, incorporate electric vehicle charging points in accordance with guidance issued by Surrey County Council;
- e) [N/A];
- f) [N/A];
- g) Incorporate sustainable construction and demolition techniques that provide for the efficient use of minerals including a proportion of recycled or secondary aggregates and encourage the reuse of construction and demolition waste at source or its separation and collection of recycling.

4.20. Policy SD8 Renewable/Low Carbon Energy further details that major development proposals are required to submit an Energy Statement demonstrating how the energy hierarchy has been applied and implemented.

4.21. Regarding heritage considerations, Local Plan Policy EE3 states that development that affects Runnymede's heritage assets should be designed to protect, conserve and enhance the significance and value of these assets and their settings in accordance with national legislation, policy and guidance and any supplementary planning documents which the council may produce.

4.22. A detailed assessment of the proposals and their compliance with the various national and local planning policy requirements is provided within Section 5 of this report.

5. Planning Assessment

- 5.1. This section of the Planning Statement sets out the main planning issues arising from the application proposals with reference to the planning policy framework set out in the previous chapter.

Principle of Redevelopment

- 5.2. Planning policy at all levels seeks to make effective use of underutilised land to meet a wide range of development needs. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, through the effective use of land driven by a plan-led system, to ensure the delivery of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits. Paragraph 119 of the NPPF also states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting developed needs including for employment land uses.
- 5.3. Section 6 of the NPPF sets out that planning decisions should contribute to the creation and continuation of a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 81 states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, considering both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Planning decisions should also help to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations. Paragraph 83 of the NPPF further states that planning decisions should recognise the specific locational requirements of different sectors, making provision for clusters where industry can thrive.
- 5.4. Whilst not part of the Development Plan for Runnymede, the London Plan acknowledges the connectivity and resulting interrelated economies in the South East region. Paragraph 2.0.5 of the London Plan acknowledges the key importance of collaboration across London and the South East, in order to facilitate the creation of appropriate space for wholesale, regional economic growth, supported by good regional transport infrastructure.
- 5.5. The Runnymede Local Plan is the Development Plan for the area, and its policies are the starting point for considering proposals for development within the Borough. Despite being adopted recently, the Plan was prepared largely before the Covid pandemic and issues such as the major changes to the occupational office market and the significant growth in demand for logistics space, which are relevant to the consideration of this application, are understandably absent.
- 5.6. However the Plan acknowledges that Runnymede is strategically positioned at the junction of the M3 and M25 motorways, giving good access to the wider South East region by road. The Borough's strong economic base with many commercial uses within the town centres is also acknowledged. One of the Council's main objectives



in the Plan is to maintain the Borough's economic role in the wider area and to sustain economic growth and competitiveness by protecting the most valued employment sites.

- 5.7. The Local Plan identifies 5 Strategic Employment Areas (SEAs), which includes the site together with the Waterside Trading Estate and the Bourne Business Park. The 5 SEAs are the highest tier of employment sites in the Borough, and policy IE2 seeks to protect these areas from non-employment uses "to accommodate existing and future demand". It also encourages the redevelopment and intensification of sites for employment uses subject to other policies of the plan.
- 5.8. Local Plan Policy IE3 also seeks to cater for modern business needs, supporting development proposals which "redevelop outmoded employment floorspace to cater for modern business needs".
- 5.9. Noting the policy context outlined above, particularly at a local level, the proposals which replace outdated, vacant office floorspace with purpose-built employment floorspace which better meets current demands would wholly accord with the strategic economic objectives and policies of the Local Plan. The acceptability of the proposed development in principle has been confirmed through pre-application discussions. The proposals would help to intensify the use of employment land within the SEA, helping to contribute to a greater extent to the economic growth and competitiveness of the borough, whilst also strengthening the role (more locally) of the SEA itself.
- 5.10. It is also important to note that Local Plan Policy IE3 seeks to cater for modern business needs, supporting development proposals which "redevelop outmoded employment floorspace to cater for modern business needs". The ongoing vacancy of the existing office buildings which are to be replaced is proof that the existing premises are not considered commercially attractive or able to provide for modern business needs. Whereas, the proposals respond to the more recent uplift in demand for modern logistics space, and the reduced demand for large office spaces, both of which are partly driven by the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 5.11. Discussions with officers at pre-application stage have included consideration of the justification and requirements driving the size of the proposed Unit 100. In this regard, a Market Assessment has been prepared by Savills in support of the application. This Assessment analyses the current market conditions for large-scale industrial warehousing floorspace within the local catchment area, including current supply and future demand levels, to ascertain the requirement for industrial floorspace, of a high-quality, modern standard, in this location.
- 5.12. The Assessment findings identify that fundamentally, Weybridge Business Park is advantageously located for large industrial and logistics premises because of its strategic location and good access to the M25 and M3 motorways which is critical infrastructure that is part of the UK's strategic road network.
- 5.13. The Assessment, in its analysis of the current market, also states that several profound macroeconomic changes have gained traction that disproportionately increased demand for larger units (greater than 100,000 sqft). The growth in e-commerce has increased the requirement for larger premises that enable tenants to

optimise the efficiency of their operations and provide sufficient space so they can flexibly adjust to changes in their operational requirements to manage higher volumes of goods at greater speeds. Additional pressures from the forces of globalisation mean companies must ensure their supply chains are operating with optimal efficiency. Events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit have made clear the need to ensure stable supplies.

- 5.14. Such pressures have forced foreign companies who service the UK market to find new premises in the country. They have also forced UK companies to secure additional industrial floorspace so they can more efficiently store, manage and distribute goods.
- 5.15. These forces have disproportionately increased the need for larger units. The aforementioned pressures arising from e-commerce and globalisation, as well as an ongoing labour shortage, have also forced operators to rely on new technologies such as robotics, digital tracking and a variety of other means which ensure ever more efficient operations. The deployment of new technologies requires larger units to provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate new and unanticipated technologies.
- 5.16. The macroeconomic forces and their impact on the demand for larger premises is reflected in both national and local property market statistics. Take-up of units over 100,000 sqft has roughly tripled in the past 15 years and has significantly exceeded the growth in supply. Whilst the changes to the economy have clearly increased demand for all industrial premises, demand for larger industrial premises (greater than 100,000 sqft) has grown disproportionately.
- 5.17. The shortage of larger premises is particularly evident and acute in Runnymede and the wider PMA because the opportunity to develop new employment land of any kind is so limited. This is clearly indicated by market data which shows that there is virtually no availability of large units (greater than 100,000 sqft) and no new supply coming forward. Market dynamics strongly indicate that the greatest need is for larger units and that the appropriate option for development at Weybridge Business Park is Building 100 which is the large premises option which meets the market's most pressing floorspace requirements and alleviate the current acute shortage.
- 5.18. As such, it is considered that the quantum of floorspace proposed at the site, particularly the larger warehouse Unit 100, is wholly appropriate for existing market conditions. The most appropriate form of development on the southern part of the site, states the Market Assessment, is unambiguously the large premises option progressed (Unit 100). There is strong market evidence of an acute shortage of and strong demand for large units (greater than 100,000 sqft) in Runnymede and the wider property market area (PMA). There is currently no vacant or available floorspace in Runnymede or the wider PMA comprising 100,000 sqft of contiguous floorspace.

- 5.19. As such, it is considered that there is clear justification regarding the demand for industrial floorspace, particularly single large units, within the local catchment area, which Unit 100 would satisfy, thus chiming with national and local planning guidance regarding meeting current market needs and modern requirements for operators. In particular, this would satisfy Local Plan Policy IE3 which recognises the need to adapt to circumstances at to replace outmoded space with modern uses. This would also accord with Chapter 6 of the NPPF, which seeks to build “a strong, competitive economy” by encouraging planning policies (and by association, planning decisions) to adapt to accommodate needs not anticipated by the plan, in order to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.
- 5.20. Noting the national and local planning policies identified above, and the considerations applied to the emerging development proposals at the site, the principle of development to bring forward enhanced employment land uses at the site is considered wholly acceptable and appropriate, and should be supported by the local planning authority.
- 5.21. In respect of the scheme proposals, and the size of Unit 100 particularly, the Design & Access Statement also includes an explanation of the institutional standards that are required to be incorporated within the design of modern storage and distribution buildings, to ensure they are as efficient as possible and therefore attractive to the proposed occupier.

Design

- 5.22. Planning policy at all levels seeks to promote the highest standard of design quality and inclusive design within new development. The NPPF in particular attaches notable weight to the design of the built environment. High quality design is considered to be a fundamental aspect of sustainable development as defined within Paragraph 124 of the NPPF.
- 5.23. NPPF Paragraph 127 also encourages planning decisions to, through scrutiny of the subject proposals, ensure that development proposed is sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change, including increased densities and built form.
- 5.24. Local Plan Policy EE1 also encourages high quality and inclusive design which responds to the local context including both the built, natural and historic character of an area whilst ensuring an efficient use of land. Development proposals will be expected to take account of a scheme’s design at the earliest opportunity, to ensure proposals contribute to and enhance the quality of their landscape setting.
- 5.25. The development proposals have been design-led from the outset of the project, to ensure high quality design is integrated as a core element of the scheme, effectively integrating the built form within the surrounding townscape whilst functioning as a successful employment location. Full details of the key design principles underpinning the proposed development are set out further within the supporting Design and Access Statement

prepared by UMC Architects in support of the scheme, which should be reviewed in line with the summarised design principles outlined within this Statement.

- 5.26. Of particular relevance is the explanation given which underpins the external appearance of the proposed buildings, including the use of horizontal bands of colour, graduating from dark to lighter tones from the base of the building towards the roof. This is considered to be the most successful way of breaking up the proposed scale and mass of a building of this type and softening its appearance.

Construction and Functionality

- 5.27. The proposed units comprise of steel-framed, single storey warehouses which are sized to suit the operational requirements of the occupier. The application seeks to provide circa 16,360m² of warehousing internal floor area, in addition to circa 2,470m² of associated ground and first floor office and welfare accommodation. Significant space is provided around the building for necessary vehicle loading manoeuvres, with integrated parking, vehicle storage and soft landscaping schemes to be implemented.
- 5.28. The sizes of these areas are derived from the needs of the end user. The yards are dimensioned to accommodate modern articulated vehicles, LGV and vans and their turning circles. The design principles of small industrial units are based on efficiency and operation, with the service yard dictating the position of level access doors and inbound and outbound loading areas. Maximum flexibility is required within the warehouse space to allow for future occupier requirements.
- 5.29. Given the rigid functionality and performance optimisation of these building types, rectangular forms are the predominant and desired building footprints for industrial operations. The proposed buildings have been designed to provide a development that will meet the long-term needs of occupiers for running an efficient and successful business. Large open yard spaces with dedicated parking, along with open plan buildings offer the ideal opportunity for industrial and storage occupiers.

Layout

- 5.30. The proposed layout of the scheme has been comprehensively refined following a detailed contextual analysis of the site and surrounding area, including analysis of its opportunities and constraints, to ensure that built development can be delivered which responds sensitively to its surroundings whilst also ensuring that a functional and efficient employment use can be delivered.
- 5.31. The orientation and siting of all built form across the site has been designed to create strong, attractive, high quality and robust frontages when viewed from short and long distances.
- 5.32. The location of the two-storey office building facing Addlestone Way in Unit 100 has been purposefully designed to provide an active frontage which is visible from the permeable northern site boundary, signposting

the location of the offices and ensuring this is legible from the adjacent road network. The positioning of this building and the incorporated glazing helps to breaking up the larger warehouse unit for those entering the site and those travelling past on Addlestone Road.

- 5.33. The proposed building heights for the warehouse units have been designed sensitively, so as to allow an effective function and operation for the proposed employment uses to be undertaken on the site and not restrict the economic vitality and success of the proposed development. However, this has been developed in conjunction with wider contextual analysis undertaken, including understanding the relationship of the site with surrounding area. The findings of the undertaken Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, prepared by LDA Design, will assess the visual impact of the height and massing of the proposed built form across the wider site from a selected series of viewpoints.
- 5.34. The layout of the site will help to promote permeable, legible and inclusive access for all site users. The staff car and cycling parking facilities, along with the office and warehouse accesses, are conveniently located in well-lit, visible locations. The proximity of the car and cycle parking facilities, and access to the proposed buildings on-site, has again been designed to reduce travel distances and ensure a safe, welcoming and accessible environment.
- 5.35. Materials and Elevations
- 5.36. Careful consideration has been given to the selected material palette and elevational treatments, in order to provide articulation to the built form proposed, instilling visual interest and diversity within the site. Detailing on the whole will be architecturally interesting, utilising clean sharp lines, a complimentary range of surface materials and a colour palette which helps to 'break up' the facades through a graduated approach. As stated above, the units will primarily consist of cladding and curtain walling, as is typical for a large industrial unit. The office elements of the three warehouse units will comprise glazing to allow good levels of natural light, juxtaposed against the coloured cladding to add relief and to break up the typical materials along the various building facades adding interest.
- 5.37. A key design principle employed across all three warehouse units in the use of graduated coloured banding along the building facades. This ranges from a dark grey at the base, through various lighter shades of grey moving upwards, and is intended primarily, whilst adding visual interest and character to the units, to break up the long, sweeping facades of the various units when viewed from short and long-term views. This has been discussed during pre-application discussions with RBC officers, and is intended to ensure that the proposed massing and built form of the development does not negatively harm the surrounding character and quality of the site's environs.
- 5.38. In summary, the redevelopment proposals will help to provide high quality, well-designed employment units, with a sympathetic yet architecturally interesting design and functionality, to provide a sympathetic relationship

with surrounding land uses whilst embedding architectural interest and quality within the design. The design approach seeks to ensure the proposed scale, form and massing, detailing and wider layout of the development responds effectively to its setting, allowing the development to integrate seamlessly within its wider surroundings.

5.39. The design principles embedded within the scheme, reflected in greater detail within the Design and Access Statement prepared by UMC Architects, are subsequently considered to contribute to a high quality, well-designed scheme which accords with the aims of national, regional and local planning policy objectives.

Landscaping

5.40. As part of the collaborative design approach a series of key landscaping principles were prepared to guide the landscaping strategy for the site at an early stage. A comprehensive explanation of the landscaping elements and underpinning masterplan approach for the site is contained within the supporting Landscape Strategy and Landscape Drawings, prepared by LDA Design.

5.41. The five identified 'landscape principles' for the scheme are as follows:

- A. Sensitively integrate new development:** The business park will consider the wider landscape character to mitigate any impact on wider views by locating the development within the bounds of the original Business Park, and by retaining existing trees and shelter belts which align the River Wey. The planting strategy will further mitigate impacts and integrate development within the landscape.
- B. Protect and conserve existing landscape assets:** Existing landscape assets will be protected, conserved and enhanced as far as possible. Existing trees, shelter belts, and drainage ditches will be retained to form part of the landscape structure and framework.
- C. Improve ecology and biodiversity value:** A coordinated landscape and ecology strategy will be implemented to provide site-wide biodiversity gain. A range of habitat types with a biodiverse, predominantly native plant selection will be proposed.
- D. Provide recreation and amenity for local people:** The landscape strategy will encourage permissive access to the River Wey, enabling connectivity with the wider PROWs.
- E. A landscape for all seasons:** The planting design will celebrate seasonal change through a carefully selected planting palette used within the design of the central open space and plot frontages

5.42. From the above principles, a detailed landscaping strategy was prepared for the site, creating a masterplan and underpinning elements which would ensure an effective, integrated approach to the landscaping

treatments across the site. A masterplan of the landscaping proposals, both for soft and hard landscaping features, is provided in Figure 5.1 overleaf.

5.43. The landscaping proposals seek to embody the following strategy (as stated in the prepared Landscape Strategy document):

- *Retain the majority of trees and shelter belts along the boundaries preserving the character and setting for the development.*
- *Introduce new hedgerows and trees to the site, designed to screen or soften the built form and improve ecological connectivity.*
- *Reinforce the existing character of the Business Park by clustering the development into parcels. Landscape elements such as specimen trees, hedge planting and woodland shelter belts are used to separate individual parcels, therefore allowing the surrounding landscape to flow into the development.*
- *Retain the rural character by using a mostly native planting pallet and a simple material palette made up of understated and durable materials.*
- *Improve existing and create new habitats for wildlife. The existing drainage ditches and Bourne will be maintained and enhanced with species rich grassland and riparian planting along the River Wey will benefit a range of wildlife.*

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

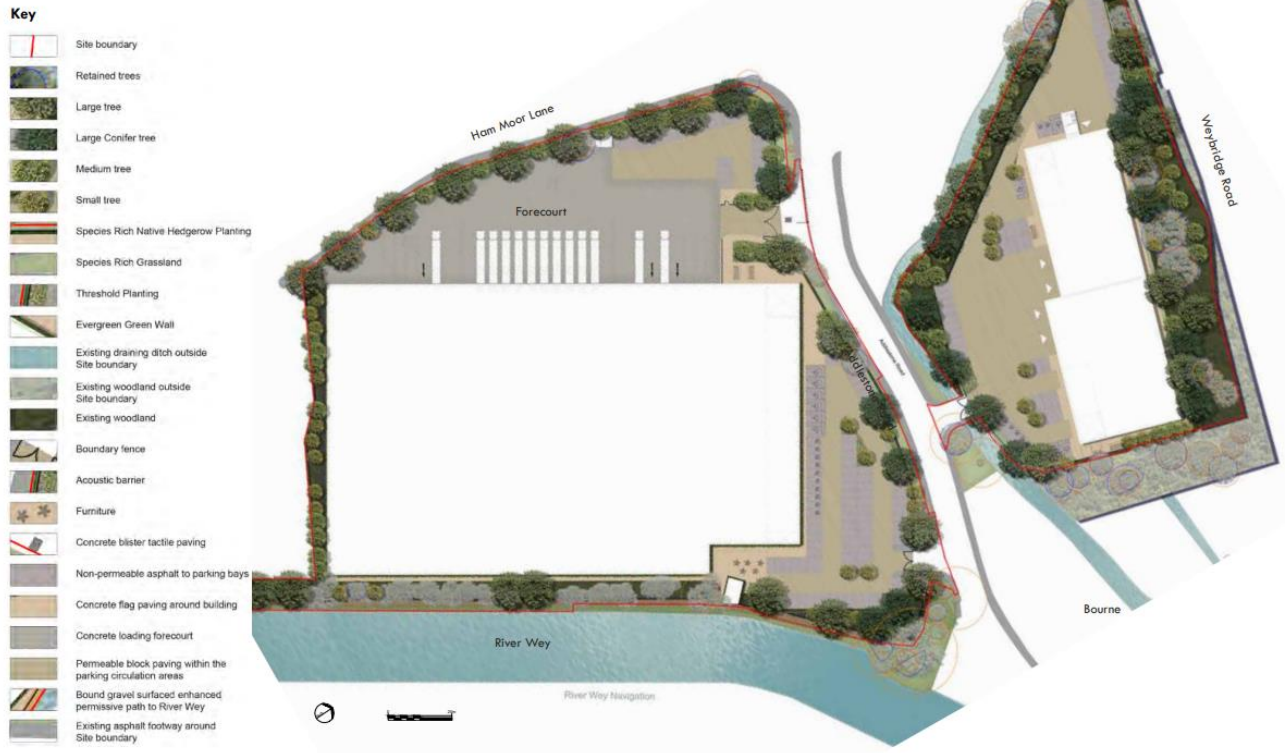


Figure 5.1: Landscape Proposals

Soft Landscaping

5.44. The majority of trees across the site are to be retained, save for those which would prejudice viable built development coming forward on the site in its proposed form. Alongside this, 135 additional newly planted trees are to be incorporated across the development site. These trees will be of varying species, maturity and form, in order to perform varying functions and allowing a ‘multi-layered woodland’ canopy to be created across the site. This is considered to add variety and interest to the tree planting palette, creating a varied and thriving landscape.

5.45. Trees are also planted in various locations dependent on their ‘impact’ – the Landscape Strategy prepared (Page 44) identifies the location of these trees and their considered ‘impact’. This strategy has been employed in order to create a varied and diverse woodland across the site, strengthening the prominence of treelines in key locations such as key thoroughfares and site entrances, in order to stand out particularly during the early establishment of the site.

5.46. Medium-sized trees are also proposed to be located in varied locations, both in prominent and existing woodland areas, both to also add prominence whilst created a varied canopy line more generally across the site. Finally, fast-growing, lighter trees are also proposed within staff car park areas, creating a high-quality, landscape-led design to these locations typically associated with swathes of hard standing.

5.47. The tree planting strategy is also underpinned by a wider 'planting strategy' which aims to create an attractive outline from, and buffer to, the buildings on-site and out to, when viewed from, the site's surroundings. A seasonally changing planting palette has been selected primarily to allow for a diverse range of colours across all seasons. This will ensure vibrance and attractiveness throughout the year, ensuring a high-quality landscaped environment which will encourage greater activity and use year-round. The key planting typologies are outlined as follows, with a brief discussion of each also provided:

- **Woodland Understorey Planting** – Woodland understorey species are to be planted underneath existing trees and under proposed woodland blocks of varying species, form and maturity to create a naturalistic, multi-layered woodland canopy effect.
- **Species Rich Grassland** – Species rich grassland to be planted under hedgerows and woodland or equivalent underneath existing trees of varying species, form and maturity Native woodland species tolerant of likely 'dry/partial shade' site conditions provides a low maintenance palette for planting under hedgerows and woodland shelter belts, adding diversity to the site.
- **Threshold Planting** - The threshold planting beds (adjacent to the building facades and windows) aim to create an attractive outlook from and buffer to the building's interior spaces. Low growing plants make up the majority of this planting palette to maintain neat and compact arrangements to enable cleaning and maintenance access to the buildings as well as to not block the light into or sight lines out of the windows.
- **Species Rich Native Hedgerows** - Native species to be planted around internal roads underneath existing trees of varying species, form and maturity and within parking areas to create a species rich hedgerow Evergreen native species such as Ilex Aquifolium (Holly) provide all year round structure complemented by deciduous native species such as Acer Campsetre (Field Maple), Corylus Avellana (Hazel) and Prunus Spinosa (Blackthorn) provides a low maintenance palette which can tolerate a likely 'dry/partial shade' site conditions, whilst remaining visually lush and interesting all year round.
- **Riparian River Corridor Planting** - Native species to be planted along the edges of the River Wey and underneath existing trees of varying species, form and maturity to create a n ecologically diverse riparian corridor.

5.48. In addition to the above, to further break up the massing of the facades of Unit 100, climbing planters have been incorporated. These features will help to provide ecological value for the site, whilst also providing further

visual interest and differentiation along the unit, which effectively juxtaposes soft and built form collectively to provide relief and soften the façade against the wider townscape. The climbing planters are seen to be a significant benefit which help to add interest to the external appearance of Unit 100.

- 5.49. The detailed soft landscaping strategy proposed is considered to encourage significant diversity and vibrancy across the site through a varied planting palette which effectively softens the site, particularly along key boundaries such as fronting the River Way and facing out on to Addlestone Road. Likewise, the enhancement of existing woodland along the inner-site boundaries, with additional car park planting, will help to provide a high-quality landscaped environment for workers at the site to enjoy year-round.
- 5.50. The soft landscaping proposals are therefore considered to be wholly appropriate and acceptable for the site.

Hard Landscaping

- 5.51. The hard landscaping strategy, and the materials employed, are intended to compliment the soft landscaping palette whilst also ensuring a high-quality environment which will be long-lasting, visually attractive and functional.
- 5.52. Surfacing materials across the site will have a high-quality finish to ensure durability and attractive amenity space. Porous materials have been used extensively through the internal roads ensuring drainage falls to below ground attenuation. Vehicular areas will be laid with herringbone bond with retaining kerb edges, to limit movement over time. Parking areas are laid with asphalt ensuring durability. The warehouse loading forecourt is laid with concrete to withstand heavy goods vehicle movements. The River Wey permissive path will be laid with a smooth bound gravel surface in keeping with its location, enabling recreational access to the wider areas and access along the river for narrow boats.
- 5.53. The street furniture, fencing and gates for the site will have a high-quality finish to ensure durability and attractive setting. Both sites will be enclosed with a metal palisade fence with large vehicular gates to the loading forecourt and car parking areas. Pedestrian gates will be provided to all pedestrian access ensuring security. Secure enclosed bike shelters are provided located close to entrances to encourage workers to ride to work. Secure bin stores are also provided located within the car parks. Communal seating is provided within the breakout space close to the River Wey. This allows staff to sit outside and enjoy the river setting.
- 5.54. As will be covered later in the section, acoustic principles identified during a noise impact assessment testing period has led to the incorporation of an acoustic fence along the Hamm Moor Lane boundary for Unit 100, and also in the northern parcel of the site (in the south-eastern corner).
- 5.55. To ensure, with particular regard to the Hamm Moor Lane frontage, that this acoustic fence does not appear blank or unimaginative in its design, given the prominence of this frontage, this fence will be green and its

appearance will be softened by the proposed landscaping approach; which would also increase the biodiverse connectivity.

- 5.56. The proposed acoustic fence will be formed of three different heights. To the south of the southern site the acoustic fence will be 1m high. As this fence travels further north, the fence will rise to 5.4m in height offering additional acoustic mitigation where located closer to residential properties. A further acoustic fence is positioned on the south eastern corner of the northern site. This shall be 4.5m high.
- 5.57. The treatment of the acoustic fence to soften its appearance, whilst also encouraging wildlife and biodiversity is provides a softened boundary to Hamm Moor Lane in combination with the climbers along the façade of Unit 100. This, along with the variety and high-quality nature of the hard landscaping materials, finishes and features will complement the soft landscaping palette proposed and ensure that the proposed development will be of the highest quality, creating employment floorspace in a bespoke environment. The landscaping proposals are thus considered to be wholly appropriate and acceptable for the site and its environs, and should be viewed positively by the local planning authority.

Energy and Sustainability

- 5.58. At a national level, the NPPF seeks to provide a framework for achieving sustainable development, summarised as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF seeks to encourage an environmental objective within sustainable development, which seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment, by minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.59. At a local level, Policy SD7 of the Local Plan states that development proposals will be supported where they:
- h) Incorporate measures for the secure storage of cycles and storage of waste including recyclable waste;
 - i) Protect existing biodiversity and include opportunities to achieve net gains in biodiversity as well as greening of the urban environment;
 - j) Maximises opportunities for passive solar gain and passive cooling through the orientation and layout of development;
 - k) Subject to feasibility, incorporate electric vehicle charging points in accordance with guidance issued by Surrey County Council;
 - l) [N/A];
 - m) [N/A];
 - n) Incorporate sustainable construction and demolition techniques that provide for the efficient use of minerals including a proportion of recycled or secondary aggregates and

encourage the reuse of construction and demolition waste at source or its separation and collection of recycling.

5.60. Policy SD8 Renewable/Low Carbon Energy details that major development proposals are required to submit an Energy Statement demonstrating how the energy hierarchy has been applied and implemented. Policy SD8 also details that, for Step 3 of the hierarchy (Be Green), development proposals of 1,000sqm or more will be expected to incorporate measures to supply a minimum of 10% of the development's energy needs from renewable and/or low carbon technologies, and in addition: a) Developments proposing 10,000sqm to 50,000sqm of net additional floorspace should consider whether connection to existing renewable, low-carbon or decentralised energy networks is feasible/achievable.

5.61. The underpinning principles relating to energy and sustainability for the development proposals can be summarised as follows, as seen within the submitted combined Energy and Sustainability Statement:

- Comply with Building Regulations Part L2A (2013); and
- Comply with Policy SD8 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy of Runneymede 2030 Local Plan, which requires the following:
 - Implementation of the energy hierarchy (Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green);
 - Development proposals of 1,000m² or more should incorporate measures to supply a minimum of 10% of the development's energy from renewable and/or low carbon technologies; and
 - Developments of 10,000m²-50,000m² should consider whether connection to existing renewable, low carbon or decentralised energy networks is possible.

5.62. The energy hierarchy has been followed to define the appropriate steps to achieve the requirements set out in by Building Regulations Part L2A and Policy SD8:

- **Be Lean:** Proposals include for the incorporation of improved building envelope details and enhanced air tightness that seeks to better that of Part L, efficient mechanical plant, and highly efficient lighting to reduce energy demand
- **Be Clean:** Local heat network sites were reviewed, and the suitability of a community heating network was considered, but the location and lack of constant heat load profile meant these options were not feasible for this development.
- **Be Green:** The proposed development includes the use of both photovoltaic arrays and air source heat pumps. These solutions have been appraised as the most viable for this development.



5.63. A combination of a fabric-first approach and renewable energies provides a route to compliance with Approved Document Part L:2013 of the Building Regulations for the proposed development. This approach also demonstrates how the development will comply with the planning criteria for 10% of the development’s energy needs to be met by renewable and/or low carbon technologies, in accordance with Policy SD8 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. The below table details the total calculated annual CO₂ emissions for the proposed development, as well as the percentage of energy demand provided by renewables, and clearly demonstrates that the 10% requirement has been drastically exceeded.

UNIT	PART L2A (2103) - TARGET EMISSION RATE (TER) KGCO ₂ /M ²	PART L2A (2013) - BUILDING EMISSION RATE (BER) KGCO ₂ /M ²	%CO ₂ SAVING	% OF ENERGY DEMAND BY RENEWABLE
Unit 100	13.7	10.4	24.1	15.0
Unit 210	25.3	15.4	39.1	44.4
Unit 220	23.3	14.4	38.2	42.0

Figure 5.2: Annual CO₂ Savings for Proposed Development by Unit

5.64. Furthermore, the proposed development is being assessed against the BREEAM New Construction 2018 Industrial criteria, which further demonstrates the development’s sustainability credentials. The development is currently targeting 64.4%; a ‘Very Good’ rating.

5.65. Noting the principles outlined above, it is considered that the scheme demonstrates excellent sustainability credentials, and thus should be viewed as acceptable and appropriate in its approach to meeting key energy and sustainability criteria at a national and local level, in line with relevant policy guidance.

Transport and Highways

5.66. At a national level, Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that transport matters should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals, so that any potential impacts of development on transport networks can be fully addressed.

5.67. At a local level, Local Plan Paragraph 3.1 recognises the borough is “strategically located at the junction of the M25 and M3 motorways” with excellent road connections to the capital and the wider South East region. Subsequently, Local Plan Policy SD4 notes that the Council will support development proposals which maintain or enhance the efficient and safe operation of the highway network, and which take account of the needs of all highway users for safe access, egress and servicing arrangements.

- 5.68. As per Local Plan Policy SD4, development proposals which generate significant traffic movements must be accompanied by a Transport Assessment or Statement which considers the impact of the proposal on the highway network and identifies the measures to mitigate impacts to acceptable levels.
- 5.69. The site will be accessed by vehicles and pedestrians from three access points at the northern and southern points along Addlestone Road; Unit 100 has two vehicular accesses, and a single access for Units 210 & 220 is proposed.
- 5.70. A new vehicular access will be provided along Addlestone Road as the sole point of access for HGVs to the service yard for Unit 100. A separate access will serve a staff car parking area segregated from the yard. An existing access off of Addlestone Road currently serving the southern site will be stopped up as part of the development proposals, as well as stopping up the existing Hamm Moor Lane access.
- 5.71. A total of 180no. car parking spaces will be provided as part of the redevelopment proposals, including 10no. blue badge spaces. EV charging facilities will be provided from the outset with 36no. active charging bays to promote EV usage. Furthermore, a total of 80no. cycle parking spaces are also provided (40no. serving Unit 100 and 20no. serving each unit on the northern parcel). The cycle parking will be provided the form of covered, secured and well-lit shelters.
- 5.72. Unit 100 will be served by 10 dock loading doors, whilst Units 210 and 220 will be served by 2 dock loading doors each.

Car Parking

- 5.73. As discussed, a total of 180no. car parking spaces have been proposed for the scheme. This is to be split across the two sites in segregated, bespoke staff car parks in the following quantum for each unit:
- Unit 100: 120 spaces;
 - Unit 210: 30 spaces; and
 - Unit 220: 30 spaces.
- 5.74. The proposed non-operational, staff car parking quantum has been informed by the maximum parking standards set out within the 2020 Surrey County Council 'Vehicular and Cycle Parking Standards' Supplementary Planning Guidance; this was confirmed to be the prevailing policy guidance, as opposed to car parking guidance adopted by RBC in 2001. The proposed provision is considered to comply with the relevant maximum standards for car parking for non-residential uses in this regard.
- 5.75. Notwithstanding, Mode Transport have prepared a Transport Assessment in support of the application. As part of this, Mode Transport have undertaken a trip generation TRICS assessment to understand the implications

of the proposed quantum of car parking. As stated in the Transport Assessment by Mode Transport, the TRICS assessment of parking demand has been undertaken for a 16-hour weekday period to ensure a sufficient window of monitoring was achieved.

5.76. The findings of the undertaken TRICS Assessment indicates that based on the proposed development, the maximum parking accumulation for the number of occupied spaces across the day would be 152 spaces. This falls below the on-site provision of 180 car parking spaces. As such, the TRICS based parking accumulation has demonstrated that the anticipated car parking demand would not incur any errant parking onto the surrounding highway network.

5.77. Therefore, it is considered that the quantum of staff, non-operational car parking proposed would not be of detriment to the site or surrounding highway network, and would be appropriate and acceptable for the scale of the proposed development, ensuring sufficient capacity in cases of overflow above anticipated numbers, helping to also reduce any future errant parking on the surrounding highway network.

Cycle Parking

5.78. Again, the quantum of cycle parking has been determined in accordance with the SCC Vehicular and Cycle Parking Standards SPG.

5.79. In line with the relevant minimum standards, to ensure a sufficient and promotive quantum of cycle parking is provided for site users to encourage sustainable transport initiatives, the scheme will provide 80 cycle parking spaces, in the following unit split:

- Unit 100 – 40 spaces;
- Unit 210 – 20 spaces; and
- Unit 220 – 20 spaces.

5.80. The provision of cycle parking spaces will take the form of secure, covered cycle shelters providing a high-quality environment for staff to park and secure their bicycles. Cycle shelters are located in overlooked locations and will be well-lit to aid security and surveillance, ensuring that the spaces are promoting site users to switch to more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling, as opposed to private car usage.

Operational Trip Generation

5.81. As part of the Transport Assessment prepared by Mode Transport, an assessment of the operational trip generation has been undertaken, both in terms of the existing trip generation (as per the consented land uses on-site) and also the proposed land uses as part of this application. The two calculations have been undertaken so that a net trip difference between the existing and proposed uses can be calculated.

- 5.82. For the existing trip generation, total vehicle trip rates have been derived from the TRICS database using the land category '02 – Employment – A – Office'. Vehicular trip rates and associated movements for the AM peak (08:00-09:00) and the PM peak (17:00-18:00) periods were calculated as part of the assessment, between the date ranges 01/01/2013 to 14/03/2019 (additional details on the calculation should be viewed in the supporting Transport Assessment).
- 5.83. For the proposed trip generation, the assessment was undertaken using the TRICS database land category '02 – Employment – D – Industrial Estate', again between the date ranges 01/01/2013 to 14/03/2019 (additional details on the calculation should be viewed in the supporting Transport Assessment). In addition to this, an additional calculation to calculate proposed development HGV trip generation (noting the lack of such activity for the 'consented')
- 5.84. Concerning net trip generation, through the TRICS trip generation assessments undertaken it is found that the proposed development would in fact lead to a potential decrease of 219 vehicular two-way trips in the AM Peak, whilst during the PM peak 195 fewer vehicular two-way trips would be expected on the surrounding highway network. There would be approximately 5 trips in the AM peak for HGVs (3 arrivals and 2 departures) and 1 trip in the PM Peak (1 departure).
- 5.85. Noting the findings above, it is clear that the proposed development will not lead to adverse impacts on the surrounding highway network, and will in fact represent a benefit to the network in the significant reduction in overall trips in both the AM and PM peaks. Whilst there are a small number of HGV trips in the AM and PM peak, these are considered negligible in the wider balance of the significant net trip reduction. As such, the proposed employment land uses will not be of detriment to the local and regional highway networks, and should be viewed positively in this regard by RBC and SCC officers.

Heritage

- 5.86. The NPPF requires proposals to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Paragraph 199 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).
- 5.87. At a local level, Local Plan Policy EE3 'Strategic Heritage Policy' states that:

"Development that affects Runnymede's heritage assets should be designed to protect, conserve and enhance the significance and value of these assets and their settings in accordance with national legislation, policy and guidance and any supplementary planning documents which the council may produce.

Development proposals likely to affect the significance of a heritage asset, including the contribution made by its setting, should be accompanied by a description of its significance in sufficient detail to allow the potential

impacts to be adequately assessed. As a minimum the Surrey Historic Environment Record should be consulted. The sympathetic and creative reuse and adaptation of heritage assets which provide a sustainable future for a heritage asset will be encouraged, where the proposed new use is consistent with conservation of the asset.

The delivery of enabling development within the setting of heritage assets which make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the heritage assets will be encouraged.

The total loss of a designated heritage asset will be exceptional”.

5.88. Policy EE5 further states that, with regard to Conservation Areas, development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area, including views in or out, should protect, conserve, and wherever possible enhance, the special interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Proposals for new development will be required to:

- Preserve and where possible enhance the existing historic fabric and features of the Conservation Area that contribute to its special interest, character and appearance;
- Respect the existing local context and established character, with reference to existing building layouts, plot and frontage sizes, form, height, depth, scale, massing of existing buildings, spacing between existing buildings, established street layouts, materials, architectural and landscape features including historically significant boundaries and building lines, and be in keeping with the character and appearance of the conservation area; and
- In the case of new development, make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

5.89. A Heritage and Archaeology Statement has been prepared by Savills in support of the planning application.

5.90. The Statement identifies that the site sits adjacent to the Wey Navigation Conservation Area (located east of the site). The Wey Navigation Conservation Area was designated in 1999. Runnymede Borough Council do not have an adopted Conservation Area Appraisal or similar document. The Wey and Godalming Navigations run for c.32km through five local authority areas; the section in Runnymede Borough Council runs for c.4km and includes the northern section of the Navigation where it adjoins the Elmbridge Borough Council boundary, as well as sections of towpath and adjoining land and historic buildings which border the Navigation.

5.91. The Heritage and Archaeology Statement summarises that the principal significance of the Wey Navigation Conservation Area is derived from its historic interest as well as the character it possesses today. Its historic interest relates to the place the Navigation has in the early origins of the industrialisation of England in the 18th century Industrial Revolution. Richard Weston’s vision for enhancing the commercial viability along the River

Wey resulted in one of the oldest river navigations in the country. The influence this had on the later Navigation and canal system is noted.

- 5.92. With regard to the impacts of the proposed development upon the adjacent Conservation Area, the existing buildings within the Site and south of Addlestone Road are legibly modern. They possess no architectural or historic merit and make no positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Wey Navigation Conservation Area.
- 5.93. The buildings make no contribution to the historic and aesthetic, or architectural, interest of the conservation area. They are understood purely as modern background buildings within the eroded wider setting of the conservation area. Therefore, their demolition, alongside the building north of Addlestone Road, would result in no harm to the significance of the conservation area.
- 5.94. With relation to the proposed development and any resulting impacts on the adjacent Conservation Area, the two warehouse units in the northern part of the site would comprise building heights relatively similar to the existing built form in this part of the Site. Being set back from Addlestone Road, with vehicular access to the south between the built form and Addlestone Road, the proposals echo the existing built form and appearance of this part of the Site. Soft landscaping to the east of the units, east of the site would remain, providing visual screen when approaching the north-east of the Site from the east.
- 5.95. The intervening built form and landscaping between this part of the Site and the Wey Navigation Conservation Area would mean that the proposals north of Addlestone Road would result in no impact on the setting or significance of the Conservation Area.
- 5.96. The proposed single warehouse unit within the Site to the south of Addlestone Road (Building 100) would be reflective of the historic use of this section of the Site, which has been of a commercial and industrial character since at least the mid-19th century; a character which has intensified through the 19th and 20th centuries.
- 5.97. The existing built form which is located in this section of the Site adjacent to the conservation area is formed of two storey individual office buildings which, except for Bridge House, are set back from the Navigation and towpath by c.15m, separated by soft landscaping and a tarmacked area providing vehicle access. The buildings therefore frame the canal side but do not dominate it.
- 5.98. Whilst reflective of the historic use of this section of the Site, the replacement building (Building 100) would result in a single, large-scale building, with comparatively dominant presence located to the west of the Navigation. The design of the proposed building has responded to this and the sensitivity of the relationship with the Conservation Area. It will however, as a form of mitigation, utilise a graduated colour scheme to soften its appearance and reduce its visual impact when passing along the Navigation and notably on the approach from the north-east. Landscaping to the Site boundary along the towpath will also be retained and strengthened at the north-east to further screen the building and soften the solidity of the built form.

5.99. In removing Bridge House and retaining an area at the north-west of the Site devoid of built form (save for a low scale electricity substation) this section of the Site would provide a more open aspect on the approach along the Wey Navigation Conservation Area, thus reducing the impact of built form when approaching from the north-east. The scale of the proposed Building 100 would however have an adverse impact upon the setting and significance of the Wey Navigation Conservation Area. It is acknowledged that this impact would be localised, impacting only a relatively small portion of the overall Conservation Area.

5.100. The section of the Conservation Area from which the site is, or would be, experienced does not include any particular elements of specific interest, as is seen elsewhere along the Navigation. It is also noted that the site, in its existing condition makes no contribution to the historic and aesthetic, or architectural, interest of the Conservation Area, forming a heavily adapted and eroded part of its wider setting. In addition, the proposed development has also incorporated a number of mitigating design strategies (noted above) to reduce the degree of harm. In summary, the perceived harm is to a small area of the Conservation Area, which has no particular elements of interest, consequently, the harm is considered to be towards the lower end of 'less than substantial harm'.

Public Benefits

5.101. Should the council find that some level of harm would arise, then then in accordance with the statutory tests they should consider what that level of potential harm is, and balance it against the scheme's other planning benefits. The following substantial planning benefits of the scheme, which are also public benefits (economic, social and environmental) are considered to be capable of outweighing any perceived harm that might be concluded to arise:

- Demolishing the existing vacant buildings which currently make, and have for a long time previously, made no contribution towards employment provision or economic activity within the council area. The presence of the existing vacant buildings is preventing the potential re-use of the land for more productive economic uses, in a defined location which the Local Plan prioritises for employment use. The application would address this fact.
- The scheme involves the re-use of previously developed land, within an area where suitable land for development is constrained by the Green Belt. The NPPF states that substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs. The need for the proposed development has been demonstrated within the submitted Market Assessment report. Additionally, the NPPF also states that planning decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings generally.
- The proposals would result in the creation of a best in class employment development, resulting in the provision of 17,820sq.m GIA employment floorspace. The economic benefits of the scheme are

significant. They involve £85m of private investment resulting in the creation of 400 new jobs, a substantial net increase compared to the existing situation. This must be compared against the continued existing use of the site which has been vacant in the long term, thereby contributing negligibly to the local economy whilst also preventing new investment from taking place.

- Additional economic benefits flowing from the proposed development include the creation of new jobs in construction (as opposed to during operation, noted above) and as a result of both the construction and operational jobs created, increased spending in the local economy on nearby goods and services, such as shops, café's, restaurants etc.
- The proposals result in the demolition of the existing buildings and their replacement with modern, energy efficient buildings incorporating energy, waste and water reduction technologies. The replacement buildings have been designed to achieve a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' with aspirations to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent'. Through a combination of the fabric first approach, and the proposed PV arrays, the council's requirement to provide 10% of the scheme's energy through renewable sources will not only be met but be significantly exceeded. This approach reduces the building's carbon emissions.
- The proposals would result in a net reduction in vehicle car parking spaces, and vehicle trips, compared to the existing number of spaces and the potential trip generation of the existing buildings in their current use. Through the scheme's location, the provision of dedicated cycle storage facilities, and a Framework Travel Plan, the proposals encourage transport by more sustainable modes thereby reducing private vehicle usage and its associated adverse effects. The proposals also include EV charging spaces to encourage electric vehicle usage.
- In addition to the net reduction in vehicle trips, the proposed development provides the opportunity for existing storage and distribution businesses in the local area to consolidate their activities at one, larger and more central location closer to the strategic road network and their intended customer base, thereby reducing the number of unnecessary vehicle journeys originating from further afield but causing traffic movements within the council area.
- The proposals also result in a greener, more environmentally sustainable development. The current development has little ecological benefit associated with it. The proposed development will be constructed within the area of existing hardstanding, to enable substantial new planting and landscaping benefits to be achieved, including the retention of existing trees plus the planting of 126 new additional trees. The proposals result in a substantial Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Other environmental benefits arising from the proposed development include the attenuation and reduction in surface water run-off. Presently, run-off flows into public water sewers are unrestricted,

whereas through the proposed development's drainage strategy, following development these flows will be restricted to greenfield rates through the use of under-ground storage tanks.

- The Heritage Assessment identifies that an additional heritage benefit that could be secured is the provision of an information board or similar overlooking the Navigation or at an entrance to the site, to set out the history of the Navigation or the associated historic industrial/commercial works at the site. This would enable the heritage of the site to be understood and appreciated better, thereby providing a direct heritage benefit. A suitably worded condition could secure this benefit.
- In addition to all of the above benefits which result from the proposed development, the proposals also generate associated benefits more widely for RBC in the local area, through the clear vote of confidence given by the decision of the applicant to commit significant private commercial investment into the Runnymede area, as opposed to other alternative locations nearby. This is particularly relevant given the current economic uncertainty affecting the U.K including increasing inflation and predictions of economic recession.

5.102. The list of benefits identified above is not exhaustive, however the list demonstrates that substantial public benefits would flow directly from the proposed development. The benefits are economic, social and environmental. Given the limited degree of *less than substantial* harm to the designated heritage asset which is considered to arise from the proposed development, and when this harm is given appropriate weight by the decision maker, it should nevertheless be concluded that the public benefits of the scheme are substantial and are considered to be capable of outweighing any perceived harm that might be concluded to occur.

Archaeology

5.103. The NPPF states that where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

5.104. Local Plan Policy EE7 also stipulates that proposals for development will be required to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance, historic features and importance of sites of archaeological importance and their settings. Proposals which improve public access to, or the understanding of, archaeological areas of importance in a manner consistent with its conservation, will be supported, whilst development that adversely affects the physical survival, setting or overall heritage significance of any element of an archaeologically important site or their settings will be resisted.

5.105. Policy EE7 further states that an archaeological assessment will be required to accompany a planning application for:

- Proposals for development on sites which affect, or have the potential to affect, Scheduled Monuments;
- Proposals for development on sites which affect, or have the potential to affect, County Sites of Archaeological Importance or Areas of High Archaeological Potential; and
- Proposals for development on all other sites which exceed 0.4ha in size.

5.106. A Heritage and Archaeology Statement has been prepared by Savills in support of the planning application.

5.107. The Statement, and it's undertaken assessment, notes that the site has a negligible potential for encountering archaeological remains of Romano-British date; negligible to low for remains of Anglo-Saxon date; low potential for remains of prehistoric or medieval date; and low to medium potential for post-medieval date.

5.108. There is considered on balance a high potential for encountering archaeological remains of 19th century to modern date. The degree and type of known development and redevelopment of the Site, including demolition and subsequent reconstruction is likely to have adversely affected the survival of archaeological remains dating to before the 19th century. The depth of required foundations for the proposed warehouse buildings may however impact previously undisturbed archaeological remains.

5.109. However, the Statement summarises that the potential below ground archaeological remains would not prevent the proposed development. It is noted that no objections were received from Surrey County Council Archaeology in relation to the previous planning application for development within the Site (in 2015) however it is acknowledged that the current site is greater in extent and incorporates additional land with known historic development relating to the Wey Navigation and its industrial workings.

5.110. The Statement recommends that any impact on the archaeological resource of the Site could be mitigated through an agreed programme of archaeological works, drawn up in consultation with Runnymede Borough Council's archaeological advisor, if considered necessary. If deemed necessary, any archaeological work could be carried out under the terms of a standard archaeological planning condition set out within the granting of planning consent.

Ecology and Biodiversity

5.111. At a strategic level, the NPPF (Paragraph 8) emphasises that the planning system has three overarching objectives in order to achieve sustainable development, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives). Paragraph 8 identifies the 'environmental objective' of planning and development as the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, including making an effective use of land whilst improving biodiversity.

5.112. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF further states that development should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

5.113. Local Plan Policy EE9 states that the Council will seek net gains in biodiversity, through creation and/or expansion, restoration, enhancement and management of habitats and features to improve the status of priority habitats and species. Development proposals should demonstrate how this will be achieved. Policy EE11 and EE12 also promote the protection, management and enhancement of Green and Blue Infrastructure respectively, seeking development to contribute towards the delivery of a high quality multi-functional Green Infrastructure network by requiring proposals to provide and make enhancements to such assets where relevant.

5.114. To firstly understand the existing ecological quality of the site, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment has been undertaken by MKA Ecology. The aims of the assessment and subsequent collective report were as follows:

- Undertake a desktop study to identify the extent of protected and notable species and habitats within close proximity of the Site;
- Prepare a habitat map for the Site;
- Identify evidence of protected species/species of conservation concern at the Site;
- Assess the potential impacts of the proposed development, using existing plans;
- Detail recommendations for further survey effort where required;
- Detail recommendations for biodiversity enhancements;
- Undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment to establish the suitability of the buildings and trees at the Site for roosting bats, and record any evidence of bat presence; and
- Assess the need for further survey effort, a European Protected Species Licence or mitigation for bats, if required.

5.115. The undertaken assessment of the habitats and subsequent biodiversity quality at present, and the subsequent findings, show that the site is overall of limited ecological value due to the domination of built form. However, of the habitats present onsite, the woodland and hedgerows, which are considered to be priority habitats, hold the highest ecological value. It is considered feasible to retain and enhance these habitats onsite post-development through additional planting. Scattered trees should also be retained where possible.

5.116. The report prepared by MKA Ecology does identify (indicatively) opportunities to enhance the site’s biodiversity value. Recommended enhancements include the enhancement of the woodland, creation of new wetland features, the provision of a diverse grassland habitats, the creation of an orchard habitat, the provision of additional dead wood features, hedgehog domes, bird and bat boxes and the inclusion of green roofs and green walls within the final development. A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment was recommended as part of the findings of the Assessment, in order to ensure that the proposed development provides a significant increase in biodiversity.

5.117. A Biodiversity Net Gain Plan has been prepared subsequently by MKA Ecology to support the proposals. The Report is underpinned by an assessment of the existing biodiversity value of the site to understand the baseline position at present. Following this, an assessment of the resulting biodiversity value on-site as part of the redevelopment proposals, including existing (retained) habitats and also including new habitats created through the proposals. By undertaking the two assessments, a direct comparison can be made, in regard to the ‘net change’ in biodiversity ‘units’, comprising ‘habitat units’ and ‘hedgerow ‘units’, on the site.

5.118. The undertaken assessment for the existing condition of the site has identified a total of 5.86 biodiversity units present on-site. In comparison, following the proposed retention and enhancement of the existing landscape and ecological features across the site, a total of 14.71 biodiversity units are identified. This demonstrates a positive biodiversity net change of 8.85 units on-site, equating to a 151.01% increase in habitat units and a 224.08% increase in hedgerow units. The full results are shown in the below table, taken from the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan prepared by MKA Ecology.

Habitat	Biodiversity units (current)*	Biodiversity units (proposed)*	Biodiversity net-change*	Net percentage change
Habitats	4.59	10.59	6.00	151.01%
- Onsite	3.97	8.50	4.53	-
- Offsite	0.62	2.09	1.47	-
Hedgerows	1.27	4.12	2.85	224.08%

* Habitat areas are calculated as biodiversity hectares, hedgerows as biodiversity metres

Figure 5.3: Biodiversity Net Gain – Assessment of Existing and Proposed Biodiversity Units

Flood Risk and Drainage

5.119. At a national level, the NPPF requires that a Flood Risk Assessment should be undertaken:

- For all developments greater than 1 Hectare (ha) in size in Flood Zone 1;
 - All proposals for new development (including minor development and change of use) in Flood Zones 2 and 3, or in an area within Flood Zone 1 which has a critical drainage problem; and
 - Where proposed development or a change of use (e.g., from commercial to residential) to a more vulnerable class may be subject to other sources of flooding (e.g., surface water drains, reservoirs).
- 5.120. The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 2, with a small area in Zone 3, associated with the nearby River Wey and Addlestone Bourn watercourses. As such, a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been prepared by HDR Consulting in support of the application.
- 5.121. Flood level modelling, supported by Environment Agency Product 4 data, indicates a maximum flood level of 12.46 mAOD for the 1 in 100-year fluvial flood event plus 24% climate change allowance. However, the development design life is approximately 25 years, such that the flood level for the 1 in 100 year plus 9% climate change allowance applies, for which a level of 12.36 mAOD has been determined. The extent of on-site flooding based on both of these scenarios has been determined based on the site's current (pre redevelopment) topography.
- 5.122. Further analysis has been undertaken which demonstrates that the proposed development levels allow for level-for-level flood water storage ('compensation') to be incorporated into the development design with no loss of floodplain capacity. New building finished floor levels of 13.00 mAOD provide 540 mm freeboard above the maximum flood level and safe access and egress has been demonstrated for the proposed development layout.
- 5.123. Future flood risk, both on and off-site, from site-generated runoff has been addressed via a detailed surface water drainage strategy. This is proposed to comprise below-ground storage with off-site runoff being attenuated to greenfield rate. All flows are to be directed into the existing adjacent surface watercourse (part of the Addlestone Bourn), subject to the necessary consents. The drainage arrangements are designed to accommodate runoff up to the 1 in 100-year storm event plus a 20% allowance for climate change.
- 5.124. It is proposed that below-ground storage systems be used at source to attenuate runoff to the QBAR greenfield rate prior to discharge into the linking watercourse (part of the Addlestone Bourn). Development levels are such that a pumped system and rising main will be required to serve the southern sector (Unit 100), while a gravity system will be used for the northern development (Units 210 and 220).
- 5.125. Permeable paving is proposed to be installed to all external car parking areas of the southern part of the development. This will be a 'Type B' system (after CIRIA 735), where the proportion of rainfall that exceeds the (negligible) infiltration capacity of the subsoil will flow into the engineered drainage network.

5.126. Flood risk at the site from all sources is therefore considered to be acceptable and the development will not increase flood risk to others, in line with relevant national planning guidance. As such, the proposals should be considered wholly acceptable and appropriate in planning regard, with consideration to flood risk and sustainable drainage.

Air Quality

5.127. NPPF Paragraph 174 states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance local environments by preventing new development from contributing to unacceptable levels of air pollution. In particular, development should where possible help to improve local conditions including air quality.

5.128. Local Plan Policy EE2 further states that development proposals should be supported by an Air Quality Assessment in order to accurately identify the potential impacts on air quality arising from a development.

5.129. An Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken by Air and Acoustics in support of this application. The Assessment seeks to accurately map the existing air quality context for the site and surrounding area, and fully assess any potential impacts arising from the scheme.

5.130. The findings of the report can be viewed in full within the complete Air Quality Assessment, submitted with this application.

5.131. The Application Site is not located within or adjacent to an AQMA; however, operational traffic will pass through the Addlestone and Weybridge AQMAs. Local Authority monitoring in the surrounding area show a mixture of compliance and non-compliance of the NO₂ annual mean objective, with automatic monitors showing compliance of the NO₂ 1-hour mean objective. The DEFRA background concentrations suggests that the NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} at the Application Site are expected to comply with the relevant annual mean objectives for the Proposed Development year of 2027.

5.132. The AQA shows that the construction dust impacts associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development, with implementation of the suggested mitigation measures, although adverse, will be temporary and 'not significant' at sensitive receptors. The assessment further shows that the air quality impacts associated with the Proposed Development, for both traffic scenarios, are negligible (adverse) on the modelled human receptors, with NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentration remaining within the relevant annual mean concentrations.

5.133. From this assessment, the impacts are resultantly considered to be 'not significant' on these receptors. Furthermore, the impacts on the Addlestone and Weybridge AQMAs are predicted to be negligible (adverse), with NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentration remaining within the relevant annual mean concentrations. The impacts are therefore also considered to be 'not significant' on these AQMAs.

5.134. The Proposed Development is therefore expected to comply with all relevant national and local air quality policy and should be considered wholly appropriate and acceptable in planning policy terms.

Noise

5.135. NPPF Paragraph 174 states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance local environments by preventing new development from contributing to unacceptable levels of noise pollution.

5.136. Paragraph 7.17 of the Local Plan further acknowledges that noise can arise from a variety of source, including road movements arising through commercial and industrial activities. As such, Local Plan Policy EE2 strongly encourages the undertaking of a detailed Noise Assessment, which wholly considers and subsequently outlines the avoidance, mitigation and/or reduction measures identified to be the most appropriate for implementation within a development proposal. Proposals which would have or would be subject to unacceptable adverse effects will not be supported.

5.137. A detailed Noise Impact Assessment has been undertaken by Air and Acoustics in support of this planning application. To underpin the findings and recommendations of the Assessment, a continued unattended baseline noise survey was undertaken at the site during February 2022. This noise survey was undertaken in order to characterise the existing noise environment and help assess the potential impacts and effects of the proposed development upon the nearby noise-sensitive receptors.

5.138. The findings of the Assessment suggest that regarding the operational road traffic noise generated as part of the development, the predicted changes in traffic noise in future are considered to be negligible in impact, as roads that have residential properties adjacent are found to be affected by a maximum of +0.1 dB in the opening year of the development. Likewise, the predicted night-time maximum sound levels are considered to be less than the nearby noise sensitive receptors experience from the existing sound level environment, whilst the predicted noise levels from the car parks will also be lower than the existing sound levels.

5.139. However, the undertaken noise assessment and subsequent calculations do suggest that the predicted operational commercial noise rating levels at some of the closest residential noise sensitive receptors would be greater than the criterion level of +5 dB above the background sound level without any level of mitigation. Therefore, as allowed by policy, a mitigation strategy is proposed. This would employ acoustic barriers on the site perimeter to ensure that the noise rating level at the noise sensitive receptors is less than +5 dB above the background sound level.

5.140. In particular, the undertaken assessments suggest that the following specifications for the acoustic barrier be followed to best mitigate the potential noise generated from the operational activity at the site:

- The minimum height of the acoustic barrier should follow the heights set out in the below except to ensure that noise rating levels at the relevant receptors are reduced to less than 5 dB above background sound levels;
- The barrier should be solid, with no gaps or holes in the barrier itself, nor below the barrier or between panels and the barrier should have a minimum surface density of 16 kg/m² to best mitigate any noise generated.



Figure 5.4: Location of Proposed Noise Barriers and Associated Heights

5.141. The calculations undertaken (and shown in the Noise Impact Assessment) clearly demonstrate that when using the methodology and criteria within BS 4142:2014+A1:2019, the proposed development would represent NOEL to LOAEL if the specified noise mitigation features referenced above are included, demonstrating a notable improvement in comparison to an unmitigated version of the proposal.

5.142. Where there are no likely adverse effects no further action is required.

5.143. The Noise Impact Assessment also fully consider the recommended construction phase mitigation strategies, to ensure that any noise generated can be minimised where feasible due to best practice techniques and procedures.

5.144. Operators should be properly trained in the use of equipment, made aware of any noise mitigation requirements, and where necessary, be supervised so that reasonable care is taken to minimise their noise impact. The lead contractor should also regularly brief the construction staff so that they are considerate of the surrounding residents and operate construction plant in a manner which controls noise (where practicable).

5.145. Once the exact construction methods and plant to be employed are confirmed, any required mitigation measures will be identified. Such measures could include:

- Avoidance of the use of horns and excessive revving of engines;
- Vehicles, generators, concrete pumps, air compressors and other constant noise sources being turned off when not required, or at least throttled back to a minimum;
- Plant to operate at low speeds, where possible, and incorporate automatic low speed idling; • Selection of 'silenced' plant and equipment where practicable;
- Locating noisy plant and equipment as far away from sensitive receptors as reasonably possible;
- Reducing impulsive noise generating activities such as slamming doors, noisy brakes, impacts etc.;
- Screening either in the form of localised temporary acoustic fencing where the distances between source and receptor cannot be managed, or on the site boundary; and • All plant being properly maintained (greased, blown silencers replaced, saws kept sharpened, teeth set and blades flat, worn bearings replaced, etc.).

5.146. Noting the mitigation strategies stated above, it is considered that that the proposed development with these specific measures incorporated, is unlikely to conflict with national, regional and local planning policy or guidance. As such, the proposals should be considered to be wholly acceptable in regard to noise considerations.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application submitted to Runnymede Borough Council on behalf of Bridge UK Properties 7 LP for the redevelopment of Weybridge Business Park, Addlestone.
- 6.2 This application proposes the comprehensive redevelopment of the site, seeking:
- “Demolition of existing buildings and the development of three employment units within Classes E(g)ii, E(g)iii, B2 and B8, with ancillary office accommodation, new vehicular access, associated external yard areas, HGV and car parking, servicing, external lighting, hard and soft landscaping, infrastructure and all associated works”.*
- 6.3 The proposals have evolved primarily through undertaking comprehensive pre-application engagement with officers at RBC, as well as stakeholder engagement with local residents and other key local stakeholders.
- 6.4 The proposals seek to deliver a redevelopment that will provide high quality employment floorspace, in line with the Council’s aspirations for the borough, redeveloping outmoded employment floorspace to cater for modern business needs in line with local planning policy objectives.
- 6.5 The delivery of high-quality and much-needed modern employment floorspace at the site would fully accord with national and local planning policy. The enhanced employment floorspace would help to make a more efficient and optimal use of the site than the current uses, subsequently contributing to the function and vitality of the local economy to a greater degree, with the general proximity of the M25 to the site further exemplifying the suitability of the site for redevelopment to bring forward distribution operations.
- 6.6 The proposals will deliver a wide range of planning benefits for the site and surrounding area, including public benefits, which are set out in more detail within this Statement.
- 6.7 This Planning Statement has assessed the material planning considerations relevant to the development proposals against the prevailing planning policy framework. The assessments and findings within this Planning Statement demonstrate that the proposals fully comply with the relevant national and local planning policy and guidance. Therefore, the proposals for the redevelopment of Weybridge Business Park should be recommended for approval at the earliest opportunity.