



THRAPSTON BUSINESS PARK

Planning Statement

May 2022



Thrapston Business Park

Planning Statement

On behalf of IM Properties Developments Ltd

May 2022

Thrapston Business Park

Planning Statement

Submitted on behalf of IM Properties Developments Ltd

Project Ref:	31209	31209
Status:	DRAFT	DRAFT
Issue/Rev:	P1a	P1b
Date:	11.05.22	19.05.22
Prepared by:	CC	CC/MAS
Checked by:	MXS	MXS
Authorised by:	MXS	MXS

Barton Willmore, now Stantec
9th Floor
Bank House
8 Cherry Street
Birmingham
B2 5AL

Tel: 0121 711 5151
Email: Stephenie.Hawkins@bartonwillmore.co.uk

Ref: 31209/P1b/A5/CC/MAS/SH/MXS/bc
Date: 19th May 2022

COPYRIGHT

The contents of this document must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of Barton Willmore, now Stantec.

All our stationery is produced using recycled or FSC paper and vegetation oil-based inks.

CONTENTS

	Page
0.0 Executive Summary	1
1.0 Introduction	9
2.0 The Site and Surroundings.....	16
3.0 Pre-Application and Stakeholder Engagement.....	20
4.0 The Proposed Development	23
5.0 Planning Policy Context.....	31
6.0 Planning Assessment	44
7.0 Planning Obligations and conditions.....	71
8.0 Conclusions	73

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	–	Planning Boundary Plan
Appendix 2	–	Full/Outline Plan
Appendix 3	–	Thrapston Public Arts Strategy
Appendix 4	–	DSV Statement

0.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 0.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore, now Stantec (BWS) on behalf of IM Properties Developments Ltd (IM Properties) ('the Applicant') in support of a hybrid planning application for a proposed employment park (Classes B8, B2 and E) referred to as land known as Thrapston Business Park ('the Site').
- 0.2. It is proposed to submit a hybrid planning application for employment development (Classes B8, B2 and E) and any associated uses. Full planning permission is sought for Development Plot 1 (Unit 1), as shown on the Full/Outline Plan (Appendix 2), together with the site entrance off the A605, principal estate road, emergency access, highways improvements and strategic green infrastructure. Outline planning permission, with all matters reserved, is sought for the remaining plots. Detailed design of those outline components comprising Development Plots 2, 3 and 4, are to come forward at a later stage as part of future reserved matters applications.
- 0.3. In advance of submitting this application, the Applicant has actively been engaged in extensive pre-application dialogue with the Council, key stakeholders, statutory and non-statutory consultees, and the local community. The proposals have been shared with the local community during a two stage pre-application and consultation exercise including two in-person public consultation events in November/December 2021 and two further events in March 2022. Further details of the detailed pre-application engagement undertaken is set out in Section 3.0 of this Planning Statement and within the Statement of Local Engagement (SLE) submitted alongside the Planning Application.
- 0.4. This application is supported by extensive plans and documentation, which together comprise the application submission and should be read in conjunction with this Statement.
- 0.5. The Site itself has few known physical constraints other than an open drain, and a Public Right of Way (PRoW) running along the northern boundary.
- 0.6. There are no statutory environmental designations on Site. The Site does however lie within the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) Buffer (3km/4km). The Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA) boundary also clips the north-western corner of the Site by the A605 roundabout. The western part of the Site falls within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone for the Aldwinde Marsh SSSI. There are no Tree Preservation Orders or ancient woodland or veteran trees on the site.
- 0.7. There are no designated heritage assets within or immediately adjacent to the Site. Parts of the Site fall within Titchmarsh Conservation Area, although the extent of the Site that does is the Eastern Parcel where no built development is proposed. There are a number of heritage assets beyond, in Titchmarsh to the north, including but not limited to, the Church of St Mary

the Virgin (Grade I), 33-34, Islington (Grade II) and The Old Rectory (Grade II). The Titchmarsh Castle moated site and fishponds Scheduled Monument also lies outside the Site on the south side of Titchmarsh. Thrapston Conservation Area and a number of listed buildings within the town lie to the southwest of the Site and are focused on the High Street. These named assets are all located between approximately 500 and 800 metres from the Site.

0.8. The Development Plan material to this application comprises:

- The Local Plan Part 1 – the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (JCS) adopted July 2016: Prepared by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning and Delivery Unit (NNJPDU), this provides the framework for (the then) individual Councils to prepare more detailed plans – that is, Part 2 Local Plans. This is currently the subject of a review (see below).
- The Local Plan Part 2 – the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP) adopted July 2011 (saved policies): Prepared by ENC, this covers the district north of the A14, with saved policies of the East Northamptonshire District Local Plan (DLP), adopted 1996, applying to the southern part of the district not covered by the RNOTP. A district wide Local Plan Part 2 is in preparation (see below) which will replace the limited number of saved policies in current Local Plan Part 2.
- Minerals and Waste Local Plan adopted July 2017: Prepared by Northamptonshire County Council and of relevance as the Policies Map shows the site to be predominantly covered by a Minerals Safeguarding Area (sand and gravel), and within the consultation buffer of Manor Farm – a committed mineral (sand and gravel) and waste (inert landfill) development – which is beyond the site to the southeast.

0.9. The Council commenced work on a district wide Local Plan Part 2, to replace remaining policies in the RNOTP and DLP, in 2017. This was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 29th of March 2021. Hearing sessions recently commenced in April 2022.

0.10. The Site is not allocated in the adopted Local Plan Part 1 - The North Northamptonshire Joint Core (JCS), which was adopted in July 2016. Notwithstanding this, the JCS provides a positive platform and policy support for the planning application. The JCS has an urban focus, supporting the principle of development in urban areas including Thrapston, which is identified as a Market Town, supports development that delivers jobs growth and economic prosperity, including proposals for logistics. Although the Site is not identified as a Strategic Site on the JCS Key Diagram (Figure 12), paragraph 8.16 confirms that *"the list of sites is not exhaustive*

and proposals that deliver jobs growth and economic prosperity will be positively considered subject to compliance with the plan".

- 0.11. Furthermore, logistics is identified as a sectoral strength and opportunity (paragraph 8.9) with support provided through JCS Policy 24 (Logistics). There has also been a significant increase in demand for industrial, in particular logistics, floorspace since the adoption of the JCS and Planning Practice Guidance requires up-to-date evidence in considering the type, size and location of facilities (Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 2a-031-20190722).
- 0.12. There is an immediate need for the proposed Occupier (DSV) to relocate to enable the existing business to modernise and expand in accordance with paragraph 81 of the NPPF¹. DSV has identified a need for a site to accommodate a large purpose-built modern facility to support its existing business operations in Thrapston and meet future needs in a single location. Following an extensive search, DSV has identified Thrapston Business Park as the only viable solution to accommodate their requirements in a reasonable period of time. Indeed, paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. Further information in relation to occupier need is detailed within a Statement of Support provided by DSV as part of this planning application at **Appendix 4**.
- 0.13. Policy EN20 in the emerging East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 further supports the relocation and expansion of existing businesses. Policy EN20 states that "where businesses need to relocate from their current premises or retain their existing premises and grow into a new bespoke space, this will be supported where a suitable site is available". A suitable site is defined by five criteria². In this respect, the Site is (a) adjacent to the existing built area of Thrapston and Halden's Parkway employment area and is (c) well located to the strategic/classified road network; the technical work is submitted in support of the application, with mitigation as appropriate, addresses the impact on the countryside and character of the surroundings, ecology, highways and the amenity of neighbouring and nearby occupiers (b), together with connectivity and accessibility for the workforce by sustainable modes of transport (e).
- 0.14. BWS Economics have researched and established the case for employment in the Thrapston Area. This research identifies that overall, there is significant strategic employment need for the development of Thrapston Business Park over and above the requirements of DSV. All the indications conclude that the market is undersupplied in the context of strong occupier demand. The Site, being adjacent to an existing and established employment area, would assist in meeting the significant unmet demand for strategic employment development. The proposed

¹ NPPF, Paragraph 81: "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".

² Criterion (d) relates to main town centre uses and is therefore not applicable

scheme will facilitate a significant economic investment into the local economy through the creation of conditions to enable business to expand and adapt. Further details are set out below in the 'Economic Need' section.

0.15. The JCS provides support for logistics development, including large scale strategic distribution, under Policy 24, where it complies with the spatial strategy. In addition, the proposals need to satisfy seven criteria. Each criterion is covered below:

a) Subject to market demand and viability, strategic distribution developments (involving individual units of 9,300sqm or more floorspace) should also include the provision of a proportion of floorspace in the form of smaller employment units;

The proposed development includes a range of employment units. Unit 1 comprises a large single unit creating 99,817 sqm (GIA) of storage and distribution floorspace. In addition, an innovation centre is proposed at Development Plot (4) situated to the west of the A605. This plot is anticipated to comprise small units to benefit smaller occupiers and support innovation and the growth of local businesses. There is an identified lack of small, flexible workspace for small and medium sized businesses across East Northamptonshire. Providing this type of space in Thrapston would create an opportunity for growing local SME businesses. It is further proposed that IM properties would be offering different types of tenures and the opportunity for SME business to acquire the freehold interest in the units.

b) Have good access to the strategic road network with priority given to the development of freight consolidation centres and sites which can be served by rail freight and operate as inter-modal terminals. Long term opportunities to provide facilities for transferring freight delivery to rail will be safeguarded;

The Site has good access to the strategic road network, being located on the A605 close to Junction 13 of the A14.

c) Have good access to local labour supply and be accessible to the local workforce through public transport, walking and cycling;

The Site has good access to local labour supply at Thrapston and the surrounding towns and villages. Currently, North Northamptonshire is a net exporter of labour. The proposed development will increase employment within North Northamptonshire, providing jobs for local residents. The proposal will deliver significant economic benefits, as set out in the Land Requirement, Labour Supply and Economics Benefits report prepared by BWS Economics. This includes, in summary, 500 direct jobs (full time equivalent) per month

during its 72-month construction period generating £26.2m GVA per annum, then when operational 2,090 jobs (gross, direct, full time equivalent) generating £88.6m GVA per annum.

d) Achieve the highest possible standards of design and environmental performance through maximising the use of sustainable design and construction techniques;

The proposed development will achieve a high standard of design and environmental performance – this underpins IM Properties’ approach to development. IM Properties is committed to delivering a development that is fit for the future and supports North Northamptonshire Council on its trajectory to net zero. The standard IMP building specification has evolved to facilitate net zero ready buildings and the kinds of measures used will include:

- EPC rating of A for the offices attached to buildings
- An all-electric energy strategy with primary energy delivered without fossil fuels
- Air Source Heat Pumps providing heating and hot water to the main offices
- High levels of air tightness and insulation
- LED lighting throughout
- Use of PV cells or other low carbon technology to provide renewable power.

e) Be in locations which allow 24-hour operations with acceptable environmental, community and landscape impact;

The Site is compatible with adjacent land uses, impacts on the environment, community and landscape have been considered as part of these proposals as set out within this Statement and accompanying documents.

f) Provide sufficient infrastructure to mitigate highways impacts;

The proposed development will address highway impacts where required as set out within the accompanying Transport Assessment and ES Chapter 6. In summary highways mitigation measures will include the following:

- A new toucan crossing on the A605 north of the site access roundabout.
- Capacity enhancement works to the A605 corridor including improvements to the approaches and partial signalisation of A14 J13, widening of the A605 between

Huntingdon Road and A14 J13, including works to the A605/ Huntingdon Road roundabout and approaches.

g) Address the local operational requirements of HGV parking arising from the development or demonstrate that suitable adequate alternative accessible parking is available.

The proposed development will address the need for HGV parking arising from the development.

- 0.16. Although the Site is not allocated, the list of sites is not exhaustive and proposals to deliver job growth and economic growth will be considered positively subject to compliance with the development plan (JCS, paragraph 8.16). This has been assessed through the Planning Assessment looking at economic need and benefits, design, landscaping, residential amenity, sustainability etc. It is considered that the proposal accords with the development plan as a whole.
- 0.17. As set out within this statement, it is acknowledged that there is some residual harm in relation to noise, landscape, and heritage. However, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposed development. The proposals will deliver significant social and environment benefits in line with paragraph 8 of the NPPF and definition of sustainable development. The proposed development will deliver extensive socio-economic and environmental benefits as follows:
- In the construction phase; 500 full-time equivalent (FTE) gross jobs, 484 FTE indirect jobs generated from the supply chain, and a £53 million contribution to productivity (GVA).
 - In the operational phase; 2,090 direct (gross) FTE jobs, 2,776 net additional employed residents (direct, indirect, and induced) in North Northamptonshire, and £118.3 million annual contribution to GVA within North Northamptonshire.
 - In respect of Unit 1 proposed to be occupied by DSV, 722 (full time equivalent) jobs will be created across a range of roles.
 - There is currently strong market demand within the strategic distribution and logistics sector. The proposed development will help meet a significant strategic employment need, over and above DSV. Demand observed over the last 10 years is likely to be a reasonable and balanced basis for forecasting future floorspace demand. A trend rate of demand for 151,000 sqm of industrial floorspace, projected over the next 15 years, results in a need

for 566 hectares of industrial land. Even if the trend rate halves after ten years, need would amount to 472 hectares.

- In the context of significant unmet employment floorspace demand, Thrapston Business Park will deliver a high-quality employment park that directly responds to the full spectrum of market demand from starter units to meet localised need to 'mid box' and 'big box' units to deliver much needed employment space.
- The proposed development would allow DSV to operate a flagship site in North Northamptonshire where the company has been operating successfully for over 40 years.
- IM properties are working with contractors and supply chain to provide job, work experience and training opportunities; engaging with local businesses to maximise contract and supplier opportunities locally; and support local schools, colleges, and universities to inspire young people to consider careers in the construction and built environment sectors.
- Provision of a range of flexible employment units and uses, including smaller units in response to local demand for employment space. The proposed Innovation Centre will provide starter/small business space to the area.
- Biodiversity net gain (30% minimum) through the establishment of green infrastructure and blue infrastructure, the creation of wetland habits and enhanced surface water runoff, and new and enhanced landscape character.
- Enhanced accessibility through access to open spaces, high quality permissive path network.
- IM Properties is committed to delivering a development that is fit for the future and supports North Northamptonshire on its trajectory to net zero. Construction of Thrapston Business Park would be net zero carbon (excluding Development Plot 1)³, which meets IM Properties' commitment to being a net zero carbon company by 2030, whilst ensuring all developments are net zero ready. Carbon emissions from the build would be offset as part of an approved and certified offsetting scheme. A rating of BREEAM 'Excellent' is also being targeted, with a minimum rating of 'Very Good'.
- Recognises that there is an opportunity to deliver a public arts strategy as part of the proposed development. The walking route through the northern part of the site provides

³ In line with the UKGBC Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework: www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/net-zero-carbon-buildings-framework

an opportunity for members of the public to interact with the site and potential installations.

- 0.18. The application is supported by an Environmental Statement. This demonstrates that there are no overriding environmental constraints which would preclude the proposed development. The design of the proposals has considered the likely significant effects and, where necessary, mitigation measures will form an integral part of the proposed development. These mitigation measures will make the development acceptable in environmental terms and will be secured by the use of planning conditions or obligations.
- 0.19. The proposed development will give rise to the need for various planning obligations. The contents of any Section 106 Agreement will be the subject of more detailed negotiation and discussion as part of the planning application process. Highway/transport obligations will be delivered through appropriate legal agreements – Section 278 and Section 38 Agreements with NCC and National Highways.
- 0.20. In conclusion, the proposed development is in accordance with the development plan as a whole and is supported by other material considerations and delivers the economic, social, and environmental objectives of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF. This planning application should therefore be approved without delay subject to appropriate conditions and planning obligations in line with the guidance contained in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore, now Stantec (BWS) on behalf of IM Properties Developments Ltd (IM Properties) ('the Applicant') in support of a hybrid planning application for a proposed employment park (Classes B8, B2 and E) referred to as Thrapston Business Park ('the Site').
- 1.2 In total, the Site extends to approximately 58.30 hectares and lies to the east of Thrapston off the A605, within the administrative area of North Northamptonshire Council (the 'Council'). A Planning Application Boundary Plan showing the red line planning boundary is included in **Appendix 1**. This also shows the highway works planning application boundary (which forms part of the red line boundary) and proposed off-site land edged in blue. The Site is described in further detail in Section 2 of this Planning Statement and is split up into three 'parcels' as set out below:
- **Main Parcel** – This is the main part of the Site, to the east of the A605 and north of Halden's Parkway, which comprises around 46.38 hectares.
 - **Triangle Parcel (Western Parcel)** – This part of the Site is located to the west of the A605 where there is a self-contained triangle of land, bound by the A605, Oundle Road and Top Close employment area to the south, which comprises around 2 hectares.
 - **Highways Upgrades** – This is an additional area of land, comprising 7.12 hectares to provide for highway improvements to the A605/ Huntingdon Road Roundabout and A14 Junction 13.
- 1.3 The remainder of the red line area comprises 2.8 hectares. This comprises the triangle of land to the rear of Top Close and highway land associated with access works to the Main Parcel and Triangle Parcel.
- 1.4 Whilst not part of the red line boundary, there is around 15.46 hectares of **off-site land** to the northeast, this comprises of two parcels and is shown edged blue on the Planning Application Boundary Plan. This is land is proposed to be set aside for the purpose of biodiversity net gain.
- 1.5 It is proposed to submit a hybrid planning application for employment development (Classes B8, B2 and E) and any associated uses. Full planning permission is sought for Development Plot 1 (Unit 1), as shown on the Full/Outline Plan (**Appendix 2**), together with the site entrance off the A605, principal estate road, emergency access, highways improvements and strategic

green infrastructure. Outline planning permission, with all matters reserved, is sought for the remaining plots. Detailed design of those outline components comprising Development Plots 2, 3 and 4, are to come forward at a later stage as part of future reserved matters submissions.

1.6 The description of development is as follows:

“Hybrid planning application comprising: Full planning application for the construction of a storage and distribution unit (Development Plot 1) (Use Class B8) with ancillary offices (Use Class E); creation of a principal estate road (including bus stop) and new access from the A605; construction and emergency access; highways improvements to Huntingdon Road and A605 roundabout and at Junction 13 of the A14; strategic green infrastructure; vehicular and cycle parking; pedestrian infrastructure; hardstanding; circulation areas; lighting infrastructure and all other ancillary, enabling and associated works including landscaping, drainage, earthworks, sub-station and boundary treatment.

Outline planning application with all matters reserved for an employment park comprising Class B2, B8 and E uses with ancillary offices; creation of a new access from Oundle Road; vehicular and cycle parking; pedestrian infrastructure; hardstanding; circulation areas; lighting infrastructure and all other ancillary, enabling and associated works including landscaping, drainage, earthworks and boundary treatment.”

1.7 The Applicant is seeking to bring forward the Site for strategic employment development, predominantly Class B8 storage and distribution use. The Site would be known as Thrapston Business Park. Logistics is a sectoral strength and opportunity for North Northamptonshire and demand for floorspace is outstripping supply in the East Northamptonshire Area. The proposed development will also include an Innovation Centre located on the Triangle Site; which will provide starter/small business space to the area.

1.8 There is strong occupier interest in the Site. It has been confirmed that DSV, a global transport and logistics business, propose to occupy Unit 1. DSV currently operate in the East Northamptonshire Area, including at Halden’s Parkway at Thrapston. The existing premises are too small and can no longer support delivery of efficient services to DSV’s customers, limiting DSV’s growth options, in turn limiting employment opportunities in the local area.

- 1.9 As such, DSV is seeking to create a new UK flagship facility which would enable their business to expand – bringing with it the retention of existing jobs along with the creation of new jobs and investment into the area. DSV and IM Properties are both keen to progress this development.

Pre-Application Engagement

- 1.10 In advance of this application, the Applicant has actively been engaged in pre-application dialogue with the Council, key stakeholders, statutory and non-statutory consultees, and the local community. The proposals have been presented to the local community through a two-stage consultation process with two separate in-person public consultation events for each stage of the consultation held in November/December 2021 and March 2022 respectively. Further details of the robust pre-application engagement exercise is set out in Section 3.0 of this Planning Statement and within the Statement of Local Engagement (SLE) submitted alongside the Planning Application.

Planning Application

- 1.11 This application is supported by extensive plans and documentation, which together comprise the application submission and should be read in conjunction with this Statement.
- 1.12 The application documents are set out in the application covering letter.
- 1.13 The application list of plans and documents was agreed with North Northamptonshire Council as part of the pre-application discussions ahead of submission.
- 1.14 An Environmental Statement (ES) is submitted with this planning application, setting out all the technical assessments, and addresses all of the consultee responses through the Scoping Opinion. These impacts are summarised within the Non-Technical Summary for the ES.

Planning Statement Structure

- 1.15 This Statement provides an overview of all aspects of the proposed development and an assessment of its planning merits against the Development Plan and other material considerations. It should be read in conjunction with the other application documents submitted alongside this planning application. The scope of this Statement is as follows:
- Section 2 provides a description of the Site and surrounding area, including the relevant planning history.

- Section 3 provides a summary of the pre-application discussions with NCC, along with EIA screening/scoping and key stakeholder engagement.
- Section 4 provides a review of the proposed development, including details of the full and outline elements.
- Section 5 identifies the planning policy framework relevant to the application and from this identifies relevant policies within the Development Plan and other material considerations which set the context for consideration of the proposed development.
- Section 6 provides an assessment of the planning considerations for the proposed development and carries out the planning balance;
- Section 7 summarises the proposed conditions and obligations; and
- Section 8 concludes on the planning merits of the proposed development and planning balance concluding that the proposed development will result in very substantial planning/public benefits significantly and demonstrably outweighing any disbenefits of the proposal, and as such, it is therefore, respectfully requested that planning permission be granted without delay.

The Value of Logistics

- 1.16 Logistics is an essential part of the UK and North Northamptonshire economy and its supporting infrastructure and is crucial to the supply chain both in terms of business-to-business and business-to-consumer. This importance has been even more apparent since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. Research from Cushman & Wakefield shows that demand for new industrial and logistics space was at record levels in 2021, and that available space fell to an all-time low towards the end of the year⁴. During 2021, in the UK, 70.1 million sq. ft of logistics and industrial warehouse space was let during 2021 – this is more than double the pre-pandemic average.
- 1.17 A recent market report by Lambert Smith Hampton stated that “*in the face of a major COVID-driven recession, the logistics sector performed with remarkable strength in 2020. It more than weathered the storm, as the pandemic stimulated new demand and accelerated structural changes, pushing the occupier and investment markets to new highs*”. The strength of the market’s performance in 2020 is all the more impressive when set against the backdrop of a severe, lockdown-induced recession. GDP contracted by 9.9% in 2020, the worst year for the UK economy in more than three centuries. While the pandemic suppressed demand in other parts of the property market, it stimulated logistics sector activity. The pandemic had both a direct impact on demand, as significant volumes of additional warehouse space; and indirect

⁴ <https://www.cushmanwakefield.com/en/united-kingdom/news/2022/01/record-year-of-investment-and-leasing-as-demand-for-uk-logistics-space-continues-to-soar>

impacts, with increased online retail activity encouraging major ecommerce businesses to push ahead with expansion plans⁵.

- 1.18 In addition, a report by the British Property Federation, dated January 2022 'Levelling Up – The Logic of Logistics' demonstrates that, over the last 10 years, jobs within the logistics sector have grown by 26% compared to only 14% across the economy as a whole, with a sharp increase since March 2015. However, it remains the case that this growth is 'suppressed' by a lack of suitable and available sites, which have been restricted due to the utilisations of either historic completions or historic take-up to predict future demand.
- 1.19 Further research in relation to the wider value of logistics is discussed within the supporting Land Requirement, Labour Supply and Economic Benefits Report, prepared BWS Economics and submitted as part of the application materials.

IM Properties Plc

- 1.20 Founded in 1987, IM Properties has established itself as one of the UK's largest privately-owned property companies with an enviable track record of delivery across all sectors of commercial real estate. Originating from the IM Group, the company has developed over 10 million sq ft of commercial real estate becoming renowned in the industry for the consistent delivery of strategically located, award-winning schemes.
- 1.21 Located in the Midlands, the business is focused on a sustainable future in all sectors in which it invests, develops, and manages, including offices, logistics/industrial and residential. Its strategic sustainability framework centres on People, Planet and Place, and is pivotal to future ambitions for responsible development and innovative growth, to ensure both long-term social and economic value to communities, underpinned by strong environmental credentials.
- 1.22 With a customer-focused approach to development, IM Properties is a market leader in quality building design, place-making and sustainable construction, developing schemes for a wide range of clients, including blue-chip customers from across the globe, all delivered with local market knowledge and expertise.
- 1.23 IM Properties has a strong track record of delivering high-quality employment developments across the region. This includes the following:

⁵ Scaling New Heights ILM 2021 Industrial and Logistics Market, Lambert Smith Hampton

- **Mercia Park** – Currently under construction, Mercia Park is a major new employment park in northwest Leicestershire that will become home to leading international businesses Jaguar Land Rover and DSV Group. The employment park will support up to 3,400 jobs, helping to drive economic growth in northwest Leicestershire and the surrounding area.
- **Peddimore** – Currently under construction, Peddimore is a new employment park being delivered by IM Properties in partnership with Birmingham City Council. It is designed to attract national and international manufacturing and logistics businesses and, when fully operational, will create around 6,500 jobs. A key focus of IM Properties' work at Peddimore is a major social value programme to provide opportunities for individuals and communities in Birmingham and Royal Sutton Coldfield.
- **Blythe Valley Park** – Located near Solihull at Junction 4 of the M42, Blythe Valley Park is an ambitious new sustainable, mixed-use business park in the Midlands. The established master planned site is home to leading occupiers and set in a 122-acre country park.

1.24 IM Properties are intending to maximise additional social value created through the proposed development at Thrapston Business Park, set out in the Social Value Framework (May 2022). Three priority areas have been identified which the social value framework will be framed around. Employment and Skills Training, alongside the environmental proposals set out in this statement, will be secured by condition, and whilst wider social value proposals in the Social Value Framework are not material planning considerations in the determination of the planning application, they represent the Applicant's commitment to maximising the social value benefits of the Proposed Development for the local community. The three priority areas are:

- **Employment, Training and Skills** – Recognising that the proposed development offers significant opportunities for job creation, training, and skills development through design, construction, and operation;
- **Climate Change and the Environment** – Offering significant sustainability features including climate change mitigation and adaptation, together with green infrastructure to support both the commitments made by NCC and the wellbeing of the local community; and
- **Wellbeing and Community Groups** – Recognising how the proposed development at Thrapston Business Park can work with existing community organisations to improve the lives and wellbeing of individuals and wider communities to ensure a lasting legacy.

1.25 IM Properties have also drawn on their Sustainable Futures Strategy in their approach to this planning application process, in addition to their work as a whole. This sets out the company's

sustainability ambitions to 2030, based around three central themes of **People**, **Place**, and **Planet**. Specifically, these comprise⁶:

- **People** – our 2030 ambition is to enable and inspire sustainable thinking from our employees, occupiers, and customers, to suppliers, industry and regulatory bodies, and the communities in which we work.
- **Place** – Our 2030 ambition is to create positive change in the communities where we work, benefitting the local economy through jobs, training, and local investment. It is therefore crucial we take the time to understand communities' current and future needs, and make sure we are leaving a positive lasting legacy.
- **Planet** – Amid ever increasing concern over climate risks, we have set a commitment that by 2030, we will be a Net Zero carbon company and all our developments will be Net Zero Ready'.

1.26 Furthermore, IM Properties' plans align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future.

⁶ Sustainable Futures (IM Properties, May 2022) <https://www.improperties.co.uk/sustainablefutures/>

2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Site Description

- 2.1. The Site, as shown edged red on the Planning Application Boundary Plan, comprises 58.30 hectares of predominantly agricultural land. As set out in Section 1, the Site is generally split up into three 'parcels', with a further two parcels off-site land edged in blue which have potential to provide Biodiversity Net Gain and wider community benefits.
- 2.2. The Main Parcel is located to the east of the A605 and north of Halden's Parkway employment area and comprises around 46.38 hectares of agricultural land. To the west of the A605 there is a self-contained Triangle Parcel, bound by the A605, Oundle Road and Top Close employment area to the south, which comprises around 2 hectares of agricultural land.
- 2.3. An additional area of land for the highway upgrades, comprising 7.12 hectares is located to the south of the Site and incorporates part the Huntingdon Road/A605 roundabout and Junction 13 of the A14 corridor. This area also forms part of the red line planning boundary as shown on the Planning Application Boundary Plan.
- 2.4. The remainder of the Site – that is, 2.8 hectares – comprises the smaller triangle site which lies to the east of Top Close employment area and forms part of a mature landscape buffer between the A605 and the residential area around Lancaster Drive. This also includes the highway land associated with access to the Main Parcel and Triangle via the A605 and A605/Oundle Road Roundabout.
- 2.5. The Site is surrounded by agricultural land to the north and east. To the west and south lies the urban area of Thrapston. The Site is bound to the east by Islington and to the west by the A605. It is strategically located on the primary road network close to Junction 13 of the A14 corridor.
- 2.6. The Site itself has few known physical constraints other than an open drain, and a Public Right of Way (PRoW) along the northern boundary. Additional PRoWs off-site connect to the village of Titchmarsh to the northeast. The Site is entirely within Flood Zone 1 for risk of flooding from rivers or the sea and the majority of the Site at a very low risk of surface water flooding. Small areas of the Site predominantly associated within the open drain have a higher risk of surface water flooding. The River Nene and several lakes are located approximately 300m to the west.
- 2.7. There are no statutory environmental or landscape designations on Site. The Site does however lie within Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) Buffer (3km/4km). The

Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA) boundary also clips north-western corner of the Site by the A605 roundabout. The western part of the Site falls within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone for the Aldwinde Marsh SSSI. There are no Tree Preservation Orders or ancient woodland or veteran trees on the site. **To be completed on receipt of final report.**

- 2.8. There are no designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the Site.

The Surrounding Area

- 2.9. The Site is well connected being located on the A605, close to Junction 13 of the A14, a strategically important transport corridor. Access to the Site is well provided for via the local highway network. The west of the main site is bound by the A605, whilst the north and east abut Church Street and Islington Road respectively. The Site is strategically located on the primary road network close to Junction 13 of the A14 corridor. The A1 Motorway runs 16km to the east of the Site. There are several bus stops within Thrapston, serving bus routes 16, X2 and X3; there are no bus stops evident north of the site in Titchmarsh. The closest rail station is a 17-minute drive from the Site, in Kettering.
- 2.10. Pedestrian access to the site is provided for by the local Public Right of Way (PRoW) network, with paths NZ11 and NZ8 running along the northern boundary and spurring to connect to Titchmarsh to the northeast.
- 2.11. There is limited provision of on-road or off-road cycle routes in Thrapston. A short section of shared footway/ cycleway is provided along Huntingdon Road at the roundabout with the A605 and this extends a short section into the business park where cyclists are directed on-carriageway.
- 2.12. The nearest statutory designation is the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits, approximately 245m to the northwest of the Site at its closest point. This is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Ramsar Site, and a Special Protection Area (SPA) for its breeding bird assemblage, wintering waterbird species and a rare example of wet floodplain woodland. Within this vicinity is also the Titchmarsh Local Nature Reserve (LNR), 850m north of the site, and Aldwincle Marsh SSSI, 1.3km northeast of the Site, designated for its scarce wetland habitat.
- 2.13. There are no heritage assets within close proximity of the Site. The closest historic feature is the Grade II Listed 'Milestone approximately 30 metres northwest of Messrs Grays Garage Limited', approximately 280m to the southeast. Beyond this, there is a swathe of Grade II Listed Buildings in Titchmarsh and Thrapston, the closest of which is 245m to the southwest of the Site, and the Grade I Listed Building Church of St Mary the Virgin, approximately 700m

to the northeast of the site within Titchmarsh. The Titchmarsh Castle moated site and fishponds Scheduled Monument is situated approximately 670m to the northeast of the Site.

- 2.14. There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within proximity of the Site. Parts of the Site fall within Titchmarsh Conservation Area, although the extent of the Site that does is the off-site land parcel where no built development is proposed.

Relevant Planning History

Application Site

- 2.15. From a proportionate review of the NNC online planning application records (year 2000 onwards) it is understood that no part of the Site has any relevant planning history.

Surrounding Site

- 2.16. In relation to the surrounding site, the relevant planning permissions to note are as follows:
- Planning permission was recently granted at the neighbouring Halden's Parkway employment site for the "*Extension to the existing facility comprising a linked finished goods warehouse, car park and associated development on land adjoining the existing site north of Plot 5*" (Ref: 20/00613/FUL). A decision was issued on 21st November 2020.
 - Planning permission was granted for the "*Erection of livestock market with ancillary agri-business units, office accommodation and associated car parking, landscaping, access and associated highway works*" (Ref: 11/01240/FUL). This is at Land Rear of Plots 11 to 14 at Halden's Parkway, directly to the south of the Application Site. A decision was issued on 29th May 2012. Planning conditions were discharged in January 2014, but the permission appears to have been unimplemented.
 - A hybrid planning application has been submitted by Newlands Developments at land to the east of Halden's Parkway for the following: "*Full permission sought for the demolition of all existing buildings and structures and the re-alignment of an existing farm track; site infrastructure works, including groundworks, strategic landscaping and creation of development plateaus; and construction of a storage and distribution unit (Unit 01) (Use Class B8) with ancillary offices (Use Class E), including access, parking, servicing, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Outline permission sought for the construction of industrial distribution space (Use Class B8) with ancillary offices (Use Class E). All matters reserved except for site access*".

The application was validated on 10th February 2022 and is being branded as “Equites Park Thrapston”. Given the proposed use and proximity to the Application Site, the Newlands application has been considered and the Consultant Team is working in conjunction with NNC Highways and Transport Team and National Highways on highways modelling matters.

Ownership

- 2.17. The landowner of the main and western parcels is Peterborough Diocesan Board of Finance. The Peterborough Diocesan Board of Finance also control the off-site land edged blue.

3.0 PRE-APPLICATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Pre-application Discussions

3.0 The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) advocates early pre-application engagement and 'front loading'; recognising the benefits of resolving issues early on in the planning process in Paragraphs 39-42.

3.1 A full report on the public consultation of the proposals prior to the submission of the application is provided in a Statement of Local Engagement (SLE) which accompanies this planning application. This statement is provided by Camargue, who have advised the Applicant on consultation, engagement, and communications. The SLE includes detail of the public consultation events and engagement with Key Stakeholders and locally elected Members. This Section mainly focuses on the pre-application engagement with NCC to be read alongside the SLE.

EIA Screening and Scoping Opinion

3.2 An EIA Screening Request was submitted to NNC on 18th June 2021 (Ref. NE/21/00993/SCR). A decision was issued on 15th July 2021 which confirmed that the proposed development is EIA development. As such, the submission of an Environmental Statement is required as part of this hybrid planning application.

3.3 Following the Screening Opinion, a Scoping Option Request was submitted to NNC on 1st December 2021 (Ref. NE/21/01749/SCQ). A decision was issued on 14th February 2022 which confirmed that the proposed scope of the Environmental Statement was considered to be acceptable, subject to the comments provided by NNC. The consultation responses provided within the Scoping Opinion have been reviewed by the consultant team and responses to the comments raised are provided within the accompanying ES chapters and technical reports.

Pre-Application Request

3.4 A request for pre-application advice was submitted to North Northamptonshire Council on 18th June 2021. An initial pre-application meeting took place on 17th September 2021. A series of regular meetings and pre-application discussions then took place with NNC and the relevant statutory consultees. NNC were assisted by Place Services on environmental, landscape, design, and sustainability matters.

- 3.5 Discussions have been held with regard to the potential to extend and enhance the Council's Greenway Network. A programme of archaeological trenching and analysis was also undertaken with input from the Council's Archaeologist.
- 3.6 Officers welcomed the level of pre-application engagement. The discussions were considered to have been positive with a number of issues clarified throughout the process.
- 3.7 Officers advised the Applicant to set out the material considerations which outweigh the policy position that the Site is not allocated or an identified employment site. These material considerations include matters such as; market demand/need /supply, the creation of quality jobs and contribution to local prosperity, satisfactory highways improvements, high-quality and sustainable design, the mitigation of potential physical and visual development impacts, positively addressing the challenges of climate change, accessibility, green and blue infrastructure, and nature conservation, etc.
- 3.8 These material considerations are addressed within the Planning Assessment (Section 7 of this Statement) which considers the principal planning issues in the context of the relevant planning policies.

Public Consultation

- 3.9 A full report on the public consultation of the proposals prior to the submission of the application is provided in the SLE.
- 3.10 Public consultation took place over two stages – starting with early engagement on the vision and key issues and following up with consultation on detailed plans and technical work.
- 3.11 During both stages, the consultation was hosted on a dedicated website (www.impthrapston.co.uk) and supported by in-person events in Thrapston and Titchmarsh, as well as meetings with key stakeholders and groups. The consultation was promoted extensively through a range of channels and there were various mechanisms for interested individuals to ask questions, highlight issues and give their feedback on the plans.
- 3.12 Public exhibitions were held across four days as set out below.
- 1) **Saturday 27th November 2021 (10.00-16.00)** at The Clubroom, 19 High Street, Titchmarsh;
 - 2) **Friday 10th December 2021 (12.00-20.00)** at Plaza Community Centre, Cosy Nook, Thrapston;

- 3) **Thursday 3rd March 2022 (16.30-20.00)** at The Clubroom, 19 High Street, Titchmarsh;
and
- 4) **Saturday 5th March 2022 (10.00-16.00)** at Thrapston Primary School, Market Road,
Thrapston.

- 3.13 The in-person events were attended by around 300 visitors across the four days, and there were 1,470 individual visitors to the website across the two consultation stages.
- 3.14 The panel boards to the exhibition provided details of the proposed development such as masterplan layout, building design, green infrastructure, landscape, enhancing public access, building with nature, transportation, and social value/community.
- 3.15 Through the public consultation undertaken, the Applicant has demonstrated its commitment to the principles of localism and community engagement by involving local residents and stakeholders in its proposals.
- 3.16 The consultation provided appropriate opportunities to comment on and raise questions about the plans, as well as opportunities to engage with IM Properties and its development team. Many stakeholders and residents took up the opportunities provided and, while written feedback was limited, gave a clear insight into their key interests and concerns.
- 3.17 A wide range of comments, suggestions, queries, and concerns have been raised throughout the consultation, with transport and traffic management, need for development, and visual and environmental impact being the most frequently raised issues. Positive feedback was received in relation to proposals to enhance wider landscape, inclusion of flexible space for smaller occupiers and provision of a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.18 The Applicant has taken on board and responded to this feedback, ensuring that the issues and concerns raised are fully addressed in the planning application. It has drawn on its experience of designing, building, and operating successful business parks across the Midlands. Local residents, businesses and elected representatives will be kept updated during determination of the planning application and, subject to approval, during the construction phase.

4.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.0 Hybrid planning permission is sought for a high-quality employment park located to the east of Thrapston. This hybrid planning application comprises two elements. The first part is a full planning application for a new storage and distribution unit (Class B8) with ancillary offices and associated works, principal estate road and access. The second part is an outline planning application for Class B2, B8 and E employment uses, including ancillary offices and associated works.

4.1 The description of development is as follows:

“Hybrid planning application comprising: Full planning application for the construction of a storage and distribution unit (Development Plot 1) (Use Class B8) with ancillary offices (Use Class E); creation of a principal estate road (including bus stop) and new access from the A605; construction and emergency access; highways improvements to Huntingdon Road and A605 roundabout and at Junction 13 of the A14; strategic green infrastructure; vehicular and cycle parking; pedestrian infrastructure; hardstanding; circulation areas; lighting infrastructure and all other ancillary, enabling and associated works including landscaping, drainage, earthworks, sub-station and boundary treatment.

Outline planning application with all matters reserved for an employment park comprising Class B2, B8 and E uses with ancillary offices; creation of a new access from Oundle Road; vehicular and cycle parking; pedestrian infrastructure; hardstanding; circulation areas; lighting infrastructure and all other ancillary, enabling and associated works including landscaping, drainage, earthworks and boundary treatment.”.

4.2 The application is to secure the comprehensive development of the Site, including approval of detailed proposals for a new DSV facility. The remainder of this section provides further detail in respect of the full and outline elements to the proposed development.

Full Planning Application

Proposed Storage and Distribution Unit (Unit 1)

- 4.3 Full planning permission is sought for the DSV facility, which is to be accommodated on Unit 1, as shown on the Parameter Plan as Unit 1, together with the site entrance off the A605, principal estate road and strategic green infrastructure.
- 4.4 The proposed unit is located to the east of the proposed employment park on the highest development plateau within Unit 1. The proposed floorspace will be delivered within a steel-framed, single-story building; delivering 99,817 sqm (GIA) of storage and distribution floorspace (Use Class B8). The proposed floorspace is broken down as follows:

Table 1: Unit 1 Proposed Floorspace Figures (GIA)

Accommodation Schedule	Proposed Floorspace (sqm) (GIA)
Warehouse Unit 1	95,821
Two storey ancillary office	2,760
Two storey hub office	1,236
Total	99,817

- 4.5 The unit will include ancillary office space. The location of the ancillary offices at the northern elevation have been specifically designed to provide a key frontage and create a sense of arrival for staff and visitors. Two smaller hub offices will be accessible both from the warehouse floor and both service yards. The hub offices are located in the centre of the unit on the eastern and western elevations. These are accessible both from the warehouse building and service yard, providing good surveillance for the distribution operations.
- 4.6 Staff and visitors will enter the building either via the offices, or externally, via turnstiles located south of the projecting hub offices. Pedestrian footpaths will be constructed from concrete tiles and placed along the elevations and amenity areas.
- 4.7 The development will provide a total of 501 car parking spaces and 200 bicycle spaces. The car park is located to the north of the unit. The cycle parking will take the form of a three-walled covered cycle shelter. It is proposed that 74 trailer spaces will be provided to the east and west of the building.

- 4.8 The unit will be served by numerous dock loading and level access doors with sufficient yard space and circulation. 64 dock doors and 16 level access doors are to be constructed to the north and east of the building. Two sprinkler tanks are proposed to the north of the unit, along the western elevation. In terms of other services, the proposed development will include switch rooms, transformer, and A/C condensers. The location of which are shown on the Unit 1 Site Plan.
- 4.9 The height, scale and massing of the proposed unit has been designed to meet the requirements of DSV whilst respecting the prevailing landscape character and appearance of the wider area. The proposed warehouse has a maximum ridge height of 18.7m and maximum haunch height of 15m. The two-storey office building to the north helps to break up the structure when viewed from the site entrances. Grey neutral colours have been chosen for building materials, including the cladding, and roofing which will create an overall contemporary appearance. The cladding will also to help vertically break up the massing and maintain a consistent appearance. The proposed materials are shown on the submitted Unit 1 elevations.
- 4.10 The design of the units, in terms of layout, architectural design, elevational treatment and office design is described in detail in the Design and Access Statement.

Principal Estate Road and Access

- 4.11 A new vehicular and pedestrian access is to be constructed via a remodelling of the existing A605/Oundle Road roundabout. This is an established roundabout which will be remodelled to enable the Site to connect to Local Highway Network via the A605; connecting to the A14 to the south and to Peterborough to the north.
- 4.12 The proposed remodelling will create a 4-arm roundabout providing access to the Site via a new principal estate road (inclusive of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure) which will provide access to the proposed development plots, including the new DSV Facility at Unit 1. The land to the west of the A605 will be served via a new simple priority junction onto Oundle Road. The existing roundabout at Oundle Road/the A605 does not function to its optimum capabilities in its current format. The proposed remodelling will deliver improvements to the roundabout for all users.
- 4.13 The new access arrangements and highways works offer a unique opportunity to improve the sense of arrival on the approach from the A605, forming a new 'Gateway' to the town.
- 4.14 A secondary access point is proposed off Islington to the east of the Site, however this is for emergency access and initial construction only.

- 4.15 There are two separate accesses to Unit 1 for car and HGV access. Both are located to the north of the proposed unit via the new principal estate road. This also allows for a level of stacking within the Site demise during peak, busy periods. HGV's will access Unit 1 from the north, circulate the building in a clockwise direction firstly accessing the eastern goods in service yard before exiting the unit via the western goods out service yard. HGV barrier gates will be constructed at the HGV entrance and exit.
- 4.16 Staff and visitors arriving to the unit by car will also gain entry via the principal estate road to the north of the unit, however this is via a separate entrance which leads directly to the car park. The routing of vehicles in and around the Site has been carefully designed to ensure there is no conflict between different users.
- 4.17 In terms of pedestrian access, the proposed development will include a 3m wide segregated shared footpath and cycleway along the southern side of the proposed principal estate road. The A605/ Oundle Road roundabout will have a new signalised crossing on the A605 North arm which will provide a connection between the existing Public Rights of Way NZ11 which routes from the A605 Thrapston-Oundle road to Islington. In addition to this, a new 3m wide footpath and cycleway is proposed from the new signalised crossing along the northern side of the A605 to a point along Oundle Road. The footpath/cycleway will then connect to the existing footway provision towards Thrapston.
- 4.18 A new footway/ cycleway connection is also proposed along the northern site boundary providing connections through the Site to Islington as an alternative route to the public right of way.
- 4.19 Further details are contained within the Design and Access Statement and submitted Transport Assessment, prepared by David Tucker Associates.

Landscaping

- 4.20 The landscape design has been an important consideration in the design evolution of the proposed development and a detailed design strategy has been prepared by Nicholsons Lockhart Garratt. Full planning permission is sought for the majority of the strategic landscaping areas, and these will be created in conjunction with the construction of Unit 1 and its associated infrastructure. This will ensure that from the outset the proposed development plots will benefit from a robust landscape and green infrastructure setting which will continue to mature as the proposed development is built out in its entirety.

- 4.21 Strategic Landscape Areas encompass both key site boundaries and open space areas. These areas of proposed landscape mitigation are considered integral to the successful integration of the development into the existing landscape and visual environment.
- 4.22 There is extensive landscaping proposed to the perimeter of the Site. The northern boundary is to be developed as a robust landscape edge and green corridor, providing connectivity enhancements whilst also providing a large area of accessible green space and ecological habitat. The creation of the green corridor also allows for the creation of new pedestrian/cycle link which provides enhanced connectivity between Thrapston and Titchmarsh and the wider network of public rights of way.
- 4.23 It is proposed that pockets of woodland shrub and tree planting will define much of the northern boundary. A network of attenuation ponds and swales will also line this boundary and provide visual interest and biodiversity enhancements within the proposed green corridor. The remainder of the corridor will comprise of meadow grassland and wildflower meadow, with pockets of tree and shrub planting to create a level of separation between the northern green corridor and development plots to the south. All planting proposed aims to provide biodiversity enhancements with the majority of planting using native species.
- 4.24 Along the eastern Site boundary with Islington to the east of Unit 1, landscaping is proposed to mainly act as a landscape/ecological buffer to minimise views into the Site from the east and northeast. A combination of native tree, shrub and scrub planting, alongside existing retained hedgerow and tree cover will provide a robust green edge to the development and help to soften the appearance of the proposed Unit 1. Further landscaping comprising native species, hedgerows and shrub planting is proposed along the southern boundary, immediately to the south of the proposed Unit 1. Further details in relation to the proposed species are contained within the plant schedule as part of the Detailed Landscape Design.
- 4.25 Much of the landscape mitigation and open space areas on Site is intended to be dual purpose, providing opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement, whilst performing a role in terms of providing amenity space and accessibility. Open space areas are proposed to the west of the proposed sub-station. The use of a variety of meadow mix suitable for grassland and wet meadow areas are proposed, along with proposed tree planting to create a natural form as shown on the Detailed Landscape Design.
- 4.26 The highway works associated with the proposed access from the A605 offer the opportunity to provide a new 'Gateway' to the town. The full details of the proposed landscape treatment within the Gateway will evolve as part of the highways works, with an illustrative design shown within the Design and Access Statement. The key features of the illustrative design include low formal clipped hedgerows and a series of concentric circles of hedgerows and associated tree

planting at differing heights to add visual interest and filter views not the site. A comprehensive and cohesive design taking account of the illustrative design and highway requirements can be secured by condition.

- 4.27 IM Properties recognise that there is an opportunity to deliver a public arts strategy as part of the proposed development. IM Properties are committed to delivering this strategy through the submission of a public arts implementation plan as part of a planning condition. The walking route through the northern part of the site provides a key opportunity for members of the public to interact with the site and potential installations. This approach will contribute to a landscape design that creates an attractive and meaningful space at the gateway to Thrapston, delivering a comprehensive and cohesive design, whilst being mindful of highway authority requirements.
- 4.28 Whilst the detail of the strategy will be reserved to be approved via an appropriate planning condition, the team have been giving some early consideration to the potential themes which a future strategy may develop around. One such theme is the archaeological potential of the site. Further details are contained within the Thrapston Public Art Strategy included at **Appendix 3**.
- 4.29 Additional details on the proposed development, including the design and the proposed landscaping, are contained within the Design and Access Statement and Landscape Strategy which accompanies this planning application.
- 4.30 Further landscaping details within the Development Zones are to come forward as part of any reserved matters applications and will look to complement the strategic landscaping as detailed on the illustrative landscape strategy.

Drainage

- 4.31 The proposed surface water drainage strategy for the Site is a combination of natural sustainable urban drainage (SUDS) features and underground crates to collect, filter and slow the movement of water across the Site. SUDS will be incorporated into the drainage design to limit discharge from the Site to equivalent mean annual greenfield run off rate.
- 4.32 Attenuated flows will be stored on the Site in a series of ponds, swales, above ground balancing ponds, pipes and below ground storage as appropriate. A network of attenuation basins and proposed swales are proposed along the northern Site boundary. The largest swales are located to the west and east of the proposed green corridor. As well as forming part of the overall

drainage strategy for the site, the proposed ponds/swales also provide a wet ecological habitat for wildlife and create a key feature in the landscape.

Earthworks

4.33 Earthworks are proposed to create development plateaus which will address the existing variations in site levels for the detailed part of the planning permission as shown on the levels/section plans which have been prepared by CDP to accompany the application.

Sub-Station

4.34 Detailed consent is also sought for a proposed sub-station which is essential for the operation of the development. This is to be located between Development Plot 3 and 4 near the main entrance to the Site.

Outline Planning Application

4.35 The outline planning application forms the remainder of the Site. The proposed scheme has been separated into four Development Plots as identified on the Parameter Plan with the 3 of the 4 Development Plots applied for in outline as follows:

- Development Plot 2 – Developable Area (8.26 hectares)
- Development Plot 3 – Developable Area (9.53 hectares)
- Development Plot 4 – Developable Area (1.45 hectares)

4.36 Outline planning permission is sought for an employment park comprising Class B2, B8 and E uses with ancillary offices. Access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale of the outline planning application area will be for the Reserved Matters stage. How the employment park might be constructed is shown indicatively for illustrative purposes only on the submitted Illustrative Masterplans. Two options are provided as part of the outline application – Option (1) and Option (2). These both show the general layout and indicative land use/floor space budget.

4.37 Table 2 below sets out the proposed use class, maximum quantum (GIA) and height for each of the Development Plots as identified on the Parameters Plan.

Table 2: Outline Application Proposed Use Class, Maximum Quantum (GIA) and Height

Development Plot	Maximum Quantum (GIA)	Maximum Ridge Height (m)
Plot 2	40,244	24

Development Plot	Maximum Quantum (GIA)	Maximum Ridge Height (m)
Plot 3	41,251	21
Plot 4	4,000	13
Total	85,495	-

- 4.38 The distribution of the Development Plots and building heights have responded to existing topography and follow detailed consideration of key views towards the Site. In total the outline planning application comprises a maximum developable area of 85,495 sqm of built floorspace (GIA).
- 4.39 The Triangle Parcel located to the west of the A605 will be served via a new simple priority junction onto Oundle Road which forms part of the outline application.
- 4.40 Through the proposed design parameters, IM Properties' objective is to deliver a high-quality, best-in-class employment park development by the integration of design, sustainability and connectivity at the heart of the scheme providing proposals that are flexible and responsive to market demand. A Reserved Matters Design Guide (RMDG) has been submitted as part of this planning application to set the principle for a high-quality design. The details to be submitted at the Reserved Matters stage will set out the design response for the delivery of the employment park in line with RMDG. In addition, existing topography has significantly influenced the infrastructure design which in turn has established the Development Plots within the proposed scheme.
- 4.41 Each Development Plot will be separated by a landscape buffer which also addresses the level changes across the site. This provides screening and reduces any perceived visual impacts of the proposed buildings. The Full/Outline Plan included at Appendix 2 details the breakdown between the full and outline elements.
- 4.42 The submitted earthworks plans also show proposed works to the outline part of the application. These will be dealt with as part of a planning condition.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.0 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan

5.1 The Development Plan material to this application comprises:

- The Local Plan Part 1 – the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (JCS) adopted July 2016: Prepared by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning and Delivery Unit (NNJPDU), this provides the framework for (the then) individual Councils to prepare more detailed plans – that is, Part 2 Local Plans. This is currently the subject of a review (see below).
- The Local Plan Part 2 – the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP) adopted July 2011 (saved policies): Prepared by ENC, this covers the district north of the A14, with saved policies of the East Northamptonshire District Local Plan (DLP), adopted 1996, applying to the southern part of the district not covered by the RNOTP. A district wide Local Plan Part 2 is in preparation (see below) which will replace the limited number of saved policies in current Local Plan Part 2.
- Minerals and Waste Local Plan adopted July 2017: Prepared by Northamptonshire County Council and of relevance as the Policies Map shows the site to be predominantly covered by a Minerals Safeguarding Area (sand and gravel), and within the consultation buffer of Manor Farm – a committed mineral (sand and gravel) and waste (inert landfill) development – which is beyond the site to the south east.

5.2 There are no designated Neighbourhood Areas or adopted or emerging Neighbourhood Plans in progress at present of relevance to the Site.

North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (JCS)

5.3 The JCS sets the overarching role for urban and rural areas within North Northamptonshire, and the spatial strategy has an urban focus, supporting the principle of development in urban areas, including Thrapston which is identified as a Market Town at Table 1 (Spatial Roles). Table 1 highlights Thrapston (along with three other of the eight Market Towns) for: *“Regeneration, diversification and expansion of the employment and service base”*.

- 5.4 JCS Policy 11 (The Network of Urban and Rural Areas) states that: "*The Market Towns will provide a strong service role for their local communities and surrounding rural areas with growth in homes and jobs to support regeneration and local services, at a scale appropriate to the character and infrastructure of the town*". Table 1 (Spatial Roles) highlights that development requirements of Market Towns are to be met through a combination of means including "*... smaller greenfield developments identified in Part 2 Local Plans...*".
- 5.5 JCS Policy 1 sets out that when considering development proposals, the Local Planning Authority should take "*a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework*".
- 5.6 JCS Policy 2 relates to the historic environment, noting that the historic environment will be "*protected, preserved and, where appropriate, enhanced*".
- 5.7 JCS Policy 3 deals with Landscape Character and states that development should be located and designed in a way that is "*sensitive to its landscape setting, retaining and, where possible, enhancing the distinctive qualities of the landscape character which it would affect*".
- 5.8 Biodiversity and Geodiversity are dealt with under JCS Policy 4 which sets out that a net gain in biodiversity will be sought, and features of geological interest will be protected and enhanced through protection of existing biodiversity and geodiversity areas; enhancing ecological networks by managing development and investment; supporting, through developer contributions or development design, the protection and recovery of priority habitats and species linked to national and local targets; and developments which are likely to have an adverse impact, either alone or in combination, on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area or other European Designated Sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.
- 5.9 Development proposals will need to take account of the Northamptonshire Biodiversity SPD, the Upper Nene Valley SPA SPD, and the JPY Mitigation Strategy for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPD. Where necessary this will include new residential development contributing towards implementation of this Mitigation Strategy.
- 5.10 JCS Policy 5 relates to the Water Environment, Resources and Flood Risk Management. It sets out that development should "*contribute towards reducing the risk of flooding and to the protection and improvement of the quality of the water environment*".

- 5.11 Under JCS Policy 7 (Community Services and Facilities), development should support and enhance community services and facilities where appropriate
- 5.12 The North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles under JCS Policy 8 sets out that development should create connected places; make safe and pleasant streets and spaces; ensure adaptable, diverse and flexible places; create a distinctive local character; and ensure quality of life and safer and healthier communities. Part (b) states that development should make safe and pleasant streets and spaces by, inter alia, prioritising the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users and resisting developments that would prejudice highway safety.
- 5.13 The above is continued through to the theme of Sustainable Buildings under JCS Policy 9 which sets out that development should incorporate measures to ensure high standards of resource and energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions. Subject to economic viability, developments of 1000+ square metres of non-residential floorspace should, as a minimum meet BREEAM very good or equivalent nationally recognised standards. The proposed development is seeking to go above and beyond, targeting a rating of BREEAM 'Excellent'.
- 5.14 The Provision of Infrastructure is dealt with under JCS Policy 10 and states that development "*must be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to meet the needs arising from the development and to support the development of North Northamptonshire*". Criteria (b) is important with regard to the environmental efficiency of the proposals.
- 5.15 JCS Policy 16 deals with Connecting the Network of Settlements. It states that "*connections between the town in the Northamptonshire Arc will be strengthened and links between the Market Towns and the trains stations improved*". Criteria (a) is important in relation to managing development and investment to prioritise enhanced public transport provision between market towns.
- 5.16 Strategic Connections for North Northamptonshire are considered under JCS Policy 17. This sets out that "*North Northamptonshire's strategic connections with surrounding areas will be strengthened and enhanced by managing development and investment to ensure that they are to the standard necessary to fulfil the role expected to them. New development that would prejudice their role will not be permitted*". We understand that the proposed development will be tested against this policy to ensure that it does not adversely impact on strategic rail and road networks and bus services.

- 5.17 JCS Policy 18 identifies that increased HGV parking will be sought to *“address an existing shortfall and to meet the needs arising from new employment development”*. This policy will be used to ensure that the development can accommodate all necessary HGV parking on site.
- 5.18 JCS Policy 19 relates to the delivery of green infrastructure. This states that the special mixed urban and rural character of North Northamptonshire will be maintained and enhanced by managing development and investment to secure a net gain in green infrastructure; Safeguarding identified sub-regional green infrastructure corridor; contributing towards the enhancement or ongoing management of local green infrastructure corridors and *“requiring, where appropriate, project level Habitats Regulations Assessments, to ensure the protection of European designated sites such as the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site”*. This policy is important with respect to EIA requirements and outcomes, and potential impacts on protected areas and wildlife within the Nene Valley.
- 5.19 The Nene and Ise Valleys are considered under JCS Policy 20 which sets out that *“the Valleys will be priorities for investment in green infrastructure to strengthen biodiversity and landscape character, support a prosperous local economy, provide leisure and recreational opportunities and support the revitalisation of towns and the protection and enhancement of their surrounding countryside. Proposals should ensure the integrity of European designated sites such as the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA are protected”*.
- 5.20 JCS Policy 22 relates to delivering economic prosperity. The policy sets a requirement for a net increase of 31,100 jobs across North Northamptonshire over the plan period 2011-2031. This is considered a *“challenging target”* (paragraph 8.1), required to balance jobs with the forecast growth in the labour force (24,200 jobs), plus additional jobs in the southern area to reduce reliance on out-commuting.
- 5.21 JCS Policy 23 aims to achieve *“a sustainable balance between local jobs and workers and a more diverse economy”*. For East Northamptonshire, the policy focuses distribution of new jobs and sets a target for the creation of 7,200 net new jobs across all sectors in the Plan period, and the supporting text (paragraph 8.16) confirms this is a minimum target. Criteria (b) sets out that *“Employment development of a scale and mix identified within commitments and approved master plans will be supported at the SUEs and strategic sites identified on the Key Diagram”*. The Site falls outside of these allocation locations as shown on the Key Diagram.
- 5.22 JCS Policy 24 focuses specifically on logistics and sets out that: *“Proposals for logistics, including large scale strategic distribution will be supported where they comply with the spatial strategy, facilitate the delivery of a mix of jobs and are of the highest viable standards of*

design and sustainability". It lists seven criteria all of which must be satisfied. These are as follows:

- i. "Subject to market demand and viability, strategic distribution developments (involving individual units of 9,300sqm or more floorspace) should also include the provision of a proportion of floorspace in the form of smaller employment units;
- ii. Have good access to the strategic road network with priority given to the development of freight consolidation centres and sites which can be served by rail freight and operate as inter-modal terminals. Long term opportunities to provide facilities for transferring freight delivery to rail will be safeguarded;
- iii. Have good access to local labour supply and be accessible to the local workforce through public transport, walking and cycling;
- iv. Achieve the highest possible standards of design and environmental performance through maximising the use of sustainable design and construction techniques"
- v. Be in locations which allow 24 hour operations with acceptable environmental, community and landscape impact;
- vi. Provide sufficient infrastructure to mitigate highways impacts;
- vii. Address the local operational requirements of HGV parking arising from the development or demonstrate that suitable adequate alternative accessible parking is available".

5.23 JCS Policy 26 provides guidance in respect of a series of key criteria aimed at addressing the sustainability of development.

5.24 The JCS Policies Map shows that the Site is within the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) Buffer (3km/ 4km) and that the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA) Boundary clips the north-western corner of the site by the A605 roundabout.

Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP) (Saved Policies)

5.25 The Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP), that is, the Local Plan Part 2 (site specific policies), was adopted by Full Council on 18th July 2011. This covers the district north of the A14, with saved policies of the East Northamptonshire District Local Plan (DLP), adopted 1996, applying to the southern part of the district not covered by the RNOTP.

- 5.26 Many policies from the RNOTP were replaced by the NNJCS policies, with effect from July 2016. However, there are several saved/retained policies specific to Thrapston and some of these remain applicable to the Site.
- 5.27 Of particular relevance is Policy THR4 (Relocating Existing Businesses around Thrapston) which identifies that proposals for relocating existing businesses and facilitating their expansion will be directed to land within Halden's Parkway, Top Close or Islip Furnace business areas. If these areas cannot provide suitable sites, relocation sites elsewhere should be adjacent to the built-up area and suitable for HGV access and manoeuvring. It also identifies that proposals for the further concentration of employment development at Halden's Parkway will be required to contribute towards improvements to the A605 roundabout junction.
- 5.28 Policy 4 (Green Infrastructure) states that "*Development within the Plan area will contribute and link into the wider green infrastructure network. To prevent adverse impacts on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site, specific Green Infrastructure projects will be designed in consultation with Natural England*".
- 5.29 The RNOTP Thrapston Inset Map shows the Site is outside of the settlement boundary which is generally delineated tightly around the main built-up part of the settlement including Halden's Parkway and Top Close, both of which are Protected Employment Areas. It is noted that the recently approved Saica extension proposal falls beyond the settlement boundary.
- 5.30 The RNOTP Thrapston Inset Map also shows a proposed cycle route/ Green Infrastructure Corridor through Halden's Parkway and along Islington to the east of the site.
- 5.31 Furthermore, the RNOTP Thrapston Inset Map shows the Minerals Safeguarding Area (Sand & Gravel) of the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Under Policy 28 of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, it will need to be demonstrated that development of the Site will not sterilise proven mineral resources of economic importance and will not pose a serious hindrance to future extraction in the vicinity. A Minerals Resource Assessment has therefore been submitted alongside the planning application.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (published July 2021)

- 5.32 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Its focus is primarily on achieving sustainable development and the matters to be considered. As such, it is a very important material consideration that should be considered when determining planning applications.

- 5.33 Paragraph 7 confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. As such, the objective of sustainable development is summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Paragraph 8 goes on to identify the three overarching objectives of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Following on from this, Paragraph 10 identifies that at the heart of the Framework is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 5.34 Paragraph 11 c) confirms that for decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Paragraph 11 d) notes that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 5.35 The NPPF provides guidance on planning conditions and obligations. Paragraphs 55 and 56 highlights that conditions that are required to be discharged before development commences should be avoided unless there is a clear justification. In addition, Paragraph 57 states that planning obligations must only be sought where they are: necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development mirroring the statutory tests in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 5.36 A key aim of the NPPF is to build a strong and competitive economy as described in Section 6 (Paragraphs 81-83). 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. Paragraph 83 further states that planning 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 high technology industries.
- 5.37 Section 9 (Paragraphs 104-113) of the NPPF relates to 'promoting sustainable transport' and requires all developments that generate a significant amount of movement to provide a Travel Plan and be supported by either a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Paragraph 111 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be unacceptable impacts on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

- 5.38 Section 12 (Paragraphs 126-136) relates to 'achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 126 highlights that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Following on from this, Paragraph 130 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments: function well; add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of development; are visually attractive; have appropriate and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to the local character including the surrounding built environment; and maintain a strong sense of place. Furthermore Paragraph 134 identifies that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to make opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.
- 5.39 Paragraph 174 states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. In addition, planning decisions should prevent development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.
- 5.40 Applicants are required to describe the significance of heritage assets affected by proposals, including any contribution made by their setting (para 194). Paragraph 195 states that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise.
- 5.41 Paragraph 202 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Planning Practice Guidance (published March 2014)

- 5.42 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a web-based resource to reflect and support the NPPF. It was first published in March 2014, and it updated periodically to reflect new Government guidance in relation to specific topic areas. The PPG provides support for new jobs and homes, as well as outlining protection for the natural and historic environment.

Before submitting a planning application

- 5.43 Paragraph 001 (Ref ID. 20-001-20190315) sets out that pre-application engagement by prospective applicants offers significant potential to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system and improve the quality of planning applications and their likelihood of success. Paragraph 003 (Ref ID: 20-003-20140306) notes that pre-application engagement is a collaborative process between a prospective applicant and other parties which may include: the local planning authority, statutory and non-statutory consultees, elected members and local people.

Determining a planning application

- 5.44 Paragraph 006 (Ref ID: 21b-006-20190315) of the PPG explains that the NPPF represents up-to-date government planning policy and is a material consideration that must be considered where it is relevant to a planning application or appeal. This includes the presumption in favour of development found at Paragraph 11 of the Framework. If decision takers choose not to follow the National Planning Policy Framework, where it is a material consideration, clear and convincing reasons for doing so are required.

Housing and economic needs assessment

- 5.45 In relation to logistics paragraph 031 (Ref ID. 2a-031-20190722) states that the logistics industry plays a critical role in enabling an efficient, sustainable, and effective supply of goods for consumers and businesses, as well as contributing to local employment opportunities, and has distinct locational requirements that need to be considered in formulating planning policies (separately from those relating to general industrial land). The planning guidance encourages "engagement with logistics developers and occupiers to understand the changing nature of requirements in terms of the type, size and location of facilities" and "analysis of market signals".

Design

- 5.46 The PPG states that well-designed places can be achieved by taking a proactive and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process, from policy and plan formulation through to the determination of planning applications and the post approval stage (Ref ID: 26-001-20191001).
- 5.47 To be read alongside this PPG guidance, the National Design Guide (published October 2019) sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice.

- 5.48 It sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It forms part of the government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.
- 5.49 Good design is set out in the National Design Guide under the following 10 characteristics:
- Context
 - Identity
 - Built form
 - Movement
 - Nature
 - Public spaces
 - Uses
 - Homes and buildings
 - Resources
 - Lifespan
- 5.50 Some key sections taken from the National Design Guide which have informed this proposal include:
- Context. '41. Well-designed development proposals are shaped by an understanding of the context that identifies opportunities for design as well as constraints upon it. This is proportionate to the nature, size and sensitivity of the site and proposal.'
 - Built form. '66. Well-designed places also use the right mix of building types, forms and scale of buildings and public spaces to create a coherent form of development that people enjoy. They also adopt strategies for parking and amenity that support the overall quality of the place.'
- 5.51 The PPG provides further information on a number of planning matters such as advertisements, determination of applications, climate change, design, flood risk, neighbourhood planning, viability, and waste

Draft Emerging North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan (NNSP)

- 5.52 The North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee (JPC) is in the process of producing the NNSP to replace the JCS (as endorsed by a report to the JPC on 2nd March 2021).
- 5.53 The NNSP process for reviewing the extant NNJCS is at its earliest stages and will take at least three years to complete through its consultation, Examination, and adoption processes. The first stage of consultation is out until 23rd May 2022. Given this early stage (with comments

yet to be received) very limited weight can be attached to this draft emerging plan in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

- 5.54 The emerging NNSP is therefore not at an advanced stage and the NNJCS will remain as the extant strategic level Development Plan Part 1 for North Northamptonshire until its future replacement by the NNSP. As such, very limited weight can be attached to the draft emerging plan in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

Emerging Local Plan Part 2 – Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Part 2 2011-2031 (February 2021)

- 5.55 ENC commenced work on a district wide Local Plan Part 2, to replace remaining policies in the RNOTP and DLP, in 2017. The Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan, and statutory supporting documents including the Sustainability Appraisal, were subject to Regulation 19 consultation (closed 19th March 2021). The Local Plan Part 2 was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 29th of March 2021. Planning Inspector Elaine Worthington MTP MUED MRTPI has been appointed to undertake the independent Examination in Public. Hearing Sessions commenced on Wednesday 6th April 2022. BWS have submitted representations to the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan and Hearing Statements on behalf of IM Properties Developments Ltd. The Submitted Plan can be afforded moderate weight in the planning assessment.
- 5.56 These representations noted that the Emerging Local Plan takes forward the jobs target for the district as set by Local Plan Part 1 – that is, the JCS. For East Northamptonshire, JCS Policy 23 (Distribution of New Jobs) sets a target for the creation of 7,200 net new jobs across all sectors in the plan period, and the supporting text (paragraph 8.16) confirms this is a minimum target. The Emerging Local Plan sets out a jobs delivery trajectory that shows job growth exceeding the JCS target by 3,982 jobs by 2031 (paragraph 7.18/ Table 11). It goes on (paragraph 7.24) to state that: *“Even in a scenario discounting sites where deliverability is uncertain ... the requirement for 7,200 jobs should be comfortably exceeded, by over 2,200 jobs, providing a significant contingency to cover any potential fallout from macro-economic events such as the Covid-19 pandemic or Brexit.”*
- 5.57 On the basis of the above, the Council propose to rely on its existing pipeline sites to meet employment needs, with the emerging Local Plan Part 2 stating (paragraph 7.25) that *“... there is no need identified for further strategic employment sites to be allocated through this Plan ...”*. It is the Applicant’s view that this approach is unsound. In particular, this approach treats the employment needs assessed in the JCS as a ceiling rather than a floor. Second, it does not address market demand and has been significantly overtaken by events, in particular arising from the substantial increase in demand for logistics floorspace in recent times in part as a

result of the coronavirus pandemic. Indeed, the emerging Plan itself (paragraph 7.45) acknowledges the employment needs target is likely to increase in the medium to long term due to additional growth aspirations arising largely from the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

- 5.58 The emerging Local Plan Part 2 broadly conforms with the spatial strategy of the JCS, with Draft Policy EN1 (Spatial Development Strategy) setting out for Thrapston that: "*Development will be focused upon the major committed development sites ... Further development ... will focus upon urban re-imagination, to support job creation, regeneration and to secure and enhance the local service base.*"
- 5.59 The Town Strategy for Thrapston (paragraph 10.72/ Figure 32/ Table 28) identifies Halden's Parkway as a '*distinctive spatial part*', with scope for further expansion of logistics or warehousing if necessary.
- 5.60 Draft Policy EN20 (Relocation and/or Expansion of Existing Businesses) provides support for existing businesses that need to relocate or expand, where a suitable site is available. A suitable site is defined by five criteria:
- a) "*Is adjacent to an existing built up area, provided that there is no significant impact on the countryside or character of the surroundings;*
 - b) "*Would not result in a significant impact on the countryside, ecology, highways, the character of the surroundings and on the amenity of neighbouring or nearby properties;*
 - c) "*Where necessary, is suitable for the provision of HGV or commercial vehicular access to the strategic or classified road network;*
 - d) "*For main town centre uses, if applicable, meets the requirements of the sequential and impact tests; and*
 - e) "*Provides maximum accessibility for the workforce by sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport*".
- 5.61 Other draft policies of note in relation to the Site are policy EN8 (The Greenway). The Greenway is a central green infrastructure route that will, upon completion, run from Wellingborough railway station, through East Northamptonshire, to Peterborough railway station. It will provide an alternative means of transport, predominantly for walkers and cyclists, and provide opportunities for informal recreation.
- 5.62 Draft Policy EN15 highlights the role of Thrapston as a village within the Nene Valley and Rockingham Forest corridors, which are a priority for tourism and recreation opportunities (reflecting Policies 19-22 of the NNJCS).

- 5.63 The Thrapston Inset Map of the emerging Local Plan Part 2 does not take forward the RNOTP settlement boundary, with the Plan appearing to rely on a written definition applicable to infill development (Policy EN2).
- 5.64 The Thrapston Inset Map does take forward the designations in respect of Halden's Parkway and Top Close identifying them as Rural Employment Areas, subject to Policy EN19 Protected Employment Areas. Furthermore, the boundary for Halden's Parkway is extended northwards to include land to the rear of plots 11-14. This parcel of land was granted planning permission in May 2012 for relocation of the Cattle Market from its Market Road site (Ref: 11/01240/FUL). The Draft Local Plan includes for redevelopment of the Cattle Market for a mix of uses compatible with the town centre (Policy EN42). This extension to Halden's Parkway would close the 'gap' between the existing employment development and the Site.
- 5.65 The Thrapston Inset Map for the emerging Local Plan Part 2 also shows that the site, in part, sits within an area of Aspirational Connections to The Greenway (Policy EN8).

Neighbourhood Planning Position

- 5.66 There are no designated Neighbourhood Areas, or Neighbourhood Plans in progress at present of relevance to the site.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 5.67 SPDs considered of relevance to the proposed development are as follows:
- Developer Contributions SPD (2006) (produced by ENC).
 - The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area SPD (2016) (produced jointly by South Northamptonshire, Northampton, Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire Councils).
 - Biodiversity SPD for Northamptonshire (2016) (produced by North Northamptonshire County Council, in conjunction with the District and Borough Councils).
 - Trees and Landscape SPD (2013) (produced jointly by ENC and Wellingborough Council).
 - Open Space SPD (2011) (produced by ENC).
 - North Northamptonshire Sustainable Design SPD (2009) (produced by the NNJPDU).
 - Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide (2008) (produced by North Northamptonshire County Council).
 - Development and Implementation Principles (for waste and minerals) (2011) (produced by Northamptonshire County Council).

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 requires the determination of this application to be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This chapter considers the principal planning issues in the context of the relevant planning policies outlined in Section 5.0.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 The Site is not allocated in the adopted Local Plan Part 1 - The North Northamptonshire Joint Core (JCS), which was adopted in July 2016. Notwithstanding this, the JCS does provide a positive platform and policy support for the planning application. The JCS has an urban focus, supporting the principle of development in urban areas including Thrapston, which is identified as a Market Town, supports development that delivers jobs growth and economic prosperity, including proposals for logistics. Although the Site is not identified as a Strategic Site on the JCS Key Diagram (Figure 12), paragraph 8.16 explicitly confirms that *"the list of sites is not exhaustive and proposals that deliver jobs growth and economic prosperity will be positively considered subject to compliance with the plan"*.
- 6.3 Furthermore, logistics is identified as a sectoral strength and opportunity (paragraph 8.9) with support provided through JCS Policy 24 (Logistics) where proposals can satisfy seven criteria. These seven criteria are as follows:

A. Subject to market demand and viability, strategic distribution developments (involving individual units of 9,300sqm or more floorspace) should also include the provision of a proportion of floorspace in the form of smaller employment units;

The proposed development includes a range of employment units. Unit 1 comprises a large single unit creating 99,817 sqm (GIA) of storage and distribution floorspace. In addition, an innovation centre is proposed at Development Plot (4) situated to the west of the A605. This plot is anticipated to comprise small units to benefit smaller occupiers and support innovation and the growth of local businesses. There is an identified lack of small, flexible workspace for small and medium sized businesses across East Northamptonshire. Providing this type of space in Thrapston would create an opportunity for growing local SME businesses. It is further proposed that IM properties would be offering different types of tenures and the opportunity for SME business to acquire the freehold interest in the units.

- B. Have good access to the strategic road network with priority given to the development of freight consolidation centres and sites which can be served by rail freight and operate as inter-modal terminals. Long term opportunities to provide facilities for transferring freight delivery to rail will be safeguarded;**

The Site has good access to the strategic road network, being located on the A605 close to Junction 13 of the A14.

- C. Have good access to local labour supply and be accessible to the local workforce through public transport, walking and cycling;**

The Site has good access to local labour supply at Thrapston and the surrounding towns and villages. Currently, North Northamptonshire is a net exporter of labour. The proposed development will increase employment within North Northamptonshire, providing jobs for local residents. The proposal will deliver significant economic benefits, as set out in the Land Requirement, Labour Supply and Economics Benefits report prepared by BWS Economics. This includes, in summary, 500 direct jobs (full time equivalent) per month during its 72-month construction period generating £26.2m GVA per annum, then when operational 2,090 jobs (full time equivalent) generating £88.6m GVA per annum.

- D. Achieve the highest possible standards of design and environmental performance through maximising the use of sustainable design and construction techniques;**

The proposed development will achieve a high standard of design and environmental performance – this underpins IM Properties' approach to development. IM Properties is committed to delivering a development that is fit for the future and supports North Northamptonshire Council on its trajectory to net zero. The standard building specification has evolved to facilitate net zero ready buildings and the kinds of measures used will include:

- EPC rating of A for the offices attached to buildings
- An all-electric energy strategy with primary energy delivered without fossil fuels
- Air Source Heat Pumps providing heating and hot water to the main offices
- High levels of air tightness and insulation
- LED lighting throughout
- Use of PV cells or other low carbon technology to provide renewable power.

E. Be in locations which allow 24-hour operations with acceptable environmental, community and landscape impact;

The Site is compatible with adjacent land uses, impacts on the environment, community and landscape have been considered as part of these proposals as set out within this Statement and accompanying documents.

F. Provide sufficient infrastructure to mitigate highways impacts;

The proposed development will address highway impacts where required as set out within the accompanying Transport Assessment and ES Chapter 6. In summary highways mitigation measures will include the following:

- A new toucan crossing on the A605 north of the site access roundabout.
- Capacity enhancement works to the A605 corridor including improvements to the approaches and partial signalisation of A14 J13, widening of the A605 between Huntingdon Road and A14 J13, including works to the A605/ Huntingdon Road roundabout and approaches.

G. Address the local operational requirements of HGV parking arising from the development or demonstrate that suitable adequate alternative accessible parking is available.

The proposed development will address the need for HGV parking arising from the development.

6.4 There has also been a significant increase in demand for industrial, in particular logistics, floorspace since the adoption of the JCS and Planning Practice Guidance requires up-to-date evidence in considering the type, size and location of facilities (Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 2a-031-20190722).

6.5 Indeed, IM Properties have put the Site forward as part of the consultation process on the emerging East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2. Hearing Statements have been submitted to the Examination in Public in March 2022. These Hearing Statements make the persuasive case that the emerging Plan does not make sufficient allocations for larger employment development, in that it takes forward the jobs target for the District as set by the JCS and relies on existing major committed sites within the District to meet this outdated need assessment. This was supported by evidence, prepared by BWS Economics which confirms that demand for industrial floorspace, in particular logistics, is outstripping supply and there is,

therefore, a need to plan for greater growth now. As such, IM Properties consider that the Site would substantially contribute to meeting the significant unmet demand for employment development in the North Northamptonshire area, along the A14 corridor where market demand is strongest. The Site has also been put forward as part of the Call for Sites submission which will inform a new Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) for the North Northamptonshire.

- 6.6 IM Properties have engaged and entered pre-application discussions with the Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss the principle and agree the technical work needed to be undertaken to inform and assess the proposals and the form and content of the planning application.
- 6.7 In summary, the suite of application material demonstrates that there is an immediate need for the proposed Occupier (DSV) to relocate to enable the existing business to modernise and expand in accordance with paragraph 81 of the NPPF. DSV has identified a need for a site to accommodate a large purpose-built modern facility to support its existing business operations in Thrapston and meet future needs in a single location. Following an extensive search, DSV has identified Thrapston Business Park as the only viable site solution to accommodate their requirements in a reasonable period of time. Indeed, paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. Further information in relation to occupier need is detailed within a Statement of Support provided by DSV as part of this planning application.
- 6.8 Saved Policy THR4 of the adopted Local Plan Part 2 – that is, the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan adopted 2011 – provides support for relocation of existing businesses around Thrapston where a suitable site is not available at Halden’s Parkway, Top Close or Islip Furnace business areas, and where the relocation site is adjacent to the existing built-up area and suitable for HGV access and manoeuvring. Aside from contributing to meeting the significant unmet need for employment land, the proposal for DSV to occupy Unit 1 means the proposed development would also fulfil the requirements of Policy THR4.
- 6.9 Draft Policy EN20 in the emerging East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 further supports the relocation and expansion of existing businesses. Draft Policy EN20 states that “*where businesses need to relocate from their current premises or retain their existing premises and grow into a new bespoke space, this will be supported where a suitable site is available*”. A suitable site is defined by five criteria:
- a) Is adjacent to an existing built-up area, provided that there is no significant impact on the countryside or character of the surroundings;

- b) Would not result in a significant impact on the countryside, ecology, highways, the character of the surroundings and on the amenity of neighbouring or nearby properties;
- c) Where necessary, is suitable for the provision of HGV or commercial vehicular access to the strategic or classified road network;
- d) For main town centre uses, if applicable, meets the requirements of the sequential and impact tests; and
- e) Provides maximum accessibility for the workforce by sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.

6.10 In this respect, the Site is adjacent to the existing built area of Thrapston and Halden's Parkway employment area and is well located to the strategic/ classified road network; the technical work is submitted in support of the application, with mitigation as appropriate, addresses the impact on the countryside and character of the surroundings, ecology, highways and the amenity of neighbouring and nearby occupiers, together with connectivity and accessibility for the workforce by sustainable modes of transport.

6.11 BWS Economics has researched and established the case for employment development in North Northamptonshire. This research identifies that overall, there is significant strategic employment need for the development of Thrapston Business Park over and above the requirements of DSV (as set out in the Economic Need Section below). The market is undersupplied in the context of strong occupier demand, undersupply is signalled by falling vacancy and availability rates, and an availability rates that remains below 8%, implying that the market is undersupplied.

6.12 The Site, being adjacent to an existing and established employment area, would assist in meeting the significant demand for strategic employment development. A trend rate of demand for 151,000 sqm per annum of industrial and logistics floorspace over the past 10 years, projected over the next 15 years, results in a need across North Northamptonshire for 566 hectares industrial land. The proposed scheme will facilitate a significant economic investment into the local economy through the creation of conditions to enable business to expand and adapt and create a significant number of economic benefits including 2,090 jobs (full time equivalent) during the operational phases.

6.13 Overall, although the Site is not allocated, the list of sites is not exhaustive and proposals to deliver job growth and economic growth will be considered positively subject to compliance with the development plan (JCS, paragraph 8.16). This is assessed through the Planning Assessment looking at economic need and benefits, design, landscaping, residential amenity, sustainability etc. It is considered that the proposal accords with the development plan as a

whole. Moreover, the proposed development constitutes sustainable development in accordance with paragraph 8 of the NPPF:

- **Economic Objective:** The NPPF (paragraph 8) notes that to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, sufficient land of the right type needs to be available in the right place and at the right time to support growth. The proposed development directly responds to market signals which is discussed in further detail in the below section looking at Economic Need. There is limited suitable land available to meet identified demand and unmet need. The Site is uniquely well placed to attract and accommodate the immediate demand and unmet need we have evidenced for additional employment land along the A13 corridor and in this location with good access to the strategic road network. A high-quality new employment park will drive economic growth and prosperity in Thrapston and the wider area.
- **Social Objective:** The NPPF looks to support strong, healthy, and vibrant communities. The proposed development will meet this objective through both the retention and creation of jobs in the local area and through investment in the area's infrastructure. While not material to the determination of the planning application, IM Properties are also committed to maximising benefits for local people/organisations through a programme of social value activity under the themes of supporting communities (people and business), jobs (including skills and training), and education.
- **Environmental Objective:** The NPPF seeks to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment. The proposed development delivers a number of environmental benefits with improvements in local green infrastructure and meeting aspirations for biodiversity net gain. IM Properties is committed to delivering a development that supports North Northamptonshire on its trajectory to net zero. The proposed development will be committing to low energy specification and renewable technologies. The building specification will include a number of sustainable design measures as set out the section on 'Design'. Construction of Thrapston Business Park will be net zero carbon (excluding Development Plot 1). Carbon emissions from the build will be offset as part of an approved and certified carbon offsetting scheme.

6.14 Therefore, when carrying out the overall planning balance, it is clear that there are a significant number of material considerations which individually and collectively weigh very heavily in favour of the proposal, and which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified disbenefits of the proposal such that the proposed development should be approved without delay. These material considerations are further discussed through the remainder of this Section and the planning balance is set out within the Conclusion.

Economic Need

- 6.15 The NPPF confirms the 'economic objective' of sustainable development is to 'help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity'. Paragraph 81 of the NPPF identifies that planning policies should help create conditions in which businesses can expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, recognising the specific locational requirements of different sectors such as storage and distribution (paragraph 83).
- 6.16 A Land Requirement, Labour Supply and Economic Benefits Report (April 2022) has been prepared by BWS in support of the application. This report has had regard to the North Northamptonshire industrial floorspace requirement, labour supply and economic benefits. A summary of the key findings and assessment against planning policy is set out in this section. Chapter 14 of the ES includes an assessment of likely significant environmental effects arising from the development in relation to Socio-Economics.
- 6.17 The North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee formally adopted the JCS in July 2016. The JCS, now 5.7 years old (March 2022), sets the industrial and logistics planning context for North Northamptonshire. The overarching aim of this is to "*make North Northamptonshire more self-reliant by achieving a sustainable balance between local jobs and workers and a more prosperous and diverse economy*". Policy 22 (Delivering Economic Prosperity) addresses all aspects of the overarching 'stronger sustainable economy' aims, including identifying new employment sites, protecting commitments, and recognising the opportunity provided by Logistics, a priority sector.
- 6.18 The JCS allocates several strategic employment sites that supplement committed strategic sites intended to enable North Northamptonshire to accommodate growth sectors, including logistics, and provide for choice and flexibility. The Site is not allocated; however, as noted above it should be reinforced that "*the list of sites is not exhaustive and proposals that deliver jobs growth and economic prosperity will be positively considered subject to compliance with the plan*" (paragraph 8.16).
- 6.19 It is important to note that the JCS is over five years old and the evidence that underpins the approach to employment land need and allocation dates to 2013. The approach is also inconsistent with the requirements in of the PPG relating to economics because it fails to address market signals, nor does it reflect the elevated importance that the PPG attaches to meeting the needs of the logistics sector. The NPPF (paragraph 82) also requires planning policies to be flexible to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances. The

impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit were not anticipated when the JCS was brought forward and the associated implications and impacts on economic need have therefore not been accounted for. As such, although the Site is not allocated, the proposals will deliver jobs growth and economic prosperity and should therefore be positively considered.

DSV

- 6.20 DSV has identified a need for a site to accommodate a large purpose-built modern facility to support its existing business operations in the locality and meet future needs in a single location. This will enable DSV to modernise and expand. Following an extensive search, DSV has identified the site as the only viable solution to accommodate their requirements in a reasonable period of time. If planning permission is not granted for Thrapston Business Park, then DSV will have to consider other options which may mean relocating out of North Northamptonshire. A Statement has been provided by DSV which is included at **Appendix 4**.
- 6.21 The research from the Land Requirement, Labour Supply and Economics Benefits report reviews the allocated and committed sites identified in the JCS and concludes that the former district of East Northamptonshire is particularly poorly served with only one site (West End Raunds) adding to the inventory and the strategically important A14 ignored completely, offering no employment land supply. This means that only Symmetry Park in Kettering can accommodate industrial and logistics occupiers on the A14 corridor across North Northamptonshire, but, critically, freehold tenure is not available at that location and the alternative lease financials proved economically inviable, as set out in the Employment Land, Labour Supply and Economic Benefits Statement (April 2022) which accompanies this planning application.

North Northamptonshire Industrial Floorspace Requirement

- 6.22 The Land Requirement, Labour Supply and Economics Benefits report identifies a significant strategic employment need, over and above DSV.
- 6.23 In the absence of a floorspace requirement to inform JCS allocations, BWS calculated that over the ten-year period 2012 to 2021 inclusive, actual demand for industrial floorspace amounts to 151,000 sqm per annum. This actual demand figure is based on observed net floorspace absorption (occupier moves in less occupier moves out) plus a margin for suppressed demand based on the assumption that availability below 8% (of the floorspace inventory) is a constraint on demand. The market is undersupplied in the context of strong occupier demand, undersupply is signalled by falling vacancy and availability rates, and an availability rates that remains below 8%, implying that the market is undersupplied.

- 6.24 Based on the foregoing analysis and having regard to the drivers of demand, we conclude that the observed level of actual demand for industrial floorspace will be sustained over time. A trend rate of demand for 151,000 sqm per annum of industrial and logistics floorspace over the past 10 years, projected over the next 15 years, results in a need across North Northamptonshire for 566 hectares industrial land. Even if demand halves after ten years, the need for employment land will still amount to 472 hectares over the next 15 years.
- 6.25 In the context of significant unmet employment floorspace demand, Thrapston Business Park will deliver a high-quality employment park that directly responds to the full spectrum of market demand from starter units to meet localised need to 'mid box' and 'big box' units to deliver much needed employment space required at the regional level. This mix of proposed unit sizes accords with criteria (a) of JCS Policy 24 which requires strategic distribution development to include a proportion of smaller employment units.
- 6.26 Furthermore, the proposed development will provide employment floorspace in a sought-after location with an almost direct connection to the A14, rectifying the undersupply of existing 50,000 sq. ft. plus buildings (typically the minimum required for large scale logistics operators) along the A14 corridor and helping to relieve suppressed market demand by delivering space to give businesses the chance to grow and expand. Separate research from Savills also shows that the need for new logistics space in the strategically located East Midlands is particularly acute, noting a vacancy rate of 1.69% and just 0.19 years' of supply, with the region strategically located on some of the country's key transport routes⁷. The A14 is one of these routes and demand from occupiers for high-quality space along the A14 is strong.
- 6.27 Thrapston Business Park will almost double the amount of sub 25,000 sq. ft. employment floorspace available in the local market adding much needed starter / small business space to the area, helping to rectify the fact that the former East Northamptonshire district has one of the lowest levels of existing available space across North Northamptonshire.
- 6.28 In terms of labour supply, the local catchment area includes at least 4,500 residents who are currently unemployed and a further 6,100 residents who are currently economically inactive who nevertheless want to work⁸. As such, the 2,090 jobs created at Thrapston Business Park offer could deliver real social value in addition to the obvious economic benefits flowing from these significant job opportunities.

⁷ The logistics market in the East Midlands (Savills, January 2022)

https://www.savills.com/research_articles/255800/323892-0?msclkid=02865cf2d06911ecac1eeade2e0349c

⁸ Employment Land, Labour Supply & Economic Benefits Statement April 2022, Section 4, Page 32 to 48

6.29 Currently, North Northamptonshire is a net exporter of labour. The proposed development will increase employment within North Northamptonshire, providing jobs for local residents, thereby potentially reducing out-commuting from the catchment area. The Land Requirement, Labour Supply and Economic Benefits Report has identified that currently, the transport and storage and manufacturing industries combined, account for 21% of resident employment in the catchment area; indicating that these two sectors are key employment sectors for the catchment area’s residents. The proposed development will create jobs and choice in these key employment sectors.

Economic Benefits

6.30 The proposed development will contribute towards employment generation and economic productivity across the local economy of North Northamptonshire, during both the construction and operational 'lifetime' phases of the development.

6.31 The dynamic mix of commercial uses which the proposed development would deliver means there will also be a range of employment opportunities for local people created by the new employment park and the associated opportunities for training and skills-creation.

6.32 In respect of Unit 1 proposed to be occupied by DSV, creating 722 full time equivalent jobs across a range of roles. DSV offers its employees in-house training and skills development through e-learning programmes, performance and development processes and a global leadership training programme. DSV also operates apprenticeship schemes. Further details are contained within the DSV Statement of Support which is submitted alongside this planning application.

6.33 Overall, the proposed development offers a very significant number of economic benefits as summarised in Table 3 below which individually and collectively weigh very heavily in favour of the proposal. Such substantial economic benefits will, in turn, also deliver social benefits for North Northamptonshire and the wider district. Planned housing growth in Thrapston and in the south and west of the catchment area, will enable continued population and labour supply growth.

Table 3: Summary of Economic Benefits of the Development

Phase	Benefit		GVA
Construction	Direct jobs	500	£26.2m per annum
	Indirect jobs	484	£26.8m per annum

Phase	Benefit		GVA
	Total jobs (72-month construction period)	984	£318m in total over 6 years
Operational effect on direct jobs	Direct job creation	2,090 jobs on site	£88.6m per annum
	Net direct job creation	1,567 jobs across North Northamptonshire	£66.5m per annum
Operational effect on district wide employment	Direct North Northamptonshire employment	1,207 residents employed	£118.3m per annum
	Indirect (multiplier effect) North Northamptonshire employment	1,569 employed residents	£67.2m per annum
	Total North Northamptonshire employment effect	2,776 residents employed	£118.3m per annum

6.34 As required by paragraph 81 of the NPPF, the above economic benefits should individually and collectively be given very significant weight in the overall planning balance and weight heavily in favour of the proposal. Although the Site is not allocated within the adopted Local Plan, this should not prevent other sites from coming forward. The JCS states that the list of allocated sites is not exhaustive and proposals that deliver jobs and economic prosperity will be considered positively subject to compliance with the Plan (paragraph 8.16). The proposals will deliver significant job growth and economic prosperity in a location adjacent to the existing Halden’s parkway Employment Area close to Junction 13 of the A14 As such, it is considered that the proposal accords with the Development Plan as a whole, when considered against the assessment within this Planning Statement.

Design

6.35 Section 12 of the NPPF is clear in its approach that great importance should be attached to achieving good design within new developments which is a key aspect of sustainable development. The approach to design and its rational for the proposed development is set out within the accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS), prepared by Stephen George & Partners. DAS provides a comprehensive review of the design principles for the proposed development that have been informed by constraints and opportunities including design approach, access, masterplan strategy including landscape design principles, sustainability, and crime prevention.

6.36 Through the proposed design parameters, IM Properties are committed to delivering a high-quality employment development through the integration of design, sustainability and connectivity providing a dynamic scheme that can be flexible to respond to future market

demand. The proposed employment park is designed to include a range of building sizes that can be accommodated in the local landscape and provide high-quality facilities for end occupiers.

- 6.37 Industrial and logistics operations require increasingly large buildings to ensure that they are highly functional and efficient in their use of space and energy. The design of Unit 1 comprises a large single-storey contemporary storage/distribution building with a functional design aesthetic. It is proposed that the lower elements of the south façade will have a smooth and robust light grey concrete finish. It is proposed that vertical metal cladding will sit above the concrete plinth this helps to break up the massing. The grey materials used will create the appearance of a contemporary facility broken up with vertical cladding to maintain a consistent appearance through the season as light levels, weather conditions and vegetation change. The use of stronger accent colours have been avoided to allow the proposed building to blend in to its surrounding context.
- 6.38 The ancillary office space creates a different elevational treatment, projecting out from the building's northern elevation. This breaks the overall massing and creates a visual interest – sign-posting the main entrance and creating a focal point to the DSV Facility.
- 6.39 The National Design Guide notes that well-designed places use the right mix of building types, forms, and scale along with public spaces to create a coherent form of development that people enjoy. The strategic landscaping forms an integral part of the overall design.
- 6.40 In terms of the outline element of the hybrid planning application, matters in relation to detailed design and appearance will form part of separate Reserved Matters Application. Notwithstanding this, key parameters in relation to maximum height and floorspace are set by the Parameters Plan and expanded upon within the DAS. It is proposed that the maximum height of any unit will not exceed 24m in height. A Reserved Matters Design Guide has also been submitted alongside this hybrid application to set out the design approach for the outline elements (Development Plots 2, 3 and 4). This document is based on the IM Properties Design Standard which is used to ensure consistency across all their developments, inform the buildings appearance, technical specification and meet the requirements of individual occupiers. The use of a Reserved Matters Design Guide ensures that the proposed buildings will adopt consistent design themes and ensure compatibility with the approach for Development 1 which is applied for in detail.
- 6.41 Whilst North Northamptonshire's policy framework doesn't incorporate any Public Art specific requirements, IM Properties recognises that there is an opportunity to deliver a public arts strategy as part of the proposed development. The walking route through the northern part

of the site provides an opportunity for members of the public to interact with the site and potential installations. Details of which will be reserved to be approved via an appropriate planning condition. The public art will include focus on the archaeological story through inspiring public interest in the Roman town of Titchmarsh which could ultimately be interpreted through different forms of artwork, bringing benefits in relation to community engagement, co-design and place making. Further details in relation to archaeology are detailed below within the planning assessment section (Section 6.0).

6.42 In respect of sustainable design, the ES chapter 'Climate Change' and accompanying Sustainability Statement set out the measures and sustainable design features which will be adopted to ensure the proposed buildings are constructed to a high level of sustainability. This includes targeting BREEAM 'Excellent'. The design work is being shaped by the UK Green Building Council performance standards. The building specification has evolved to facilitate net zero ready with the following measures incorporated:

- An EPC rating of A for the offices
- An all-electric energy strategy with primary energy delivered without fossil fuels
- Air Source Heat Pumps providing heating and hot water to the main offices
- High levels of air tightness and insulation
- LED lighting throughout
- Use of PV cells or other low carbon technology to provide renewable power

6.43 The scheme incorporates measures to ensure high standards of resource, energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions. As such, it is considered that the proposed development accords with JCS Policy 9 (Sustainable buildings), NPPF Section 9 (Achieving well-designed places) and the National Design Guide.

Landscape and Visual Impact

6.44 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) (March 2022) has been prepared by Nicholsons Lockhart Garratt to assess the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development. In addition, a Detailed and Wider Landscape Strategy have also been prepared to support the scheme.

6.45 From the outset the development masterplan process has followed a landscape and environmental led approach. A comprehensive and wide-reaching landscape strategy has been developed for the Site that exceeds the applicant's required commitment with respect to Biodiversity Net Gain. A Landscape and Ecological Management Framework has also been developed to ensure all management requirements are met and intended targets achieved.

- 6.46 The initial assessment of the Site identified that its location on the edge of the Nene Valley, occupying an elevated position within the landscape, would allow wider views from the northwest and west across the valley. This highlighted the importance of good design and detailed assessment of the likely visual impact of the development, influencing not only the design and layout of the proposals but also the scale, nature and extent of the proposed landscape planting, open space areas and landscape buffers. In addition, other potential concerns, including proximity to Titchmarsh and the extensive network of Public Footpaths and Bridleways were also identified and have heavily influenced the design approach.
- 6.47 In light of this, the LVIA, accompanied by the Green Infrastructure Supporting Statement (April 2022) sets out a detailed overview of the proposed landscape mitigation measures and strategy.

Strategic Landscape Areas

- 6.48 Strategic Landscape Areas encompass key site boundaries and open space areas where the proposed landscape mitigation is considered integral to the integration of the proposed development. Mitigation in these Areas (see LVIA for further detail) will ensure they benefit from a robust landscape and green infrastructure setting, and that future phases of development will benefit from establishing mitigation measures prior to construction.

Green Corridor

- 6.49 The northern Site boundary is to be developed as a robust landscape edge and green corridor, providing enhancements in terms of connectivity, whilst providing a large area of accessible green space and ecological habitat. This will provide a dedicated pedestrian/cycle link in addition to a multi-functional space for the enjoyment of employees. This will contribute to the improvement of public accessibility and connectivity, including the provision of an enhanced link at the northern Site boundary to offer an alternative to the retained PROW.

Thrapston Gateway

- 6.50 The new access and highways' works/arrangements offer the opportunity to improve the approach from the A605. The basic design principles are set out within the Landscape Design Codes within Appendix 1 of the LVIA. The full application largely captures these requirements, though those elements falling within the outline part of the application will be designed in accordance with these principles, though balanced with the technical requirements of the highway authority where relevant. The approach will include opportunities for public art which will contribute to a landscape design that creates an attractive and meaningful space at the gateway to Thrapston.

Amenity Landscape Areas

- 6.51 Amenity landscape areas are limited to the curtilage of the proposed units due to much of the landscape mitigation and open space area on Site intended to be dual purpose. These spaces will include linear features such as hedgerows that will create functionally linked habitats and green space for biodiversity.

Woodland Planting

- 6.52 Woodland tree and understorey planting is proposed on the Site boundaries, providing visual containment and a robust green edge to the development. This has been designed to incorporate a variety of native tree species and varying heights and scales.

Designing for Climate Resilience

- 6.53 The proposed development has considered Building with Nature Standards in terms of climate resilience when selecting woodland tree and shrub species on-Site.

Meadow Grassland

- 6.54 The majority of the strategic landscape areas will be maintained as meadow grassland, set out in detail in the Detailed Planting Plan – see LVIA Appendix 2. Consideration has also been given to the existing soil conditions on-Site.

Wetland Habitat and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

- 6.55 A network of attenuation ponds/basins and swales are proposed along the northern Site boundary. These will allow for the creation of wetland and seasonally wet ecological habitat and landscape features, providing opportunities for wet meadow planting and marginal planting that is not only aesthetically pleasing but which also provide further opportunities for wildlife.
- 6.56 A further wetland area is proposed between Plots 2 and 3 and along a section of the southern Site boundary, where the existing drainage ditches are to be realigned and incorporated into the scheme. Further planting, of a similar nature that are described above, will provide further opportunities for wildlife and the creation of an attractive and varied green space.

Offsite Land Enhancements

- 6.57 IM Properties are currently exploring options for the use of the off-site land for landscape mitigation purposes, in addition to other contributions such as Biodiversity Net Gain. This will help contribute to a multifunctional scheme that will not only deliver Net Gain, but additional environmental benefits, such as carbon storage, air and water quality enhancements, public access, and informal recreation amenities.
- 6.58 With regard to the effect of the proposals upon the character of the Site and its immediate setting, it is considered that the proposals will constitute a **Moderate** effect overall.
- 6.59 The LVIA identifies that the proposed development, if left unmitigated, would give rise to a number of potential significant adverse effect, constituting a demonstrable adverse impact in landscape and visual terms. Through mitigation and compensation measures, discussion with the Council, and commitment to long-term, specific management, it is considered that the development can be completed in a manner which significantly reduces these adverse landscape and visual effects. It is therefore considered that the proposed development can be successfully integrated into the receiving landscape. As such, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the NPPF, JCS Policy 3 (Landscape Character) and JCS Policy 19 (The delivery of green infrastructure).

Transport and Highways

- 6.60 In accordance with paragraph 113 of the NPPF, a Transport Assessment (TA) and Framework Travel Plan are submitted alongside the planning application. The traffic and access effects of the proposed development during the construction and operational phases have been modelled and assessed within the TA.
- 6.61 Chapter 6 of the ES considers the likely significant environmental effects arising from the proposed development and concludes that the scheme does not result in any significant adverse residual transport effects.
- 6.62 The NPPF recognises that sustainable transport has an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development. Paragraph 111 states 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.
- 6.63 The TA concludes that subject to appropriate access and mitigation works the impact of the development will not result in an unacceptable impact on the operation of the local road

network which accords with paragraph 111 of the NPPF. In summary highways mitigation measures will include the following:

- A new toucan crossing on the A605 north of the site access roundabout.
- Capacity enhancement works to the A605 corridor including improvements to the approaches and partial signalisation of A14 J13, widening of the A605 between Huntingdon Road and A14 J13, including works to the A605/ Huntingdon Road roundabout and approaches.

6.64 In addition, access improvements include:

- Increasing the size of the current roundabout in addition to providing an additional eastern arm to provide access to and from the site. The roundabout will also be slightly realigned to the east to improve approach visibility from the south and to reduce the existing adverse camber.
- There will be a new 3m footway/ cycleway from the site across the A605 via either the Toucan crossing or northern splitter island of the roundabout which will continue south into and along Oundle Road. It will then reduce to a 2m footway with cyclists transitioning to the carriageway within the 30mph zone.
- There will be a new footway/ cycleway through the landscaped area to the north of the development connecting the A605 and Islington. This will provide a usable route for pedestrians and cyclists in addition to the existing public right of way network. This route will connect to the Toucan crossing providing access to the other facilities set out above.

6.65 The scope of the TA was issued to the Local Planning Authority as part of the Environmental Impact Scoping Process. This work was shared and agreed with North Northamptonshire County Council and National Highways. As part of the pre-application discussions, the Local Highway Authority confirmed that they had no in principle objection to the proposed site.

6.66 As a starting point, the TA based likely traffic generation on surveys of existing established similar users. This has then been distributed on to the highway network using both data from the Census and local traffic counts. At a strategic level, through agreement with NH and NNCC, the development transport impacts have firstly been considered using the County Council's wider Strategic Traffic Model. Following the strategic work, a more detailed micro-simulation model is being built for the main area of Thrapston. It is anticipated the strategic and local modelling work will validate the finding and conclusions of this TA.

- 6.67 The Site has been designed to accommodate access by sustainable modes with an internal pedestrian and cycleway provided alongside the new development spine road. The internal road will be designed to accommodate public transport with a new turning area and bus shelter.
- 6.68 The road accident data record within the vicinity of the site has been analysed. This shows no significant issues.
- 6.69 The current car parking shown on both Illustrative Masterplans (option 1 and option 2) is indicative and based on market requirements and experience of the Applicant. However, the final car parking numbers and requirements (including levels of electrical vehicle charging points) will be agreed during the future Reserved Matters Application. 501 car parking spaces 200 cycle spaces are proposed for Unit 1 based on the occupier requirements for the DSV facility.
- 6.70 Overall, the Transport Assessment considers the impacts and appropriateness of the development in line with the wider policy tests set out in the NPPF. The conclusion of that assessment is that the additional traffic associated with the proposed development would not have a material adverse impact on the safety or operation of the local road network, and, therefore, and applying paragraph 111 of the NPPF, the transports impacts of the development will not be remotely "severe" in NPPF terms and, as such, there are no justifiable reasons for refusal of the proposed development on highway grounds.
- 6.71 The Framework Travel Plan submitted in support of the accompanying planning application also sets out the following overarching sustainable transport measures, which include:
- Provide a 3m wide segregated shared footpath and cycleway along the southern side of the access road;
 - Provide a new signalised crossing at the A605/ Oundle Road roundabout;
 - Provide a new footway/ cycleway connection along the northern site boundary;
 - Cycle parking;
 - Changing facilities and lockers to be provided in each unit;
 - Car sharing scheme;
 - Bike buddy scheme;
 - Smart technology – staff access to electronic travel pack and other travel and useful information;
 - Travel information notice boards; and
 - Appoint Travel Plan Coordinator.

6.72 On the basis of the above analysis and that the proposed scheme will promote and encourage sustainable modes of transport, it is considered that the proposed development complies with Section 9 of the NPPF, and JCS Policies 10, 11 and 24.

Built Heritage

6.73 Built Heritage impacts have been assessed through Chapter 10 of the ES. This is accompanied by a Heritage Assessment prepared by Turley Heritage which forms a technical appendix to the ES.

6.74 There are no designated heritage assets within the site. However, there are a number of designated heritage assets within the surrounding area.

6.75 Based on the assessment of the heritage assets (designated and non-designated) with the potential to be affected by the Proposed Scheme, it is concluded that there would be no harm to Thrapston Conservation Area, Islip Conservation Area or the grade II listed buildings within Titchmarsh.

6.76 The Built Heritage assessment considers that the Proposed Scheme would cause a degree of 'less than substantial harm' in NPPF terms to the setting and significance of the Titchmarsh Conservation Area, Grade I listed Church of St Mary, and the scheduled remains of Titchmarsh Castle and moated site. Within the 'less than substantial harm' NPPF scale, the built heritage assessment concludes that it is very low and low 'less than substantial harm' to the setting and significance of the scheduled remains and Church of St Mary (respectively), and moderate "less than substantial harm" to the setting and significance of Titchmarsh Conservation Area Paragraph 202 of the NPPF is therefore engaged which states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm (which attracts considerable importance and weight in the planning balance) should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

6.77 The public benefits of the proposal which individually and collectively weight heavily in favour of the proposal include the following:

- (a) In the construction phase:
 - (i) 500 full-time equivalent (FTE) gross jobs;
 - (ii) 484 FTE indirect jobs generated from the supply chain;
 - (iii) £53 million gross value added per annum during the construction phase;

- (b) In the operational phase:
- (i) 2,090 direct (gross) FTE jobs;
 - (ii) 2,776 net additional employed residents (direct, indirect and induced) in North Northamptonshire;
 - (iii) £118.3 million annual contribution to GVA within North Northamptonshire;
 - (iv) Biodiversity net gain through the establishment of green infrastructure and blue infrastructure, the creation of wetland habits and enhanced surface water runoff, and new and enhanced landscape character;
 - (v) Enhanced accessibility through access to open spaces, high quality permissive path network;
 - (vi) Provision of work experience and training opportunities including engagement with local businesses to maximise contract and supplier opportunities locally; and support local schools, colleges, and universities to inspire young people to consider careers in the construction and built environment sectors;
 - (vii) Construction of Thrapston Business Park would be net zero carbon (excluding Development Plot 1). Carbon emissions from the build would be offset as part of an approved and certified offsetting scheme. A rating of BREEAM 'Excellent' is also being targeted, with a minimum rating of 'Very Good'.;
 - (viii) Provision of a range of flexible employment units and uses, including smaller units in response to local demand for employment space.

6.78 When carrying out the paragraph 202 NPPF balance, paragraph 18a-020-20190723 of the PPG confirms that the very considerable public benefits of the proposal may be balanced against the identified less than substantial heritage harm and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the NPPF.

6.79 A review of the very considerable public benefits of the proposed scheme and the balancing of the identified heritage harm with those significant public benefits as required by paragraph 202 of the NPPF is undertaken in Section 6.0. In summary, the proposed development will deliver substantial economic benefits including the retention and creation of jobs, environmental benefits with improvements in local green infrastructure and meeting aspirations for biodiversity and environmental net gain. It is considered that the public benefits of the scheme outweigh the less than substantial harm in accordance with Policy 202 of the NPPF and JCS Policy 2.

Archaeology

- 6.80 A suite of archaeological work has been carried out to fully inform the design of the proposed scheme, the planning application and required mitigation. This work has included a desk-based assessment, taking into account previous fieldwork undertaken on Titchmarsh Roman town, a full geophysical survey of all land within the Site, and trial trench archaeological evaluation. The results of this work are reported within the Archaeology Chapter (Chapter 11) of the ES. Overall, the ES concluded that there are no likely significant effects for archaeology.
- 6.81 The majority of the Site is not of archaeological interest, but within the north-west corner of the Site are extensive below ground remains of the margins of the Roman town, including a ditched trackway which forms the spine of a Roman 'ladder settlement' and outlying settlement enclosures. Evidence has been found of Roman activity from predominantly the 1st to 3rd centuries AD, including compacted stone surfaces and some evidence for small-scale metalworking.
- 6.82 JCS Policy 2 (Historic Environment) states that "*Proposals should conserve, and where possible, enhance the heritage significance and setting of an asset or group of heritage assets in a manner commensurate to its significance*" and that "*Where loss of historic features or archaeological remains is unavoidable and justified, provision should be made for recording and the production of a suitable archive and report*". Further to any planning permission for the proposed development, provision will be made for the appropriate treatment of archaeological assets that will be lost. Archaeological remains identified within the Site will be excavated and recorded to conserve its interest, with provision made for public outreach and the enhancement of the social value of the development.
- 6.83 The effects of the proposed development on the archaeological remains could be mitigated in part through the information gained from their excavation and recording with this scope of this work to be defined by a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to be submitted and agreed by NNC to be secured by a suitably worded planning condition. As such, it is considered that the proposed development accords with JCS Policy 2.

Trees

- 6.84 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared by Nicholsons Lockhart Garratt. As part of this assessment, a tree survey was carried out in accordance with the guidelines provided in BS5837 (2012). This survey identified a total of 52 trees, 20 groups and 14 hedgerows. The proposed development will require the removal of 16 trees, 4 hedgerows and 1 group. It is also proposed that 4 hedgerows and 1 group will be partially removed. No ancient or veteran trees are present on or adjacent to the Site.

- 6.85 Most trees to be removed are assessed as having a low Arboricultural quality, with four being of moderate quality and two being unsuitable for retention. These trees are proposed for removal because they are located within the footprint of the proposed built floorspace and infrastructure.
- 6.86 It is proposed that all retained trees within, or directly adjacent to the Site, will be protected by tree protective fencing. These measures will ensure that retained trees within the site are not adversely impacted as a direct result of the proposal.
- 6.87 Tree planting (see paragraphs 6.44 – 6.59) has been proposed to mitigate the loss of trees as a direct result of this proposal and to increase tree cover across the sites while linking existing green corridors. Furthermore, those trees of important landscape, historic, cultural, green infrastructure and ecological benefit will be retained and protected in accordance with BS5837:2012 recommendations.
- 6.88 As such, it is considered that the proposed development accords with Section 15 of the NPPF, JCS Policies 3, 4, 19 and Biodiversity SPD.

Flood Risk

- 6.89 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared by Complete Design Partnership Ltd.
- 6.90 The FRA is carried out in accordance with BS 8533:2011, NPPF, PPG, Environment Agency (EA) Advice for Development and following the guidance in CIRIA C624, C697 & C753 and Northamptonshire LLFA Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage in Northamptonshire.
- 6.91 The Site is entirely within Flood Zone 1 for flooding from rivers or the sea and the majority of the Site is generally at a very low risk of surface water flooding. Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) will be used as part of the drainage strategy. SUDS features will be incorporated into the drainage design, including limiting discharge from the site to the equivalent mean annual greenfield runoff rate. Attenuated flows will be stored on the main site in a series of ponds, swales, above ground balancing ponds, pipes and below ground storage where appropriate.
- 6.92 The Site is not located in the Upper Nene catchment the surface water drainage will therefore be designed for the 1 in 100-year event plus 40% allowance for climate change.
- 6.93 The FRA concludes that the risk of flooding from fluvial, pluvial, groundwater and tidal sources are low. It is considered that the proposed development, with the inclusion of the SuDS

drainage systems will not increase the risk of surface water flooding in the wider catchment. As such, with these measures in place there is considered to be no residual flood risk to be mitigated for the proposed development. On this basis, the proposed development complies with the NPPF, PPG and JCS Policy 5.

Noise and Vibration

- 6.94 The effects of potential noise and vibration emissions from the proposed development are assessed in Chapter 8 of the ES. The assessment considered the noise and vibration effects from construction works/activities on-site as well as noise generated by construction traffic. Furthermore, the assessment considered noise generated by the operation of scheme (i.e., loading and unloading activities within service yards), from traffic on the road network associated with the Proposed Scheme and noise from building services and plant.
- 6.95 In terms of construction noise, the impacts will only be limited and occur for a short period of time given the nature of the works and likely timescales to complete the works.
- 6.96 The operation of the proposed development includes elements that will generate noise (contained principally to the Development Plots) and for the purpose of assessing a "worst case" scenario, it was assumed that these activities would be located at the closest point to identified receptors. Operational noise will be mitigated through planning conditions, other than road traffic where any increases in noise levels are assessed within the planning balance.

Lighting

- 6.97 A Lighting Impact Assessment Baseline Survey prepared by Hoare Lea has been submitted, along with Chapter 13 of the ES.
- 6.98 The lighting assessment considered the effects of the increase in light pollution arising from temporary lighting associated with construction and new permanent lighting required for the operation of the Proposed Scheme.
- 6.99 During construction, temporary lighting required to complete works (especially in the winter months when daylight hours are reduced) can result in light pollution experienced by nearby receptors, include glare to road users cause by poorly sited and angled lighting. Nonetheless, all construction lighting will adhere to strict measures, in line with relevant guidance and standards to ensure that light pollution is minimised. The specific control measures will be controlled through the CEMP. With such measures in place the effects of light pollution from temporary construction lighting were not considered to be significant within the ES.

6.100 Lighting design principles have been included as part of a lighting strategy informed by current British Standards and other industry standard guidance. These standards and guidance require the appropriate control of operational lighting to ensure only areas required to be lit are lit. This specification is met through the careful selection of lighting, consideration of placement, mounting and orientation. With such measures in place, it was identified that the scheme would not generate significant effects during operation, with respect to light pollution, either to local residents or road users.

Ecology

6.101 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal along with the below background studies have been prepared by Middlemarch Environmental to inform Chapter 12 of the ES comprising:

- Great Crested Newt Survey;
- Winter Bird Survey;
- Breeding Bird Survey;
- Preliminary Ground Level Bat Roost Assessment of Trees;
- Dusk Emergence and Dawn Re-Entry Bat Surveys;
- Bat Activity Surveys;
- Badger Survey;
- Hedgerow Regulations (1997) Assessment;
- Foraging Wetland Bird Survey;
- Badger Bait Marking Survey; and
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.

6.102 A Framework Ecological Mitigation Strategy has also been prepared by Middlemarch Environmental. Much of the mitigation has been designed to ensure the long-term retention of existing key habitats and to create linking wildlife corridors through and around the site, allowing species movement into the wider landscape. In addition, the Wider Landscape Strategy identifies scope for offsite habitats to be enhanced and new habitats to be created, including a wetland habitat corridor and woodland/scrub/mosaic habitat.

6.103 Initial calculations indicate that, even at the early stage of design a significant BNG can be achieved, IM Properties are committing to achieving a minimum of 30% BNG.

6.104 The document has also identified measures to ensure the long-term protection of notable species which have either been recorded at or near to the site, or for which suitable habitats are present within the site. These species and species groups comprise bats, terrestrial mammals, herpetofauna and birds.

6.105 A Shadow HRA has been undertaken. Evidence to support the Council at Stage 1 of Habitats Regulations Assessment (Screening) has been detailed and it is concluded (in the absence of mitigation) that the proposed development had the potential to result in likely significant impacts upon the qualify features of the Upper Nene Gravel Pits SPA and the Upper Nene Gravel Pits Ramsar site during its construction and operational phases due to:

- Construction Phase: Disturbance to foraging and roosting of the qualifying bird species (visual, acoustic, light),
- Construction Phase: Accidental pollution event (surface water-runoff), and
- Operational Phase: Disturbance to foraging and roosting of the qualifying bird species (visual, acoustic).

6.106 However, evidence to support the competent authority at Stage 2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) has robustly demonstrated that, with appropriate mitigation measures in place, the proposed development will not result in a likely significant effect upon the qualifying bird species, or the habitats upon which qualifying species rely, or prevent or impede the delivery of the conservation objectives of the European sites under consideration.

6.107 On the basis that mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed to protect local biodiversity, it is considered that the proposals accord with JCS Policy 4 and relevant elements of JCS Policy 3 along with general place-shaping and design policies. IM Properties is delivering a greater than 10% net gain within the Site and the rest through the proposals for the off-site land.

Energy and Sustainability

6.108 NPPF paragraph 8 seeks to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment. The proposed development delivers a number of environmental benefits. IM Properties is committed to delivering a development that supports North Northamptonshire on its trajectory to net zero. They will deliver a sustainable employment park which incorporates a range of sustainable design measures to minimise resource use, provide resilience to climate change, minimise waste and encourage recycling opportunities.

6.109 A Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Statement has been prepared by Turley, along with Chapter 16 of the ES which reports the outcome of the assessment of likely significant environmental effects arising from the proposed scheme in relation to Climate Change.

- 6.110 As a commitment to sustainable design, all Units are being designed to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating (2018), with a minimum rating of 'Very Good'. A BREEAM pre-assessment has been prepared setting out a potential route to achieve an Excellent score. This forms Appendix 1 of the Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Statement.
- 6.111 The supporting Sustainability Statement concludes that the proposed development has been designed to respond positively to national and local planning policy, incorporating measures to deliver social and economic benefits, whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment where possible. This includes the consideration of measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.
- 6.112 In recognition of climate emergency, the development will incorporate a range of measures to reduce carbon emissions, mitigate the effects of climate change, and to ensure the long-term resilience of the development to the effects of climate change. These measures include:
- Achievement of a highly energy efficient building for the detailed element of the application which exceeds local policy requirements. Unit 1 will exceed the FBS 2021 and includes solar PV to provide 10% of energy demand from renewables.
 - All Units will achieve an EPC rating of A, putting them in the top 3% of all non-domestic buildings in the UK.
 - An LCA has been undertaken for all Units, demonstrating how the embodied carbon of key development materials has been considered in the development to achieve a reduction in embodied carbon during the construction of the building.
 - Targeting 'Net Zero Ready' for the outline element of the application.
 - Reduced carbon emissions through the use of energy hierarchy, using a fabric first approach to design to reduce energy demand, helping mitigate the effects of climate change; and
 - Incorporation of site wide SuDS including attenuation storage to ensure that post development surface water-run off is no higher than pre-development run-off for the 1 in 100-year storm event plus a 40% allowance for climate change.
- 6.113 Design measures are also included within the development to protect and enhance the local environment. This includes a design which will consider the embodied carbon associated with construction material and the provision of measures through construction and operation of the

site to reduce pollution, minimise waste and encourage recycling. Sustainable and active modes of travel are also encouraged.

- 6.114 The effects of the release of greenhouse emissions from the construction, operation and construction and operation combined were quantitatively assessed as part of the ES. Collectively, the environmental effects were not considered to be significant.
- 6.115 On the above basis, it is concluded that the proposed development complies with Policy 9 of the JCS.

7.0 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND CONDITIONS

Planning Obligations

- 7.0 The proposed development will be subject to a series of planning obligation to ensure it is acceptable in planning terms. Planning and highway transport obligations will be delivered through appropriate legal agreements, including a Section 106 agreement and Section 278 and Section 38 Agreements with NCC and National Highways.
- 7.1 Paragraph 57 of the NPPF (as set out in Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010) states that planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests: a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; b) directly related to the development; and c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development Planning obligations are also covered in the Developer Contributions SPD (2006) (produced by ENC).
- 7.2 It is anticipated that the following potential planning obligations will be required:
- Off-Site Highways Improvements
 - Air Quality Monitoring
 - Public Transport Enhancements
 - Employment and Skills Training Plan (construction and operational phase)
 - Net Zero Carbon Construction (excluding Plot 1)
 - Framework Ecological Mitigation Strategy
 - Framework Travel Plan and Occupier Travel Plans
 - A detailed scheme to deliver the biodiversity net gain

Planning Conditions

- 7.3 The proposed development will also give rise to a series of planning conditions to ensure that it is acceptable in planning terms. These will be discussed in further detail with the Council and relevant stakeholders during the determination period.
- 7.4 Paragraph 56 of the NPPF states that planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise, and reasonable in all other respects.
- 7.5 Given this is a hybrid planning application, combining full and outline elements, it is suggested that conditions are structured to respond specifically to these separate aspects of the planning

permission. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF goes onto state that pre-commencement conditions should be avoided unless there is a clear justification. This is important to allow site enabling and infrastructure works to commence as soon as possible following the grant of planning permission.

7.6 Chapter 18 of the ES sets out a schedule of mitigation measures identified to manage and reduce likely significant environmental effects. It is important that, where necessary, these mitigation measures are secured through appropriately worded planning conditions.

7.7 In addition to the time limit and approved plans/documents, it is anticipated that conditions may be necessary in relation to the approval of the following details, amongst others:

- Public Arts Strategy
- Reserved Matters Design Guide (for Outline only)
- Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points
- BREEAM target of 'Excellent' with a minimum of 'Very Good'.
- Waste Management Strategy
- Innovation Centre maximum unit size
- Highway Works Implementation including vehicular access, internal access, parking provision and pedestrian/cycle access
- Strategic Landscaping and Gateway Design – taking account of built heritage, biodiversity enhancement, and visual impact
- Lighting Principles
- Energy and Sustainability Strategy
- Waste Provisions
- Construction Environmental Management Plan – including traffic management, dust management, air quality, noise management, habitat management, water and utility management, contamination, waste and soil management, and lighting.
- Earthworks
- Remediation Strategy
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), to include Building with Nature benchmark and Biodiversity Net Gain
- Archaeology
- Full details of the landscaping within the adopted highway boundary (site entrance)

7.8 IM Properties would welcome further early discussions with the Council to agree planning conditions and obligations at an early stage during the determination period to ensure the delivery of development is not delayed in accordance with paragraph 56 of the NPPF.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This Statement has been prepared to support a hybrid planning application to North Northamptonshire Council for a proposed employment park (Use Classes B2, B8 and E) being put forward by IM Properties. The description of development is as follows:

“Hybrid planning application comprising: Full planning application for the construction of a storage and distribution unit (Development Plot 1) (Use Class B8) with ancillary offices (Use Class E); creation of a principal estate road (including bus stop) and new access from the A605; construction and emergency access; highways improvements to Huntingdon Road and A605 roundabout and at Junction 13 of the A14; strategic green infrastructure; vehicular and cycle parking; pedestrian infrastructure; hardstanding; circulation areas; lighting infrastructure and all other ancillary, enabling and associated works including landscaping, drainage, earthworks, sub-station and boundary treatment.

Outline planning application with all matters reserved for an employment park comprising Class B2, B8 and E uses with ancillary offices; creation of a new access from Oundle Road; vehicular and cycle parking; pedestrian infrastructure; hardstanding; circulation areas; lighting infrastructure and all other ancillary, enabling and associated works including landscaping, drainage, earthworks and boundary treatment.”.

- 8.2 The proposed development would be known as the ‘Thrapston Business Park’ and create a well-designed and highly sustainable employment park north of the A14 at Thrapston, located close to Junction 13. The development benefit from good access to the strategic road network.
- 8.3 Logistics is a sectoral strength and opportunity for North Northamptonshire and demand for floorspace is outstripping supply, in the East Northamptonshire Area. There is committed occupier interest in the Site. It has been confirmed that DSV, a global transport and logistics business, propose to occupy Unit 1. DSV currently operate in the East Northamptonshire Area, including at Halden’s Parkway at Thrapston. The Site lies adjacent to Halden’s Parkway employment area.

- 8.4 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004, sets out the planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This planning statement considers the principal planning issues in the context of the relevant adopted planning policies and material considerations outlined in Section 5.0.
- 8.5 The Development Plan comprises the Local Plan Part 1 - The North Northamptonshire Joint Core (JCS) (adopted July 2016), Local Plan Part 2 - Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP) (adopted July 2011), and the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (adopted July 2017).
- 8.6 It is recognised that the Site is not allocated in the JCS, although this plan does provide a positive platform for the planning application. The JCS has an urban focus, supporting the principle of development in urban areas including Thrapston; identified as a Market Town. It also supports development that delivers jobs growth and economic prosperity, including proposals for logistics. The JCS also confirms that the list of allocated/strategic sites is not exhaustive and proposals that deliver jobs growth and economic prosperity will be positively considered subject to compliance with the development plan (paragraph 8.16).
- 8.7 The Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP), Local Plan Part 2, provides support for the relocation of existing businesses around Thrapston on sites that are adjacent to the existing built-up area (Policy THR4). The emerging East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2, which will replace the RNOTP, similarly provides support for existing businesses that need to relocate or expand on sites adjacent to the existing built-up area (Policy EN20).
- 8.8 The proposed development has been assessed through the Planning Assessment (Section 6.0) looking at economic need, economic benefits, design, landscape and visual impact, transport, and highways, built heritage, archaeology, noise and vibration, lighting, flood risk, ecology, and energy and sustainability. Based on this assessment, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the development plan as a whole, together with other material considerations which weigh in favour of the planning proposal.
- 8.9 These other material considerations include the emerging East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 and in particular, Policy EN20, the NPPF, PPG, National Design Guide, and the Biodiversity SPD.
- 8.10 As set out within this Planning Statement, it is acknowledged that there is some residual harm in relation to noise, landscape, and heritage.

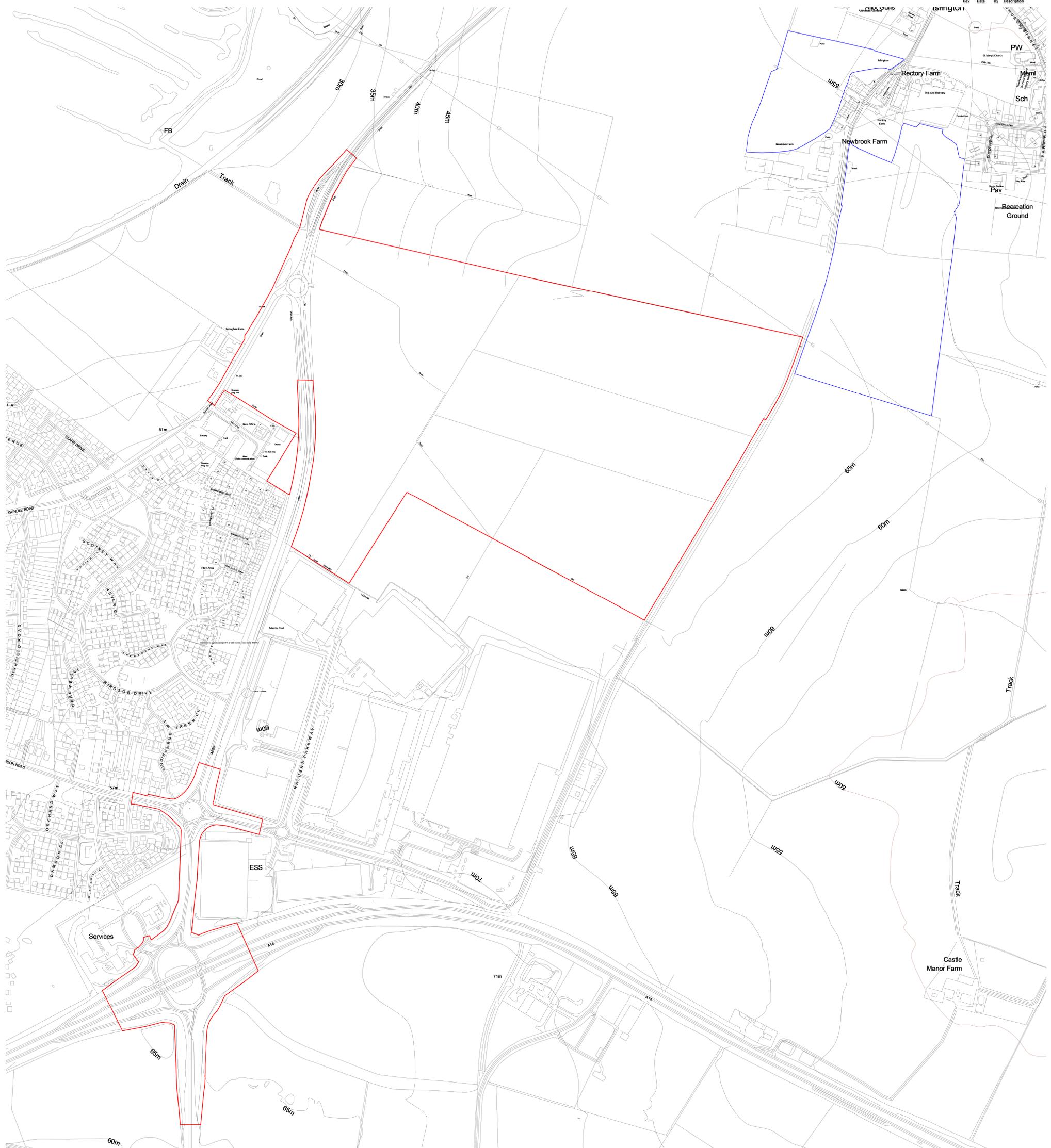
- 8.11 In terms of noise and vibration harm, the impacts will only be limited and occur for a short period of time given the nature of the works and likely timescales to complete the works. The elements of the proposed development set to generate noise (contained principally to the Development Plots), and for the purpose of assessing a “worst case” scenario, it was assumed that these activities would be located at the closest point to identified receptors. In light of this, we consider that the significant benefits of the proposed development outweigh the temporary impacts created from this harm.
- 8.12 In terms of landscape harm, the LVIA identifies that the proposed development, if left unmitigated, would give rise to a number of potential significant adverse effect, constituting a demonstrable adverse impact in landscape and visual terms. Through mitigation and compensation measures, discussion with the Council, and commitment to long-term, specific management, it is considered that the development can be completed in a manner which significantly reduces these adverse landscape and visual effects. It is therefore considered that the proposed development can be successfully integrated into the receiving landscape. As such, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the NPPF, JCS Policy 3 (Landscape Character) and JCS Policy 19 (The delivery of green infrastructure).
- 8.13 In terms of heritage harm, less than substantial harm has been identified to Titchmarsh Conservation Area, the Grade I listed Church of St Mary, and scheduled remains of Titchmarsh Castle and moated site. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF is therefore engaged which states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. We consider that there are significant public benefits from the proposed development which outweigh this harm; see below.
- 8.14 This residual harm set out above should be weighed against the benefits arising from the proposed development, outlined below. The proposals will deliver significant economic, social and environmental benefits in line with Paragraph 8 of the NPPF and the definition of sustainable development. The proposed development will deliver the following significant benefits.
- IM Properties is committed to delivering a development that is fit for the future and supports North Northamptonshire on its trajectory to net zero. Construction of Thrapston Business Park would be net zero carbon (excluding Development Plot 1). Carbon emissions from the construction would be offset as part of an approved and certified offsetting scheme. A rating of BREEAM ‘Excellent’ is also being targeted with a minimum rating of ‘Very Good’.

- IM Properties are working with their contractors and supply chain to provide job, work experience and training opportunities; engaging with local businesses to maximise contract and supplier opportunities locally; and support local schools, colleges, and universities to inspire young people to consider careers in the construction and built environment sectors.
- In the construction phase; 500 full-time equivalent (FTE) gross jobs, 484 FTE indirect jobs generated from the supply chain, and a £53 million contribution to productivity (GVA).
- In the operational phase; 2,090 direct (gross) FTE jobs, 2,776 net additional employed residents (direct, indirect, and induced) in North Northamptonshire, and £118.3 million annual contribution to GVA within North Northamptonshire.
- Of these 2,090 operational jobs, the proposed DSV/Unit 1 would create 722 (full time equivalent) jobs across a range of roles. The proposed development would allow DSV to operate a flagship site in North Northamptonshire where the company has been operating successfully for over 40 years. The loss of DSV to the local area would inevitably have an impact on the security of existing employment and wider benefits currently associated with its activity in the area.
- The proposed development will also help meet a significant strategic employment need, over and above DSV. Demand observed over the last 10 years is likely to be a reasonable and balanced basis for forecasting future floorspace demand. A trend rate of demand for 151,000 sqm of industrial floorspace, projected over the next 15 years, results in a need for 566 hectares of industrial land. Even if the trend rate halves after ten years, need would amount to 472 hectares.
- In the context of significant unmet employment floorspace demand, Thrapston Business Park would deliver a high-quality employment park that directly responds to the full spectrum of market demand from starter units to meet localised need to 'mid box' and 'big box' units to deliver much needed employment space. The proposed Innovation Centre is an example where start units would be provided, and flexible terms will be offered.
- Commitment to Employment and Skills Training.
- Commitment to the Building with Nature benchmark.
- Opportunities to deliver a public arts strategy as part of the proposed development.
- Commitment to achieving a minimum of 30% biodiversity net gain.

- Enhancing public access in the area by providing new and improved links through green spaces, and off-site pedestrian links to improve accessibility and support health and wellbeing.
- Supporting and enhancing existing bus services to encourage more sustainable modes of travel.

8.15 In conclusion, the proposed development is in accordance with the development plan as a whole and is supported by other material considerations, including the delivery of significant of the economic, social, and environmental objectives of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF. We therefore ask that the planning application should be approved without delay, subject to appropriate planning conditions and planning obligations.

APPENDIX 1
PLANNING BOUNDARY PLAN



1 Composite Planning Application Boundary
1 : 2500

- Planning Boundary
58.30 ha || 144.08 Ac
- Offsite Land
15.46 ha || 38.22 Ac



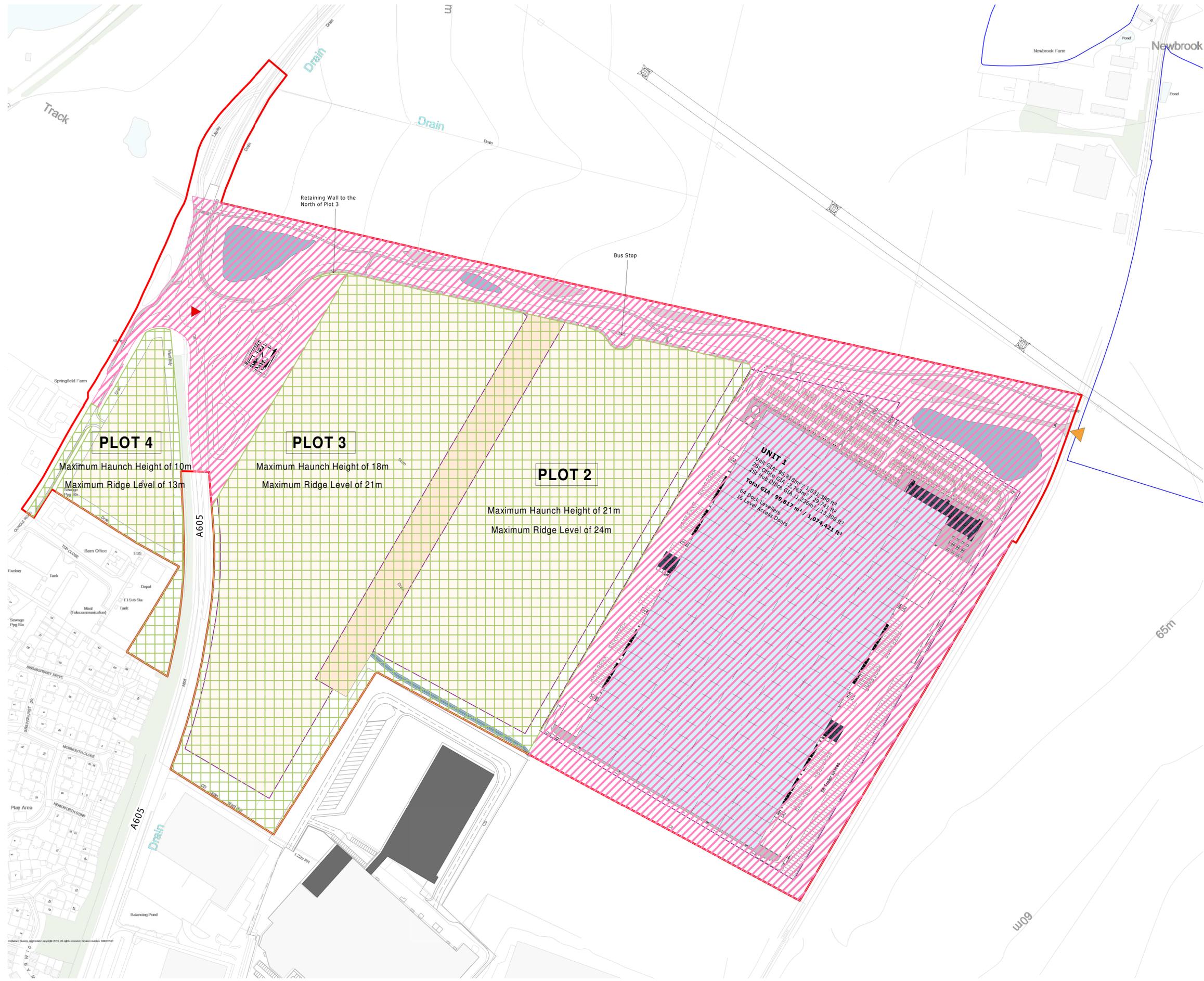
SGP
Architects + Masterplanners
Waterfront House
23 Smith Way
Grove Park
Endorby
Leicester LE19 1SX
t: +44 (0)116 247 0557
www.stephengeorge.co.uk
Thrapston, A605



Drawing Name:	Planning Application Boundary
Drawing Stage:	PLANNING
Status:	04
SGP File Ref:	19-282-M12
SGP Project No.:	19-282-05-12-21
SGP Issue No.:	AZ 18MS Au @ A1
Drawing Number:	19-282-SGP-XX-XX-DR-A-11101
Project Code:	Originator Volume Layer Type Role Number

Red Line Boundary based on OS Data and NOT confirmed as the Legal Boundary. This drawing, the works and concepts depicted are copyright of Stephen George + Partners LLP and may not be reproduced or made use of, either directly or indirectly without express written consent. All heights, levels, sizes and dimensions to be checked on site before any work is put to hand.

APPENDIX 2
FULL/OUTLINE PLAN



Rev	Date	By	Description
-----	------	----	-------------

- Application Boundary
- Area of Full Planning Application
- Area of Outline Planning Application
- Infrastructure Zone
- Primary Access
- Construction/Emergency access

For detailed highways information please refer to separate drawings

For illustrative purposes



SGP

Architects + Masterplanners

Waterfront House
2a Smith Way
Grove Park
Enderby
Leicester LE19 1SX

t: +44 (0)116 247 0557

www.stephengeorge.co.uk

Thrapston, A605

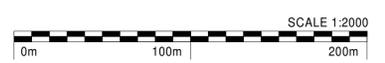
Drawing Name:
Full/Outline Plan

Drawing Stage: PLANNING
Suitability: S4

SGP File Ref: 19-282-M012
19-282 22/02/2022 AZ MMS As @A1
SGP Project No: Date: Drawn: Team: Indicated: Rev:

Drawing Number:
19-282 - SGP - XX - XX - DR - A - 131101
Project Code Originator Volume Level Type Role Number

1 Full/Outline Plan
1 : 2000



This drawing, the works and concepts depicted are copyright of Stephen George + Partners LLP and may not be reproduced or made use of, either directly or indirectly without express written consent. Do not scale off this drawing. All heights, levels, sizes and dimensions to be checked on site before any work is put to hand.

APPENDIX 3
THRAPSTON PUBLIC ARTS STRATEGY

Thrapston Public Arts Strategy

Whilst North Northamptonshire's policy framework doesn't incorporate any Public Art specific requirements, IM Properties recognises that there is an opportunity to deliver a public arts strategy as part of the proposed development. The walking route through the northern part of the site provides a great opportunity for members of the public to interact with the site and potential installations.

The technical work undertaken to date, and pre-application discussions with officers have highlighted an opportunity to develop and incorporate a public arts strategy, which may be based around a number of key themes.

Whilst the detail of the strategy will be reserved to be approved via a planning condition, the team have been giving some early consideration to the potential themes which a future strategy may develop around. One such theme is the archaeological potential of the site.

The Archaeological Story

Archaeological geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation at the application site has identified archaeological remains such as ceramic shards, coins, glass fragments and brick pieces, concluded as being of regional importance. The findings relate primarily to the north-west corner of the site, fronting the A605, which is believed to be the edge of the Roman town of Titchmarsh.

The Roman town of Titchmarsh lies nearly a kilometre to the west of the present village. It was one of a group of settlements located at intervals along the Nene Valley and lay at an important crossing over the River Nene, and also at the junction of two roads: Gartree Road, a Roman road from Leicester to Huntingdon; and the Roman road from Peterborough to Irchester. The town would have lay within a wider agricultural landscape, with farmers living in extended family groups in small farmsteads, keeping cattle, sheep and goats, and growing crops of wheat, spelt, barley and cabbage.

It is most likely that the location of the town made for a convenient stopping point, a place to trade, and perhaps for the Roman authorities to control the passage of goods. The town would have served as a convenient marketplace for the farmers, a commercial centre, with places for travellers to stay, and Roman shrines for people to make offerings to the gods to ensure their continued safe journey. It's likely that the settlement would have been characterised mostly by rectangular wooden buildings, with adjoining enclosures for small-scale industrial activity such as metalworking, perhaps a blacksmith to shoe horses and repair harnesses.

In the 4th century AD, the town was abandoned. By the early Saxon period the settlement had relocated to the current village of Titchmarsh, as well as Thrapston to the south; and the application site was left to revert to agriculture, with parts of the town cleared and levelled. Some earthwork remains of the Roman town most likely persisted in the surrounding countryside for some hundreds of years, reminding subsequent generations of the mark left by the Romans.

The Potential

The precise nature of the role of archaeology as part of the Public Arts Strategy will depend to some extent on the results of the excavation. However, the above extract and the accompanying technical reports highlight the opportunity to inspire public interest in the Roman town of Titchmarsh which

could ultimately be interpreted through different forms of artwork, bringing benefits in relation to community engagement, co-design and place making.

There are of course other key themes which will be explored further, such as the surrounding green infrastructure and the Nene Valley, whose significance to the locality may be able to be portrayed through public art.

Case Study: Peddimore, Birmingham City Council

Peddimore is a best-in-class employment location for national and international manufacturing and logistics businesses. Occupying a strategic position on the edge of Birmingham and close to key transport routes, it will be one of the Midlands' most important economic assets and provide excellent employment opportunities for local people from all backgrounds.

IM Properties is Birmingham City Council's development partner for the first phase of Peddimore, delivering buildings for employment on 37 hectares of the 71-hectare site, as well as building the infrastructure needed for the whole Peddimore development.

In October 2018, IM Properties agreed with Birmingham City Council a framework for Public Art development for the site, and engaged a Public Arts Consultant who has provided advice, challenge and support to ensure high quality delivery.

The process for the delivery of the Peddimore Public Art Strategy involves a number of stages, starting with local community and stakeholder consultation; feeding into developing a strategy; developing ideas; scoping and recruitment of artists; and finally, delivery of installations on site. The vision follows a clear methodology of a place-based co-designed strategy. We are currently at the recruitment stage for the Peddimore strategy, having identified opportunities to work with the street furniture on site, deliver an arts trail along the walking route, install lit pieces, and work with felled oak trees to create sculptures relevant to the site.

IM Properties experience of agreeing and delivering a Public Arts Strategy at Peddimore demonstrates an understanding of the process and a commitment to the opportunity available at Thrapston. IMP have indeed already engaged with an Arts Consultant to share ideas, and discuss potential community groups and organisations who may be interested in contributing to the strategy.

APPENDIX 4
DSV Statement



DSV – STATEMENT OF SUPPORT AND SITE REQUIREMENT SUMMARY

Introduction

1. This Statement has been prepared to provide background on DSV's proposed, subject to planning, acquisition of Unit 1 at Thrapston Business Park, as proposed on land to the east of the A605 close to Junction 13 of the A14 and immediately north of Halden's Parkway employment area. This Statement supports the hybrid planning application being submitted to North Northamptonshire Council.

DSV Business Summary

2. DSV is a Global Transport and Logistics company with its headquarters based in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Company was founded in 1974 and has since grown through acquisition and organic growth. Today, DSV has 53,000 employees in more than 90 countries around the world. DSV is listed on NASDAQ Copenhagen (Denmark) and included in the C25 index as one of the 25 most actively traded shares on the Copenhagen stock exchange.
3. DSV is organised into three divisions offering a complete range of services to support customers entire supply chain. The three divisions are as follows:
 - Air/Sea – Offering worldwide transportation by air and sea;
 - Road – Offering transportation by road and rail primarily in Europe; and
 - Solutions – Offering warehousing and logistics services.
4. DSV is present in the UK market for all three divisions and have developed a substantial presence as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 DSV Divisions and Turnover

Division	Turnover (Million)	Employees
Air/Sea	£230	454
Road	£197	1598
Solutions	£80	767
Total	£507	2819

DSV Financial Summary

5. In 2021 the annual revenue of DSV amounted to DKK 182.3 billion (+58.6%), and the gross profit was DKK 37.6 billion (+32.7%).
6. DSV actively pursue profitable growth, through organic growth of existing business and an active acquisition approach. Measured by revenue and profit margins DSV is among the largest and most profitable operators in the industry. This gives DSV a strong market position and foundation for continuously growing its business above market level in all markets where it operates.

Corporate Responsibility

7. DSV is committed to being a responsible business partner and an active participant in the global community. As the world's third-largest transport and logistics company, DSV strives to hold a strong and responsible position on environmental, social and governance issues. These duties include helping combat climate change by moving the industry towards more sustainable practices.
8. In close cooperation with the Executive Board, the Board of Directors is responsible for setting the direction, shaping the strategy and determining our targets for each area. In this work, DSV are guided by the commitment the company has to fulfilling and promoting the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Global Compact's Ten Principles. By committing to the UN Global Compact, DSV applies the 17 UN SDGs as a framework for defining its strategies and measuring its progress.
9. DSV has a strong focus on environmental performance, social responsibility, the health and safety of employees, and solid business management and processes. Corporate responsibility at DSV is based on the following focus areas -
 - Business ethics
 - Community engagement
 - Environment
 - People

DSV North Northamptonshire Business Summary

10. DSV currently operate from three sites in North Northamptonshire – that is, Raunds, Rushden and Thrapston.
11. The annual turnover for Thrapston in 2021 was just over £14.5m.
12. At Thrapston, DSV employs approximately 200 staff within their Solutions Division at their two warehouses located at Halden's Parkway. These are both blue and white collar roles. Blue collar roles include Mechanical Handling Equipment (MHE) drivers (e.g. fork lift drivers and powered pallet trucks), non-MHE warehouse operatives (such as labelling / kitting), warehouse team leaders and supervisors, and administrators, covering such roles as customer servicing, planning, inventory management. White collar roles include application engineers, project managers and engineers, and contract and site managers.
13. The DSV business has been present in Thrapston for over 40 years, originally starting as Thrapston Warehousing Company, which was based in the centre of the town, before relocating to new facilities at Halden's Parkway.
14. DSV's current operations platform at Thrapston is too small and is fragmented across two buildings that are old and environmentally inefficient. These buildings can no longer support delivery of efficient services to DSV's customers and limit DSV's growth options, in turn limiting employment opportunities in the local area.

15. Redeveloping the existing site is not an option as the available land is too small to accommodate DSV's needs. It is therefore intended to vacate and close the existing site at the time of the move. It is expected that the existing buildings would be re-let to other occupiers given the significant demand for industrial and logistics space along the A14 corridor. This would help to both create and retain jobs in the local area.
16. DSV propose a £132m investment to create a UK flagship facility in Thrapston. The investment will increase business efficiency and offer improved amenities and facilities for employees. It will also allow space for the business to expand in a purpose-built location which places an increased emphasis on environmentally friendly construction and post construction, operationally. The development will also include a purpose-built pharmaceutical and healthcare chamber.
17. In terms of staff numbers, it is expected that the 200 current staff will be relocated, in addition to 400 new permanent staff. The new facility is expected to therefore employ 600 permanent members of staff in the Solutions Division. This excludes a number of agency staff that operate seasonally during busy periods.
18. The increase in employment that the new facility will enable will arise from securing new clients from additional capacity available at the new facility. In this respect, DSV have a healthy pipeline of interested customers which would be able to be accommodated in the facility. DSV have completed similar new build projects in the UK which have on each occasion succeeded in rapidly securing additional high-quality customers. We set out below examples of new DSV developments in the UK completed in the last 5 years -
 - Stoke (18,580 sqm (200,000 sq. feet)) completed in 2017, attracting additional customers of Fiskars, Molson Coors and Allbirds;
 - Peterborough (27,870 sqm (300,000 sq. feet)) completed in 2018, attracting additional customers of Westland and Deckers; and more recently
 - Mercia Park, Swadlincote – DSV completed a 48,495 sqm (522,000 sq ft) facility in November 2021. DSV closed three very old and dilapidated sites to move into Mercia Park and have so far gained one new contract and are in the stages of tendering for another two contracts.
19. The jobs to be created jobs at Thrapston will be across a range of roles, as noted above, and with automation technology – that is an Autostore Robotic Centre - an increase in the skill sets will be required with new specialist job opportunities including: IT specialisms, engineers and (Electrical and robotic) Programmers.
20. DSV offers inhouse training and skills development including -
 - **DSV eLearning Platform** – an internal learning platform for colleagues to further educate themselves on the job systems but also to further develop themselves professionally with soft and key skills training sessions offered
 - **DSV Performance and Development through Employee Central** – DSV have recently rolled out a Performance and Development process supported with Employee Central to support managers by encouraging continuous feedback with their colleagues to promote a rewarding and constructive work environment

- **DSV International Leadership Courses** – The global leadership training programme is a training service that offers in-house training with the overall goal to improve the leadership skills of the individual manager

21. DSV also operates Apprenticeship schemes. These are both internal and external to help upskill the current workforce while ensuring a talent pipeline for DSV's future.
22. In summary, the proposed development would allow DSV to operate a flagship site in North Northamptonshire where the company has been operating successfully for over 40 years. It would follow the aspirational high standards set by its Danish Headquarters and provide additional employment and training opportunities for local people. DSV is committed to sustainability and is working with IM Properties to ensure its new facility contributes to a site-wide strategy for environmental responsibility.

East Midlands Property Requirement

23. The requirement in the East Midlands is driven by the need to support the existing business as well as plan for growth in the region. The building will be temperature controlled to support clients within the pharmaceutical industry and also adding future automation to the mix. This will also create additional scale to accommodate the anticipated growth requirements of the business and provide an opportunity to enable DSV's green strategies to be implemented in a new facility to meet the environmental targets of the business.
24. A corporate review was undertaken in 2019/20 that identified the need to cater for the existing business and growth, within a single site to accommodate a logistics facility of around 100,000sqm (including ancillary offices) with dock level loading on both sides of the facility.
25. Due to the scale of the requirement, it was determined that it could only be delivered by way of a new development as there are no available facilities in existence within the search area that suit the business need. Similarly, the only feasible way to procure the facility would be to acquire land on a freehold basis for direct development to enable DSV to -
 - Control the development's programme to align closely with its portfolio needs
 - Accommodate flexibility in the build process which is not possible to achieve outside direct development
 - Accommodate DSV's corporate and bespoke higher specification within the development, which is not possible to achieve at a viable cost outside direct development
 - Comply with DSV's business requirements to hold its primary assets and development projects via freehold tenure
26. DSV has its own logistics development team that has large scale experience around the world, and which has delivered 3 million sqm over 50+ developments in the last 8 years. It can therefore demonstrate strong capabilities in delivering high quality property.
27. It is worth noting that IM Properties and DSV have contracted previously in a similar approach at Mercia Park, where DSV (as noted above) completed a development in November 2021, following a land transfer from IM Properties in late 2019 after planning permission was secured. Therefore, there is a demonstrable track record of both parties working together effectively in bringing such developments forward to the benefit of local communities.

28. In terms of the geographical area of interest, in order to maximise staff retention and maintain efficiencies in the supply chain, Thrapston and the immediate surrounds has been determined as the only feasible location in which to site the new facility.

Search Process and Site Selection

29. In March 2020, Agents were instructed by DSV to identify suitable parcels of land able to accommodate their requirement.
30. Various land opportunities were considered initially within Thrapston, Kettering and Corby. Sensitivity analysis and GIS mapping work of the staff was then undertaken, along with analysis of logistical factors related to DSV's customer base and requirements. The output from those initial studies confirmed that only Kettering and Thrapston locations were viable from a staff retention and customer perspective.
31. In respect of Corby, for staff retention this is considered unviable. Around 25% of the staff employed at Halden's Parkway live within five miles of the facility with the remainder within 12 miles. Corby falls outside of the 20-minute peak drive time boundary which would significantly extend the commute for existing staff employed at the Thrapston facility and public transport links are poor. It is likely that DSV would lose many of the existing staff with a relocation to Corby, including longstanding core staff members with knowledge and experience in DSV operations which would result in significant disruption to customer services. Furthermore, from a customer perspective, Corby is further from A14 which is the key corridor for deliveries coming from the ports at Felixstowe and for outbound deliveries that go up or down the M1, M6 and A1 to the main cities of London, Birmingham and Manchester.
32. At the end of this process the following land opportunities were identified as being able to accommodate DSV's requirements and progressed in more detail -
- Kettering Energy Park (Panattoni)
 - Symmetry Park Kettering (Tritax)
 - The subject site at Thrapston (IM Properties)
33. Kettering Energy Park was reviewed at length and considered to be incompatible in terms of planning viability due to the planning requirements for occupiers at this location to comply with energy related activities not suitable for general storage and distribution activities.
34. Symmetry Park Kettering was similarly explored at length but, critically, freehold tenure is not available at that location, the alternative lease financials proved economically unviable for the project.
35. The subject site (Thrapston Business Park) is therefore the only available site able to accommodate the scale of development required by DSV that offers a deliverable and viable proposition in terms of location for staff, location for customers, control, direct development, cost and tenure. In addition, the subject site is extremely close to DSV's existing facility at Halden's Parkway and therefore existing jobs can be protected if DSV's new facility is permitted here.
36. Whilst not part of the site search, the Newlands Site, located to the east of Halden's Parkway, is not considered to be an appropriate size or shape to meet DSV's requirement.

37. If planning permission is not granted for Thrapston Business Park, then DSV will have to consider other options which may mean relocating out of North Northamptonshire.

Conclusion

38. DSV has identified a need for a site to accommodate a large purpose-built modern facility to support its existing business operations in the locality and meet future needs in a single location. Following an extensive search, DSV has identified the site as the only viable solution to accommodate their requirements in a reasonable period of time. The proposed development will deliver clear economic benefits including the retention and creation of jobs, forming part of a scheme that delivers environmental benefits with improvements in local green infrastructure and meeting aspirations for biodiversity and environmental net gain, alongside a range of social benefits.