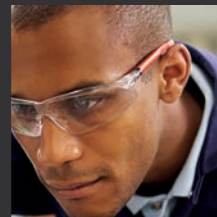
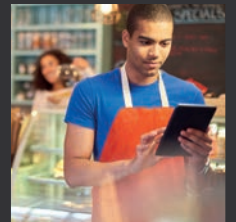
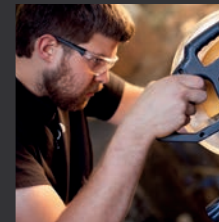




# THRAPSTON BUSINESS PARK

## Statement of Local Engagement

April 2022



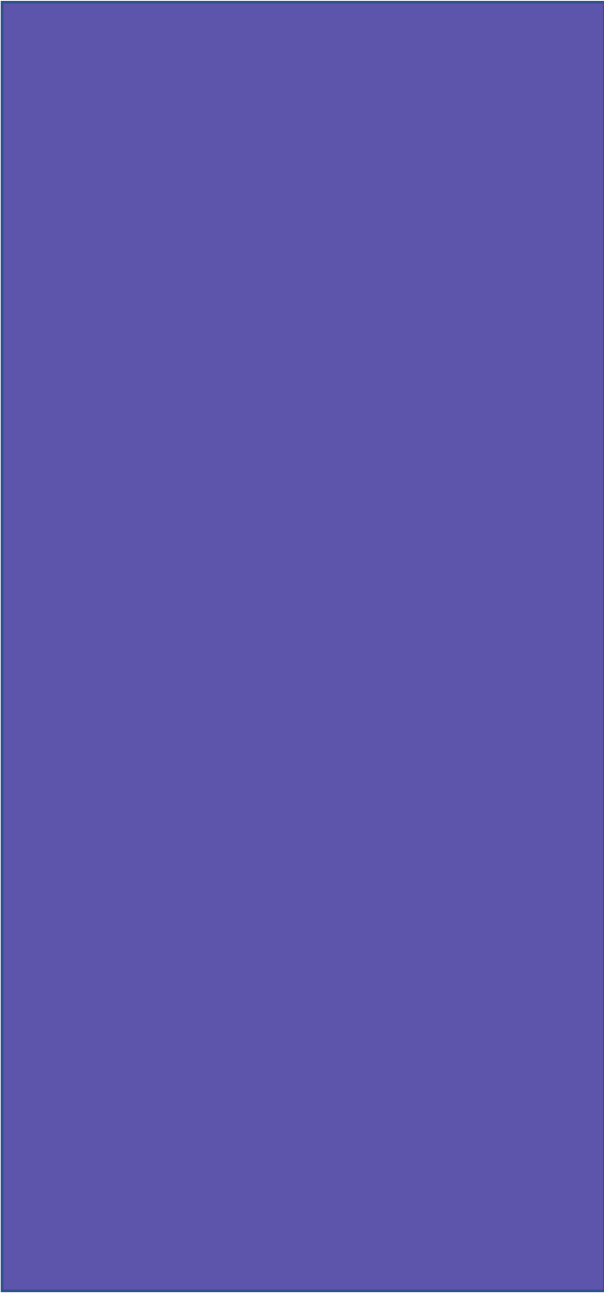


Indicative image of Thrapston Business Park

## Executive summary

1. IM Properties Developments Ltd (“IM Properties”) recognises the importance and value of involving local communities in the planning and development process, and is committed to consulting local people in a way that is relevant to the location, nature and scale of its proposals.
2. For Thrapston Business Park, the decision was taken to deliver the consultation 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. During both stages, the consultation was hosted on a dedicated website ([www.impthrapston.co.uk](http://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.
4. 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.
5. While written feedback from the two stages was limited – the likely result of a local campaign group advising the local community not to comment on the plans – IM Properties was able to capture significant feedback from conversations at the stage one in-person events. This confirmed a number of in principle areas of interest and concern:
  - Need for the development and why the site was chosen
  - Doubts over the quality of jobs that would be on offer, whether jobs were needed given low unemployment rates locally, and where employees would come from given existing recruitment challenges
  - Congestion on local roads and the A14, and whether they would cope with additional traffic from the development
  - The scale of buildings, light pollution, and whether landscaping would be effective in screening the development from local views
  - Wildlife, flooding, air quality and noise, and doubts over the ability to achieve biodiversity net gain on a large development site

- How the community might benefit from the development, including options for the off-site land and support for community initiatives
6. The second consultation sought to respond to these areas of interest and concern. Detailed plans and images were presented to showcase the emerging proposals alongside an explanation for the approach taken, an overview of key strategies and objectives, and an update on technical work being undertaken to inform the plans.
  7. IM Properties recognises that there is local opposition to its plans and that concerns remain. However, it was encouraged by the large number of visitors to the consultation events who recognised that its proposals were well considered and appreciated that a genuine effort had been made to respond to the community's key interests and concerns.
  8. IM Properties was also encouraged by the number of positive comments made in relation to specific aspects of its proposals. In particular:
    - Inclusion of flexible space for smaller occupiers to support innovation and growth of local businesses
    - Commitment to the Building with Nature benchmark and achieving a net gain in biodiversity above the minimum requirement
    - Proposals to enhance the wider landscape, environment and community access opportunities on the off-site land connected to Titchmarsh
    - Approach to site layout, building elevations, site reprofiling and landscaping to minimise impact on local views
    - Provision of a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists within the northern landscape corridor, alongside proposals for a safe crossing of the A605
    - Proposals for increasing capacity and improving traffic flow at junction 13 of the A14, along the A605 and at the access to the site
  9. IM Properties has taken on board and responded to this consultation feedback, ensuring that the issues and concerns raised are fully addressed within its planning application. It has drawn on its experience of designing, building and operating successful business parks across the Midlands to deliver proposals for a best in class employment park for Thrapston.
  10. IM Properties will continue to keep local residents, businesses and elected representatives updated during the determination of the planning application and, subject to approval, during the construction phase.

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- A large, solid purple rectangular block covers the left side of the page, indicating that the content has been redacted.
11. The consultation website is being updated to reflect submission of the planning application and make key documents easily available for download.



Site location plan with main parcel and triangle parcel highlighted yellow

## Introduction

12. This Statement of Local Engagement (SLE) supports a hybrid planning application by IM Properties for Thrapston Business Park.
13. The SLE sets out the approach to, and outcomes of, IM Properties' pre-application consultation and engagement with the local community on its plans. This voluntary activity was separate from, and in addition to, the pre-application dialogue entered into by IM Properties with North Northamptonshire Council and other statutory and non-statutory consultees – details of which can be found in the various documents submitted with the planning application.

## The site

14. The Thrapston Business Park site borders the north-eastern edge of Thrapston. It is generally split into four parcels:
  - Main parcel – the area to the east of the A605 and north of Halden's Parkway
  - Triangle parcel – located to the west of the A605 and east of Oundle Road
  - Highway upgrades – land to the south to provide for highway improvements to the A605 / Huntingdon Road roundabout and A14 Junction 13
  - Off-site land – land to the north-east that is to provide primarily for biodiversity net gain

## The planning application

15. IM Properties is submitting a 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.



National Planning Policy Framework



## Statement of Community Involvement – consultation draft

December 2021

[www.northnorthants.gov.uk](http://www.northnorthants.gov.uk)

## Methodology and approach

16. IM Properties recognises the importance and value of involving local communities in the planning and development process, and is committed to consulting communities in a way that is relevant to the location, nature and scale of its proposals.
17. Its approach to pre-application consultation and community engagement for Thrapston Business Park was informed by guidance at both a national and local level. This guidance encourages proactive communication between applicants, local planning authorities and local communities to help facilitate better planning decisions and outcomes.

*“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.” (paragraph 39)*

**Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2021**

*“Local planning authorities should...encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law, to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.” (paragraph 40)*

**Revised NPPF July 2021**

*“Where a proposal / application is deemed to be significant by the planning authority by virtue of being large in scale or otherwise locally significant, developers / applicants will be expected to undertake community engagement and involvement in drawing up their proposals.” (paragraph 3.10)*

**North Northamptonshire Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – consultation draft December 2021**

*“The type and extent of community involvement will need to be related to the scale and likely impact of the development and to the target audiences.” (paragraph 3.16)*

**North Northamptonshire Council SCI – consultation draft December 2021**



## Approach

18. IM Properties had regard to this guidance and advice when formulating an appropriate strategy for pre-application consultation and engagement on its plans for Thrapston Business Park. It also consulted officers at North Northamptonshire Council on its proposed approach before committing to the consultation and engagement activity.
19. The overall consultation and engagement strategy was designed to:
  - Deliver an inclusive consultation programme to engage, inform, explain and involve stakeholders and members of the community
  - Communicate early, clearly and openly with those most likely to have an interest in the plans
  - Help inform the planning application by inviting comments and suggestions on the detailed designs and technical work
  - Identify and respond to issues / concerns before the plans were finalised and a planning application submitted to North Northamptonshire Council
20. To achieve these objectives, IM Properties was committed to maximising awareness by promoting the consultation through a range of channels, and encouraging participation by making it accessible on a range of platforms.
21. The decision was also taken to deliver the consultation over two stages – starting with early engagement on the vision and key issues (stage one), and following up with consultation on detailed plans and technical work (stage two). This was considered to be the most appropriate and effective approach, given the nature and scale of the proposals and the lack of any previous proposals for development of the site.



Stage one consultation flyer



## Stage one: early engagement on the vision and key issues

22. The focus of the first stage of the pre-application consultation and engagement programme was to:

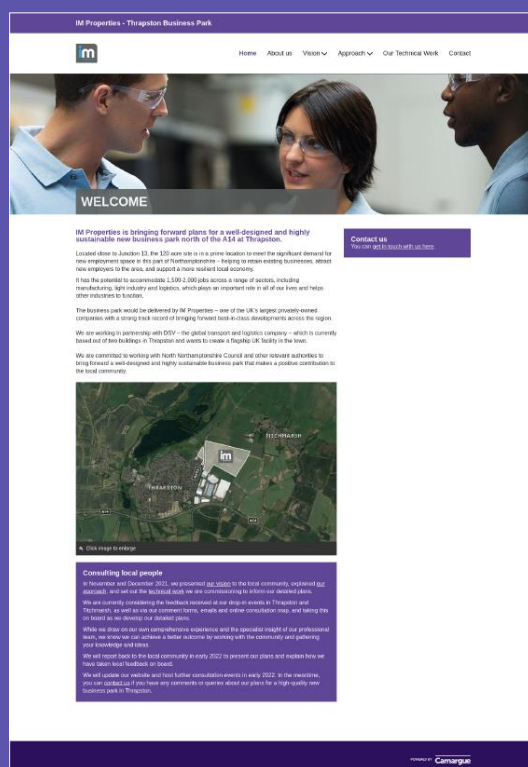
- Introduce IM Properties to the community
- Outline its strategic vision for the site
- Identify the key issues, themes and opportunities driving its approach
- Outline the extent of technical work being undertaken to inform detailed proposals and support a future planning application
- Provide opportunities for the community to help shape the proposals by identifying key issues of interest and concern while technical work was ongoing and detailed plans were still being prepared
- Explain the process going forward and be clear that there would be further consultation on detailed plans

### Consultation website

23. The consultation was hosted on a dedicated project website – [www.impthrapston.co.uk](http://www.impthrapston.co.uk) – which was launched on 22 November 2021 and invited feedback up to and including Sunday 19 December. The website presented key information about the emerging proposals and provided options to give feedback. A screenshot of all pages from the first stage consultation website can be found at appendix A of this report.

24. The first option for giving feedback online was to complete a comment form, which asked five questions about the emerging plans. These were:

- Do you have any comments on our vision for Thrapston Business Park and the key themes driving our approach?
- For you, what are the main priorities we need to address in our technical work?
- Our proposals have the potential to enhance public access to green spaces, provide outdoor amenities for community use, and support local aspirations to enhance the environment. What would you most like to see come forward as part of our plans – both within the main business park site and as part of any proposals for the off-site land being considered for environmental improvement?
- Do you have any other comments on our emerging proposals for Thrapston Business Park? Are there any other broader issues you think we should be aware of in developing our plans and investing in the area?



Stage one consultation website



Stage one consultation display panels

25. The second option was to pin comments onto an online consultation map, which showed the site in the context of its surroundings, gave a broad indication of the main site components, and identified key opportunities and constraints.

26. Other feedback options included contacting the consultation team by:

- Email – [info@impthrapston.co.uk](mailto:info@impthrapston.co.uk)
- Telephone – 03308 834199
- Post – IM Properties, c/o Camargue, 11 Waterloo Street, Birmingham B2 5TB

### Consultation events

27. The stage one consultation programme also involved hosting two in-person events – giving the local community the opportunity to meet representatives of IM Properties and its consultant team. The information presented at the in-person events was consistent with the information provided on the dedicated consultation website to ensure nobody was disadvantaged by not visiting the website (and vice versa). A copy of the display panels presented at the events can be found at appendix B of this report.

28. A comment form was available at the events to capture feedback from attendees. The comment form asked the same questions as the online version on the consultation website. A copy of the comment form can be found at appendix C of this report.

29. The events were held in accessible locations, with one on a weekday and the other on a Saturday to fit in with different work patterns and other commitments. The consultation events were held on:

- Saturday 27 November 2021 (10.00-16.00) at The Clubroom, 19 High Street, Titchmarsh NN14 3DF
- Friday 10 December 2021 (12.00-20.00) at Plaza Community Centre, Cosy Nook, Thrapston NN14 4PS

### Publicity

30. A range of channels were used to raise awareness of the consultation and invite key stakeholders and the local community to participate.

31. Emails were sent to elected representatives for the local area giving them an introduction to IM Properties and its vision for Thrapston Business Park, as well as sharing key information about the consultation and offering to meet. These emails were sent to:



Stage one consultation advert



Stage one consultation event in Titchmarsh

- The North Northamptonshire councillors for Thrapston ward:
  - Councillor David Brackenbury – also cabinet member for growth and regeneration
  - Councillor Wendy Brackenbury
  - Councillor Geoff Shacklock

- The chair and clerk to Thrapston Town Council
- The chair and clerk to Titchmarsh Parish Council
- The local MP for Corby constituency

32. A copy of the email to Councillor David Brackenbury can be found at appendix D.

33. A press release announcing the proposals and consultation activity was issued to the *Northamptonshire Telegraph* and resulted in online coverage on 17 November 2021. A copy of the online article can be found at appendix E of this report. A similar article appeared in the print edition on 18 November.

34. A consultation flyer was sent by post on 18 November 2021 to over 3,750 homes, businesses, clubs and organisations across Thrapston and Titchmarsh. The flyer provided key information about the emerging proposals and consultation activity, and invited anyone with an interest to participate. A PDF of the flyer was also emailed to the town and parish councils. A copy of the consultation flyer can be found at appendix F of this report. A map showing the distribution area can be found at appendix G of this report.

35. A quarter-page advert was placed in the *Northamptonshire Telegraph* on 19 and 26 November 2021, and again on 2 and 9 December 2021 ahead of the second consultation event. A copy of the advert can be found at appendix H.

36. During opening times for the consultation events, signage was displayed in a prominent position outside the venues to attract passing footfall.

## Participation

37. A total of 119 people attended the in-person consultation event at the Clubroom in Titchmarsh, while 79 people attended the second in-person consultation event at the Plaza Community Centre in Thrapston. Visitors included the Thrapston ward councillors and members of the town and parish councils, as well as residents and workers in Thrapston, Titchmarsh and the wider local area.



Stage one visitors to consultation website

38. The consultation website attracted a total of 387 individual users during the 4-week consultation period from Monday 22 November to Sunday 19 December. Around 85 per cent of users came to the site direct (i.e. by typing the website address into their browser), while around 10 per cent arrived at the site from social media pages and around 5 per cent from online searches.
39. The consultation team received four emails and two phone calls during the 4-week consultation period. One email provided feedback on the plans. The other emails and calls asked for clarification on technical issues relating to use of the consultation website.

### Feedback

40. IM Properties received very little written feedback to the first stage consultation. This was likely the result of a local campaign group (STAUNCH) encouraging the local community not to comment on the plans – arguing that any feedback would be used by IM Properties to counter objections and enhance the prospects for a planning application. 16 individuals made a total of 39 online comments using the comment form and feedback map on the consultation website. Only one comment form was completed at the consultation events.
41. However, IM Properties was able to capture significant feedback from conversations at the in-person consultation events. This confirmed a number of in principle areas of interest and concern.
42. The table below provides a summary of the feedback received in writing and during conversations at the consultation events.

#### Need for the development

- Some visitors acknowledged the need to meet occupier demand for high-quality buildings and facilities, and supported the provision of a flagship new facility for DSV to retain the business in the town.
- There was also some support for the provision of flexible space for smaller occupiers, including local businesses looking to set up or grow.
- However, the majority of visitors challenged the need for the proposed development – suggesting there are many vacant units and new buildings under construction or planned elsewhere in North Northamptonshire.

- Some visitors acknowledged the need to meet occupier demand for high-quality buildings and facilities, and supported the provision of a flagship new facility for DSV to retain the business in the town.
- There was also some support for the provision of flexible space for smaller occupiers, including local businesses looking to set up or grow.
- However, the majority of visitors challenged the need for the proposed development – suggesting there are many vacant units and new buildings under construction or planned elsewhere in North Northamptonshire.
- There were some suggestions that supporting the retention and growth of DSV locally was not important, and that the loss of some jobs was not a major concern.
- It was also suggested that unemployment locally was very low and that the development would be better situated close to Kettering, Wellingborough and other big towns.
- Others queried the number and quality of jobs that would be accommodated on the site, with some arguing automation would reduce the number while others acknowledged that automation requires skilled support.
- It was suggested that a new employment site could create pressure to build more homes in the local area.

#### Transport and access

- Traffic generation was a common concern with many visitors suggesting the A605, A14 and other local roads are already congested and unable to cope with additional vehicles – whether from Thrapston Business Park or the development proposed by Newlands at Castle Manor Farm.
- Several visitors were specifically concerned that traffic to and from the development would travel through Thrapston or Titchmarsh to avoid congestion on the A605 leading to the A14 junction.
- Many Titchmarsh residents were keen to ensure the proposals did not include an access from Islington.
- It was suggested that low unemployment levels in Thrapston and Titchmarsh would result in significant numbers of employees travelling by car to reach the site.
- It was also felt that there are already a significant number of HGVs on local roads and that more would be unacceptable – adding to congestion and impacting local air quality.



- There was some support for enhancing pedestrian and cycle connections and creating new routes through the site – in particular from the A605 to Islington as the existing public footpath is often muddy and difficult to use.
- There was also some support for enhancing public transport provision, with many suggesting that existing bus services were limited.
- There were a number of queries around HGV parking provision within the site, with many suggesting there is already an issue with HGV drivers 'overnighting' and leaving rubbish on local roads.

#### Design and landscape

- There was interest in the potential scale of new buildings on the site and how these would appear on the local landscape – notably from Titchmarsh and across the Nene Valley.
- Detailed design was also a common point of interest and concern, with a general opinion that Haldens Parkway and other warehouse developments in Thrapston and wider North Northamptonshire were not attractive buildings.
- Many visitors suggested the multiplicity of warehouse developments were changing the character of North Northamptonshire for the worse and that any further developments of this nature should be resisted.
- Several visitors suggested the existing DHL unit and other buildings on Haldens Parkway were already an eyesore, and that the development of new buildings closer to Titchmarsh would make this position worse.
- A number of visitors specifically raised concerns with the potential for light-pollution from the development – suggesting Haldens Parkway is very visible at night and that there is already a glow over Thrapston from existing buildings and the A14.
- There was general agreement that the site boundaries needed significant landscaping to help screen buildings – with some suggesting significant bunding / tree planting and others calling for a more natural landscape appearance.
- Several visitors suggested landscaping at DHL and Primark didn't successfully screen the buildings, and queried why the IM Properties proposal would be any different.



- There were a number of queries around management of the landscaped areas – who would be responsible and how long for.

#### Environment and sustainability

- There was general support for the ambition to maximise biodiversity net gain, although many visitors doubted that a large-scale development on agricultural land could achieve any gain in biodiversity.
- There was general support for the commitment to 'Building with Nature' but doubts over what could be achieved given the size of buildings and area to be developed.
- Several visitors referred to wildlife visiting the site and suggested various species would be harmed by the development – through loss of habitat and foraging opportunities, during construction, or as a consequence of ongoing activity (light and noise).
- Many visitors referred to a history of flooding locally and raised concerns that the development would make these flood events more frequent and adverse – specifically in Thrapston, on the A605 and across the Nene Valley.
- Noise was a common complaint with many visitors concerned the development would add to what they considered was existing noise pollution from the Haldens Parkway development and the A14.
- There was general support for the commitment to sustainability in construction and operation, including maximising energy efficiency and incorporating renewables.

#### Off-site land

- There was interest in the off-site land – initially because of concerns that it was being considered for development and then because of the opportunities being considered.
- Several visitors suggested the off-site land was a poor effort to make the development acceptable, while others welcomed it as a genuine attempt to manage impacts and deliver benefits for the community.
- There was general support for the opportunities being considered – in particular habitat enhancement, tree planting and increasing community access.
- Some residents of Thrapston suggested the off-site land would only benefit Titchmarsh.

- Several residents living along Islington were keen to protect their views to the west over the Nene Valley, and therefore asked that the north-west land parcel be prioritised for wildflower meadow and wildlife habitat enhancement rather than new tree planting.
- There was general support for tree planting on the larger southern parcel to help screen views from Titchmarsh.
- There were a number of queries around future management of the off-site land – who would be responsible and how long for.
- There were also queries around long-term ownership and protection of the off-site land, and concerns that it may be considered for development in the future.

#### Social value and community

- There was a lot of interest in IM Properties' commitment to social value – with some recognising the potential for benefit if the development is approved, while others considered it a sop.
- The vast majority of visitors to the consultation events felt it was important for any development to give back to the area in which it is located – from investment in infrastructure to supporting local communities and initiatives.
- There were a number of queries around potential uses for a community fund and the sort of initiatives this might support.
- There was also general interest in the potential to improve skills through collaboration with schools, colleges and training providers.

#### Other

- There were general queries around IM Properties' interest in the site and whether it owned the land.
- There were queries about what would happen to the existing DSV units once the business relocates to the new unit.
- Several people commended IM Properties for its early engagement with the local community.

### Meeting with Tom Pursglove MP

43. IM Properties and DSV attended a meeting on 4 March with Tom Pursglove, the constituency MP for Corby & East Northamptonshire, to update him on the emerging plans.
44. Mr Pursglove explained his priority was to ensure his constituents' key issues and concerns were considered by IM Properties and DSV. Based on feedback given to him, these were:
- Need for the development in this location – for DSV and generally
  - Capacity for additional traffic on local roads
  - Size of buildings and potential impact on the landscape
  - Approach to landscaping to help screen buildings
  - Phasing of infrastructure (including landscaping) relative to buildings
  - Delivery of the smaller business units – certainty and timing

## Stage two: consulting on detailed plans and technical strategies

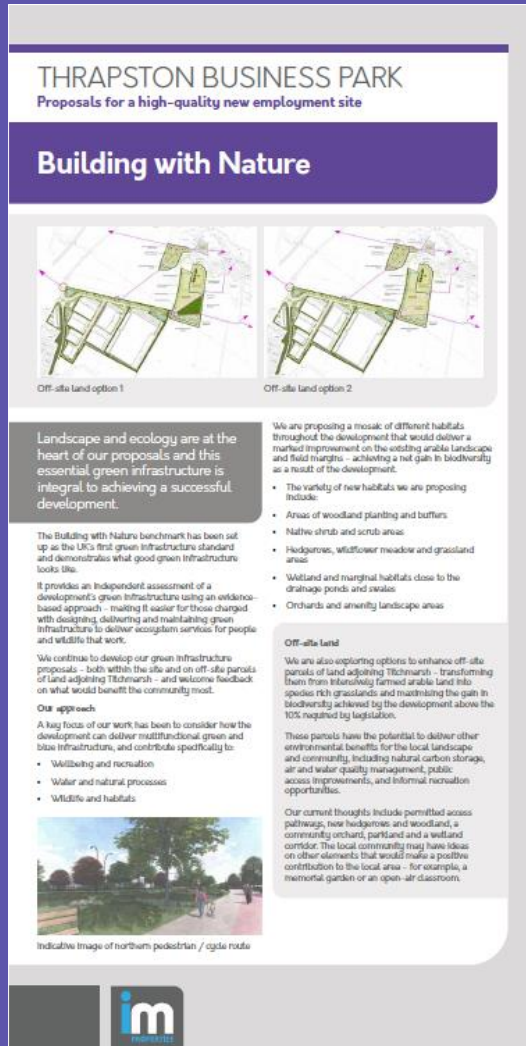
45. IM Properties considered all of the feedback it received from the first consultation stage as it developed its proposals, undertook detailed technical work, and prepared for a second programme of consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and the local community.
46. The purpose of the second stage pre-application consultation and engagement programme was to:
  - Give a reminder of IM Properties' strategic vision for the site
  - Report on feedback from the first stage of consultation and respond to this
  - Present draft plans for the site including the proposed layout and approach to key issues
  - Provide an update on the breadth of technical work being undertaken to inform the draft plans and support the upcoming planning application
  - Present potential options for the off-site land and invite input to help identify priorities for this space
  - Invite the community to comment on the draft plans and related strategies being developed to deliver a sustainable development that addresses all relevant issues
  - Explain the next steps including the submission of the planning application and statutory consultation by North Northamptonshire Council

### Consultation website

47. Again, the consultation was hosted on the dedicated project website, which was updated with a significant amount of new information on 23 February 2022 and invited feedback up to and including Saturday 12 March. The website updates reported on feedback from the first consultation stage, presented the latest proposals (including a [flythrough of the emerging scheme](#)), provided an update on key workstreams, and invited feedback on the plans. A screenshot of all pages from the second stage consultation website can be found at appendix I of this statement.
48. The dedicated project website included a new comment form, which asked seven questions about various aspects of the plans and approach to key issues. These were:
  - Do you have any comments on the proposed layout and design of buildings?
  - Do you have any comments on our landscape-led approach?
  - Do you have any comments on our plans to deliver biodiversity net gain?



Stage two consultation website



Stage two consultation display panels

- Do you have any comments on the opportunities to enhance public access?
- Do you have any comments on options for the off-site land or other potential community benefits?
- Do you have any comments on environmental considerations, including drainage, lighting or noise?
- Do you have any comments on our approach to transport?

49. The consultation map was updated to include the emerging site masterplan, showing it in context and giving the opportunity for users to post comments to a specific feature or location.

50. The consultation email, phone line and postal address set out at paragraph 25 of this report continued to operate for anyone wanting to contact the consultation team.

### Consultation events

51. Two in-person consultation events were held during the stage two consultation programme to give the local community a further opportunity to meet representatives of IM Properties and its consultant team. These in-person events were held on:

- Thursday 3 March (16.30-20.00) at The Clubroom, 19 High Street, Titchmarsh NN14 3DF
- Saturday 5 March (10.00-16.00) at Thrapston Primary School, Market Road, Thrapston NN14 4JU

52. Again, the information presented at the events was consistent with the information on the consultation website. A copy of the display panels presented at the events can be found at appendix J of this report, and a copy of the copy comment form can be found at appendix K of this report. Large print copies of key plans were placed on tables to improve accessibility and assist conversations, while tablets were also available at the event to show visitors the flythrough of the emerging scheme.

### Publicity

53. The various channels used for the first consultation stage were successful in raising awareness of the proposals and attracting visitors to the website and consultation events. On that basis, the decision was taken to use the same channels for the second stage.

54. Emails were sent to elected representatives for the local area:

- The North Northamptonshire councillors for Thrapston ward





Stage two consultation event signage



Stage two consultation event In Thrapston

- The chair and clerk to Thrapston Town Council
- The chair and clerk to Titchmarsh Parish Council
- The local MP for Corby constituency

55. A copy of the stage two email sent to Councillor David Brackenbury can be found at appendix L of this report.
56. A press release announcing the second consultation programme was issued to the *Northamptonshire Telegraph* and resulted in online coverage on 28 February. A copy of the online article can be found at appendix M of this report.
57. A consultation flyer was sent by post on 23 February to over 3,750 homes, businesses, clubs and organisations across Thrapston and Titchmarsh. A PDF of the flyer was also emailed to the town and parish councils. A copy of the consultation flyer can be found at appendix N of this report.
58. A quarter-page advert was placed in the *Northamptonshire Telegraph* on 3 March before the two events. A copy of the advert can be found at appendix O of this report.
59. During opening times for the consultation events, signage was displayed in a prominent position outside the venues to attract passing footfall.

### Participation

60. A total of 45 people attended the stage two in-person consultation event at the Clubroom in Titchmarsh, while 56 people attended the stage two in-person event at Thrapston Primary School. Again, visitors included the Thrapston ward councillors, members of the town and parish councils, as well as residents and workers in Thrapston, Titchmarsh and the wider local area.
61. The consultation website attracted a total of 336 individual users during the second consultation period from Wednesday 23 February to Saturday 12 March. Around 60 per cent of users came to the site direct (i.e. by typing the website address into their browser), while around 27 per cent arrived at the site from social media pages and around 13 per cent from online searches.
62. The consultation team received three emails and one phone call during the second consultation period. Two emails were from individuals giving feedback on the emerging plans, and the third was from STAUNCH accepting the offer of a meeting to discuss the plans. The phone call was simply asking for clarification on a specific aspect of the plans.



### Feedback

63. Again, IM Properties received limited written feedback to the second stage consultation likely as a result of advice being given to the community by STAUNCH. There were 54 individual comments on the consultation map from 11 individual users, while four comment forms were completed at the consultation events or returned by post.
64. Conversations at the in-person events provided the main opportunity to capture feedback. The IM Properties team was encouraged by these discussions – not least the large number of visitors who recognised that the proposals were well considered and that a genuine effort had been made to respond to the community's key interests and concerns.
65. IM Properties was also encouraged by the number of positive comments made in relation to specific aspects of its proposals. In particular:
- Inclusion of flexible space for smaller occupiers to support innovation and growth of local businesses
  - Commitment to the Building with Nature benchmark and achieving a net gain in biodiversity above the minimum requirement
  - Proposals to enhance the wider landscape, environment and community access opportunities on the off-site land connected to Titchmarsh
  - Approach to site layout, building elevations, site reprofiling and landscaping to minimise impact on local views
  - Provision of a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists within the northern landscape corridor, alongside proposals for a safe crossing of the A605
  - Proposals for increasing capacity and improving traffic flow at junction 13 of the A14, along the A605 and at the access to the site
66. However, IM Properties recognises that a significant element of the community remained opposed to its plans, with ongoing concerns over the principle of the development and various details associated with it.
67. The table below summarises feedback captured during the second stage consultation programme, including from conversations at the in-person events and in the written feedback received. Many of these points are carried over from the first consultation.

### Need for the development

- There was some acceptance of the need argument being presented by IM Properties, although many individuals continued to challenge this.
- Some people challenged need on the basis the site is not allocated in the council's emerging local plan, while others suggested there are vacant units and other developments able to meet this need elsewhere.
- There were a number of specific queries and comments about the need for this development alongside Newlands' proposals for the Castle Manor Farm site.
- Several people continued to challenge the need for new development in this particular location – suggesting Corby, Kettering and other bigger towns would be more appropriate with larger labour pools – although some acknowledged the logic and benefit of retaining DSV locally.
- There continued to be questions and concerns around what would happen to the existing DSV units once the business relocated to the new facility.
- There was general support for the provision of space for smaller businesses on the triangle of land west of the A605.

### Transport and access

- There continued to be a general concern that local roads were not able to accommodate additional traffic – whether from Thrapston Business Park or the development proposed by Newlands at Castle Manor Farm.
- Employee traffic was a common concern, with suggestions that low unemployment levels in Thrapston and Titchmarsh would result in significant additional car movements.
- A specific concern was that traffic to and from the development would travel through Thrapston or Titchmarsh to avoid congestion on the A605 leading to the A14 junction – HGV drivers “blindly” following satnavs was mentioned by several people.
- Several people suggested it could be very difficult to access the A605 from Lancaster Drive and raised concerns that this could be made worse with additional traffic using this stretch of road.

- Many people were interested in the detail of the proposed access roundabout and acknowledged the benefits this would deliver for traffic flow, although just as many considered the improvements inadequate.
- There was also widespread interest in the detail of potential improvements to the A605 and the A13 junction, with many acknowledging the potential benefits and just as many feeling more extensive improvements are needed.
- There were a few comments about the proposed short merge sections coming off the new access roundabout and Huntingdon Road roundabout, with suggestions that these can encourage dangerous attempts at overtaking.
- There continued to be queries and concerns around HGV parking provision within the site, with many suggesting there is already an issue with HGV drivers 'overnighting' and leaving rubbish on local roads.
- There continued to be support for enhancing pedestrian and cycle connections and creating new routes through the site – in particular the route through the northern landscape corridor between Islington and the A605.
- Some individuals suggested Islington is not a safe route for pedestrians / cyclists and asked whether the proposal could help to address this – suggesting this would be of real value to residents in Titchmarsh.
- There was general support for the proposal to introduce a signalised crossing of the A605 north of the new access roundabout, although some people suggested drivers would ignore the red lights while others suggested the lights would increase congestion
- There continued to be some support for enhancing public transport provision, with many suggesting that existing bus services were limited.

#### Design and landscape

- The potential scale of new buildings and how these would appear on the landscape continued to be a major point of interest and concern.
- There was widespread recognition of the considered approach to layout, design and landscaping, and positive comments about the information presented by IM Properties in the second consultation to help explain and understand this – in particular the flythrough and CGIs.

- However, many people still felt the development would have an unacceptable impact on the local landscape because it would be visible.
- There was some support for the landscape proposals and objective to filter views, while others felt any landscaping needed to screen buildings completely.
- There was widespread interest in when the landscaping would be introduced and a general opinion that it should be delivered early on.
- There was also widespread interest in the proposal to create a gateway into Thrapston along the A605, with some support for IM Properties' landscape-led approach and some concern that a logistics development wasn't the welcome the town needed.
- There were differing opinions on the proposed approach to elevational treatments, with some suggesting it was much better than other similar developments they had seen and others feeling it wouldn't make the buildings less prominent in the landscape.
- Many people highlighted the change in levels across the site and were interested to know how the layout and overall development approach responded to this.
- The proposed DSV unit was a particular concern given its scale and position on the highest part of the site, although many people were pleased to hear the DSV plot would be cut into the hill and that the floor level of the building would be lower than Islington and land immediately adjoining it.
- The potential for light pollution was a specific concern – from buildings, street lighting and vehicles.
- There were a number of queries around management of the landscaped areas and other communal areas – who would be responsible and how long for.

#### Environment and sustainability

- There was continued support for the ambition to maximise biodiversity net gain and a greater acceptance that this could be achieved as part of the development, although some people continued to doubt whether any gain was possible on an existing greenfield site.
- There was continued support for the commitment to 'Building with Nature' and greater recognition that this was a key driver in the evolution of the development, although some people continued to challenge this commitment given the overall loss in greenfield land.

- Flooding was an ongoing concern for many people who were keen to understand how the proposals would address this.
- Many people were reassured by the considered approach to managing surface water and the results this would achieve – both in terms of the amount and quality of surface water run-off compared with the existing situation.
- However, some people remain concerned that development of a greenfield site will exacerbate existing flooding events and have an adverse impact on local homes, roads and the Nene Valley.
- Noise continued to be raised by many people – with concerns that on-site activity would add to existing noise pollution from Haldens Parkway, and that HGV movements would add to existing noise on the A605 and A14.
- There continued to be interest in the approach to sustainability and net zero – both during construction and operation – and general support for practical measures to maximise efficiency and incorporate renewables.
- There were differing opinions on which renewable technologies were most appropriate on this site and in this location, although solar panels / photovoltaics were generally popular and wind turbines less so.

#### Off-site land

- There was continued interest in proposals for the off-site land and general support for the opportunities being considered, although some people felt it was a poor attempt to make the development acceptable.
- Several people recognised the potential benefit of proposals for the off-site land but stated that they would only engage on this aspect of the plans if the overall development is approved.
- Some residents of Thrapston and Aldwinckle suggested the off-site land was biased towards Titchmarsh and delivered little value to other communities.
- A representative of the town council asked that IM Properties support other initiatives for environmental enhancement being delivered by the town council elsewhere in the local area.

- Some Islington residents repeated earlier comments that they did not want new tree planting on the north-west parcel as this would block their view over the Nene Valley – preferring instead wildflower meadow and wildlife habitat enhancement on this land.
- The same residents asked for better signage and marking of the existing footpath through the north-west parcel, on the basis walkers regularly the formal route and walk along the boundary of their homes.
- There continued to be general support for tree planting on the larger southern parcel to help screen views from Titchmarsh.
- There was also general support for increasing community access on the larger parcel of land, including the creation of a new circular route.
- There were some specific requests from dog walkers, including for a small car park on or adjoining the large parcel and provision of bins for dog waste.
- There were specific requests for a pedestrian and cycle route along the western boundary of the larger parcel to provide a safer alternative to walking or cycling along Islington.
- There was general support for the enhancement of ponds on the larger parcel and some requests for these to be enlarged to help reduce existing flooding on Islington.
- There were a range of other comments and suggestions around potential options for the off-site land, including a community orchard, nature trail and hide for birdwatching.
- There were ongoing queries around future management of the off-site land – who would be responsible and how long for. Many people were encouraged by the 30-year commitment while others felt it should be in perpetuity.
- There were ongoing queries around long-term ownership and protection of the off-site land, with general agreement that there needed to be a formal / legal mechanism in place.

#### Social value and community

- There was continued interest in IM Properties' commitment to social value – with some recognising the potential for benefit if the development is approved, while others considered it a sop.



- The vast majority of visitors to the consultation events felt it was important for any development to give back to the area in which it is located – from investment in infrastructure to supporting local communities and initiatives.
- There were some detailed discussions about what IM Properties has supported elsewhere, but relatively little in the way of specific initiatives that could be supported locally – with several people stating they would only engage on these issues if the overall development is approved.

#### Other

- Many people commended IM Properties for its efforts to engage the local community, respond to key issues and share information about its emerging plans. Some even went so far as to say that too much information was being shared.
- There were queries about what would happen to the existing DSV units once the business relocates to the new unit, as well as queries about what the business would do if the new unit wasn't approved.

#### Meeting with STAUNCH

68. ON 24 March, IM Properties held a meeting with representatives of STAUNCH – the local campaign group set up to oppose the developments by IM Properties and Newlands.
69. The meeting started with a short update from IM Properties, who confirmed that technical work was ongoing and that the objective was to submit a planning application in April 2022.
70. STAUNCH advised that the group would not be giving feedback on the plans during the meeting (for the same reason is was advising local residents not to comment) but had a number of queries for IM Properties:
  - Why is IM Properties bringing forward a planning application rather than promoting the site through the local plan?
  - What is the need for this employment space and when is it required?
  - What is DSV's commitment to the site?
  - What is to stop DSV from leaving the site after 12 years?
  - Where has the off-site land interest come from?

- How much in advance of the wider development would the off-site land be delivered?
- How would the off-site land be managed?
- What is an innovation centre?
- What is the height of the proposed DSV unit?
- Why do these buildings have to be so ugly?
- What proportion of HGV traffic does IM Properties expect to travel to / from the A14 junction?

71. The IM Properties team responded to each of these queries during the meeting and those responses are included in the next section of this report.

## Response to feedback

72. IM Properties is very appreciative of the time and effort local people have invested to find out about its plans and positively engage with the development team. Feedback from both stages of pre-application consultation and engagement programme has revealed a range of comments, opinions, questions and suggestions, which have been both supportive and critical of the plans.
73. The key issues and queries raised during the consultation are listed in the table below alongside IM Properties' responses. In some instances, the response reflects how IM Properties has amended its plans in response to the feedback received. In other cases, the response explains how the application has addressed the points raised or could be subsequently assessed and addressed.
74. The following responses are intended as a summary only. The various technical documents submitted with the planning application provide a comprehensive analysis and justification for the proposals, dealing with each of the issues and considerations that are relevant to the nature of the development. Those documents also detail the extensive and ongoing pre-application engagement that has taken place with NNC and statutory consultees on relevant topics, including design, landscaping, transport and noise, as well as through the EIA Scoping process.
75. It should be highlighted that not all of the feedback requires a response at this stage of the process. For example, some comments relate to reserved matters that will be subject of future consultation and applications. IM Properties will continue to engage with its neighbours and local community and respond to feedback as the project reaches key milestones.

Need for the development	
Site not allocated in emerging Local Plan	<p>The emerging Local Plan is currently being examined by an independent Inspector.</p> <p>It is IM Properties' view that the emerging Local Plan does not account adequately for strategic employment land needs, and the employment land requirement for North Northamptonshire should be significantly higher. IM Properties previously submitted representations to the local plan and it is continuing to promote the site at</p>

	<p>the examination. It wouldn't be bringing these proposals forward if it wasn't confident there was an unmet need for strategic employment land and the demand was there.</p> <p>Further information on the justification and need for the development can be found in the Planning Statement and the Employment Land, Labour Supply and Economic Benefits Statement submitted with the planning application.</p>
Availability of vacant units, new developments and other sites elsewhere in North Northamptonshire	<p>The market for industrial premises in the Midlands is very strong due to the continuing renaissance of the manufacturing sector, the dynamism of the logistics sector, and because many businesses are looking to onshore their operations and reduce their reliance on global supply chains.</p> <p>Industrial and logistics operations require increasingly large buildings that are highly functional and efficient in their use of space and energy. This supports their viability and helps keep costs down – creating savings that can be passed onto customers and consumers.</p> <p>Older buildings do not meet this requirement and there is a shortage of new employment space along the A14 corridor. Much of the space currently being built in other areas, such as Corby, caters for different parts of the market to businesses looking to take space along the A14.</p> <p>The planning application documents individually and collectively evidence the need for the development.</p>
Low unemployment so jobs not needed	<p>At a time of national economic uncertainty, this site has the potential to help meet the significant demand for industrial premises in North Northamptonshire and contribute to the resilience of the local economy. It has the potential to accommodate around 1,500-2,000 jobs in a strong and growing sector, with jobs coming forward over time as buildings are occupied.</p> <p>Our own analysis shows there is demand for these jobs – both within the immediate area and the wider catchment. This demand is evidenced within the Employment Land, Labour Supply and Economic Benefits Statement submitted with the planning application.</p>
Quality of jobs	<p>Manufacturing, light industry and logistics are complex and technologically-driven sectors requiring a diverse workforce with a broad range of skills. There are widespread misconceptions of logistics in particular, but the sector pays well and supports an increasingly diverse range of jobs. This is further evidenced within the Employment Land, Labour Supply and Economic Benefits Statement submitted with the planning application.</p>
DSV requirement and options	<p>DSV needs a new facility to accommodate growth of the business and provide a highly sustainable and efficient new base for its operations in Thrapston. These are currently split across two buildings at Haldens Parkway that do not meet existing needs, create major inefficiencies and have limited scope for improvement.</p>

	<p>The new facility would be a total of 1m sq ft compared with around 367,000 sq ft across the two existing buildings at Haldens Parkway.</p> <p>The existing buildings aren't capable of delivering the floorspace, high productivity and sustainability requirements that the business needs to grow. Redeveloping the two buildings is also not an option as the available land is too small to accommodate DSV's needs.</p> <p>DSV wants to remain in Thrapston – it has a long association with the town and an existing employment base who are local to the area. DSV looked at options across North Northamptonshire and this is the only site that meets its specific needs. DSV is focused on supporting IM Properties' planning application to make it as good as it can be. If the planning application isn't successful, DSV will need to consider its options, which would mean widening its search beyond North Northamptonshire and potentially severing its links with the area.</p>
Future of existing DSV units	<p>DSV would vacate the existing buildings, which are owned by a third party, and IM Properties would expect the buildings to be relet to other occupiers given the significant demand for space along the A14. This would help to create and retain jobs in the local area.</p>
Innovation centre	<p>IM Properties was encouraged by the support for this aspect of its plans. The business wants to realise space for growing small to medium-sized enterprises, which is a strategic policy objective of North Northamptonshire Council. Apart from the Enterprise Centre at Raunds, there is a real lack of small, flexible workspace for small and medium-sized businesses across East Northamptonshire. Providing this type of innovation space in Thrapston would provide an opportunity for growing local businesses.</p> <p>The plans include space for units ranging from 2,500 sq ft to 17,000 sq ft, with options to combine units to meet specific business needs.</p> <p>It is proposed that the units would be offered with short-term leases starting at 5 years and with the option to acquire the freehold of the units. IM Properties is also further assessing the potential to provide flexible leases, all-inclusive rentals, and giving priority to businesses in the local area.</p>
Need for this development and Newlands	<p>There is significant demand for new employment space along the A14 corridor and a shortage of new space being built. DSV has a specific requirement that can only be met on the IM Properties site, and Thrapston Business Park would also provide space for growing small to medium-sized businesses.</p> <p>Both developments are the subject of planning applications that will be considered on their own individual merits by North Northamptonshire Council before taking a decision.</p>

Pressure to build more homes	Our own analysis shows there is demand for these jobs from the existing population – both within the immediate area and the wider catchment. This is evidenced in the Employment Land, Labour Supply and Economic Benefits Statement submitted with the planning application. North Northamptonshire Council is already planning for housing growth in its emerging Local Plan.
<b>Transport and access</b>	
Local highway capacity and impact	<p>IM Properties has undertaken an extensive programme of work to understand likely travel demand to and from the development, including employees working across the park, visitors to the site, and operations associated with the various businesses.</p> <p>It has used industry-standard processes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand existing traffic levels on the road network</li> <li>• Factor in how this might change anyway as a result of natural traffic growth and other developments planned for the local area</li> <li>• Calculate the expected number of vehicle movements or 'trips' to and from our proposed development</li> <li>• Identify where these trips are expected to travel on the road network</li> </ul> <p>This work is detailed in a Transport Assessment (TA) submitted with the planning application.</p> <p>The highways authority is preparing its own highways model of the local area. Once this is complete, IM Properties will be able to test the potential impact of its development on local roads and junctions, and identify any necessary improvements.</p>
Proportion of HGVs expected to use the A14 junction	Around 90 per cent of HGVs travelling to and from Thrapston Business Park are expected to use the A605 between the site access and junction 13 of the A14. The distribution of HGV trips is considered within the Transport Assessment submitted with the planning application.
New access roundabout on the A605	The planning application includes a new access roundabout on the A605, which would increase capacity relative to the existing A605 / Oundle Road junction and ensure safe access into and out of the site. The design of the new roundabout and approaches to it will form part of ongoing discussions with the highways authority during the determination of the planning application.
Wider improvements to the A605	The planning application includes proposed improvements to the A605 / Huntingdon Road roundabout and the approaches to it. These proposals are consistent with the improvements identified by Newlands as part



	of its planning application for the Castle Manor Farm site. These will be the subject of ongoing discussions with the highways authority during the determination of the planning application.
Improvements to the A14 junction	The planning application includes proposed improvements to junction 13 of the A14 and the approaches to it. These proposals are consistent with the improvements identified by Newlands as part of its planning application for the Castle Manor Farm site. These will be the subject of ongoing discussions with the highways authority during the determination of the planning application.
Vehicle access from Islington	The main vehicle access would be from an improved roundabout at the A605 / Oundle Road junction. Access from Islington would be limited to emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists via a shared access in the north-east corner of the development. This access would also be used in the early stages of constructing the DSV unit while the new access roundabout and spine road is being built.
Short merge sections leaving roundabouts	The new access roundabout, improvements to the A605 / Huntingdon Road roundabout, and improvements to junction 13 of the A14 would comply with the relevant highway standards and requirements. Short merge sections are standard highway features.
Vehicles exiting Lancaster Road onto the A605	The proposal would deliver a number of improvements along the stretch of the A605 passing Thrapston. These improvements would increase capacity and improve traffic flow along this stretch of road.
HGV traffic through Thrapston and Titchmarsh to avoid queues on the A605	The proposal would deliver a number of improvements along the A605 and at junction 13 of the A14, which would increase capacity and improve traffic flow along this stretch of road.
HGV parking	The proposal provides sufficient parking on site so that HGVs do not park on local roads. Good site management is also essential and, as the site would be proactively managed by IM Properties, the business would be able to manage the development effectively and work closely with all occupiers on a day-to-day basis.
Pedestrian and cycle route through northern landscape corridor	<p>IM Properties was delighted with the positive response to its proposals to enhance public access in the area, which is a key objective of the plans.</p> <p>Currently, there is no public access to the site although a public footpath runs along the northern boundary. This route is currently unsurfaced and can be difficult to access</p> <p>The planning application includes proposals for a high-quality pedestrian and cycle route within the northern landscape boundary – using woodland and habitats to create an attractive environment and enhance links between Thrapston and Titchmarsh.</p>

	<p>The route would include enhanced signage and interesting features that embrace both the wider landscape and environmental assets, as well as local changes and new uses.</p> <p>The masterplan for the wider site includes a network of pedestrian routes focused on health, wellbeing and education to provide a high-quality environment for those working on the park and those visiting the site.</p>
Wider enhancements for pedestrians and cyclists	<p>The proposals for a new access roundabout and associated improvements on the A605 include provision of a safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as an upgrade to the section of public footpath to the south of the site.</p> <p>IM Properties is also proposing a network of permissive routes and connections on the large, southern parcel of off-site land adjoining Titchmarsh. This parcel of land is crossed by existing footpaths but their connectivity is poor and opportunities for circular routes are limited.</p> <p>IM Properties will continue to work with North Northamptonshire Council and the Greenway Project during the determination of the planning application (and beyond) to ensure its proposals are fully integrated into local plans and assist in the development, connectivity and usability of the Rights of Way network.</p>
Impact of in-commuting given low unemployment locally	<p>The Transport Assessment submitted with the planning application takes account of potential travel demand from employees traveling to and from the site.</p> <p>The objective is to employ people where possible from North Northamptonshire so that the socio-economic benefits stay in the local area. Where people need to travel, IM Properties is committed through the package of travel plan measures to developing a sustainable travel proposition that drives modal shift as much as possible and avoids reliance on the private car.</p> <p>The Travel Plan includes measures to encourage walking and cycling (using the enhanced links included within the proposals), car sharing and travel by bus.</p>
Public transport provision	<p>There are two existing bus services – the 16 (Kettering to Raunds) and the X3 (Corby to Addenbrooke's). IM Properties is in discussions with the transport authorities about the potential to increase the frequency of these existing services – particularly at peak times – and extend them into the site. IM Properties is also looking at the low carbon technologies for this transport, which is evolving all the time as the UK transitions to net zero.</p> <p>Discussions with the transport authorities will continue during the determination of the planning application and beyond.</p>

## Design and landscape

### Size of buildings

Thrapston Business Park is designed to cater for a range of building sizes that can be accommodated in the local landscape and provide best-in-class facilities for occupiers.

Industrial and logistics operations require increasingly large buildings that are highly functional and efficient in their use of space and energy. This supports their viability and helps keep costs down – creating savings that can be passed onto customers and consumers.

DSV has a specific requirement for a large unit providing 99,817 sq m of floorspace, which has been designed and for which consent is sought in detail. The DSV building would be a maximum height of 15m at the haunch and a maximum height of 18.7m at the ridge.

A parameter plan forms part of the planning application and covers the DSV plot, as well as the plots to be developed for other occupiers. This plan gives a maximum height for buildings in each of the development plots – providing flexibility to meet the specific requirements of different occupiers while allowing a robust assessment of the potential impacts of the development. The respective heights are:

- Plot 2 – maximum 21m at haunch and maximum 24m at ridge
- Plot 3 – maximum 18m at haunch and maximum 21m at ridge
- Plot 4 – maximum 10m at haunch and maximum 13m at ridge

### Detailed design of buildings

The starting point for detailed design is the IM Properties Design Standard – a document IM Properties uses to ensure consistency across all its developments while allowing flexibility so each development is sensitive and appropriate to its surroundings and able to meet the requirements of individual occupiers.

The Design Standard informs building appearance, technical specification, and the approach to creating attractive and successful business environments.

At Thrapston Business Park, IM Properties is proposing a high-quality palette of materials to present premium buildings that would be seen from short-distance views filtered by trees and hedgerows along the boundaries.

The ancillary office components would be a focal point for each building – using a different elevational treatment and projecting out from the rest of the building to create visual interest and sign-post the main entrance. The internal fit-out would match the quality of the exterior to create a contemporary, flexible and welcoming working environment.

	<p>These key design principles would be incorporated into a Design Code to guide detailed planning applications for individual buildings across the site.</p> <p>DSV has its own detailed requirements for the outside and inside of its proposed building, including space for a gym and other high-quality welfare facilities for employees. IM Properties has worked with DSV to meet those requirements and deliver the best possible design solution that complements IM Properties' approach to the rest of the site.</p>
Change in levels across the site	<p>The site would be reprofiled to create three level development plateaus – with the DSV unit on the highest plateau and the other two plateaux stepping down from this towards the A605. Reprofilng the site helps to minimise net import / export of materials during the construction phase, as well as helping to minimise the visual impact of the buildings. By way of example, the finished floor level (FFL) of the proposed DSV unit would be lower than the ground level of Islington, which runs along the eastern boundary of the site – meaning the DSV unit would appear lower than its 18.7m ridge height.</p>
Boundary landscaping	<p>The proposals have been designed to preserve and enhance a robust green corridor and landscaped edge along the northern and eastern boundaries, with buildings set back and their appearance filtered as this planting establishes.</p> <p>The remaining boundaries and internal landscape areas have also been carefully designed to provide an attractive setting for the development alongside areas of new ecological habitat, circular trails and walks.</p>
Visual impact	<p>IM Properties' approach has been driven by the need to minimise visual impact while also creating a high-quality and interesting place to work.</p> <p>Initial assessments showed that the site's elevated position within the landscape would allow wider views from the west and north-west across the Nene Valley, while its proximity to Titchmarsh and the immediate network of footpaths and bridleways would allow shorter range views.</p> <p>A detailed assessment Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was undertaken of the likely impact of the development on the local landscape and visual environment. This assessment forms part of the planning application and provides an objective view of the development effects and required mitigation measures. Reprofilng the site, incorporating strategic landscaping along sensitive boundaries, and carefully considering the detailed design of individual buildings has formed part of the strategy.</p>
A605 gateway into Thrapston	<p>The site access from the A605 is important and provides an opportunity to deliver a high-quality gateway to Thrapston – creating a sense of arrival and defining the boundary of the town.</p>

	IM Properties' aspirations for this area are covered in the landscaping strategy, which provides some flexibility to deliver a theme for this space that reflects the history of the site and wider local area.
Light pollution	The approach to lighting is informed by best practice established by the Institution of Lighting Professionals. This focuses on reducing light spill, glare and sky glow and there are relevant standards that need to be met. The planning application demonstrates that the development is able to meet these standards. Lights would be visible but they would not contribute to light pollution.
Landscape delivery and management	<p>The hybrid planning application includes detailed proposals for strategic landscaping across the site, including the northern landscape corridor and the other site boundaries. These strategic landscape areas would be part of the key infrastructure delivered within the first phase of development. They would be managed long-term by IM Properties as part of its ongoing management of the business park.</p> <p>Further detail can be found in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment submitted with the planning application.</p>
<b>Environment and sustainability</b>	
Biodiversity net gain	<p>Achieving a significant net gain in biodiversity was a key objective for IM Properties from the outset of its work on proposals for Thrapston Business Park, and the business was encouraged by the number of people who responded positively to this commitment, after some initial scepticism, once the detail had been explained to them.</p> <p>Arable fields are habitats designed to create food for humans and livestock at an industrial scale, which requires a constant cycle of disruption and harm to wildlife through ploughing, use of pesticides, spreading of fertiliser and harvesting.</p> <p>IM Properties' assessments have demonstrated that there is very little evidence of wildlife living on the site, although there is evidence that the site provides food and shelter for some protected species (such as birds, brown hares, badgers etc.). IM Properties' proposals would create significant new habitat areas, both within the development site and the surrounding area, that would be protected, managed and monitored for a minimum of 30 years. These new areas of habitat would provide more and better-quality feeding and sheltering habitats for species that currently use the fields.</p> <p>IM Properties has committed to achieving a 30 per cent net gain in biodiversity within its planning application. The planning application provides full details of the biodiversity net gain assessment and how the 30 per cent net gain would be achieved.</p>

	Further detail can be found in the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and the Building with Nature Assessment submitted with the planning application.
Building with Nature	<p>The Building with Nature benchmark was set up as the UK's first green infrastructure standard. It provides an independent assessment of a development's green infrastructure using an evidence-based approach.</p> <p>The benchmark was identified early on as an important factor in developing the proposals for Thrapston Business Park. It helped mould and shape the proposals to ensure the development was able to deliver a marked improvement on the existing arable landscape and field margins, with a variety of new habitats including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas of woodland planting and buffers</li> <li>• Native shrub and scrub areas</li> <li>• Hedgerows, wildflower meadow and grassland areas</li> <li>• Wetland and marginal habitats close to the drainage ponds and swales</li> <li>• Orchards and amenity landscape areas</li> </ul> <p>Detail of how the proposals respond to the Building with Nature benchmark can be found in the Green Infrastructure Strategy submitted as part of the planning application.</p>
Construction impacts on wildlife	IM Properties would work with its appointed contractor to ensure existing habitats and wildlife are not harmed during construction. All construction activity would be undertaken in accordance with relevant guidelines and restrictions, and would be agreed in advance with the relevant authorities, including North Northamptonshire Council and Natural England.
Flooding impacts	The planning application is supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage strategy. The drainage system would be made up of a series of linked water features that would collect surface water, hold it in underground tanks and open-air ponds, and ensure the site does not lead to flooding nearby. The planning application demonstrates that – even in the worst-case 100-year flood events – the drainage system would limit water run-off to roughly half of existing run-off rates from the existing site.
Contamination of surface water	Currently, surface water from the site is contaminated by pesticides and fertiliser from farming activities, which would no longer take place once the site is redeveloped. The drainage system within the proposed development would include a filtration system to ensure any future surface water run-off is not contaminated by on-site activity. Further detail of the drainage system and filtration capability can be found in the planning application.



Noise pollution	<p>IM Properties is committed to delivering a development that respects its neighbours. There are standards that must be met and the planning application demonstrates that the proposal is able to meet these standards.</p> <p>There will inevitably be commercial activity and associated noise on the site, but the proposals include robust measures to mitigate against this. For example, it is proposed that loading areas are located on the sides of buildings facing away from the nearest homes so the buildings themselves help to screen any associated noise. The proposals also make appropriate and effective use of landscape bunds and fencing to contain noise within the site.</p>
Sustainability – energy and renewables	<p>IM Properties is committed to delivering a development that is fit for the future and supports North Northamptonshire on its trajectory to net zero. It is committed to low energy specification, renewable technologies, and sustainable procurement, and it will engage with all potential occupiers to optimise their energy strategy.</p> <p>IM Properties' standard building specification has evolved to facilitate net zero ready buildings with the following measures incorporated in its proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An EPC rating of A for the offices attached to our buildings</li> <li>• An all-electric energy strategy with primary energy delivered without fossil fuels</li> <li>• Air Source Heat Pumps providing heating and hot water to the main offices</li> <li>• High levels of air tightness and insulation</li> <li>• LED lighting throughout</li> <li>• Use of PV cells or other low carbon technology to provide renewable power</li> </ul> <p>Its design work is being shaped by the UK Green Building Council performance standards.</p> <p>Further details of the approach to sustainability can be found in the Design and Access Statement and other documents submitted as part of the planning application.</p>
<b>Off-site land</b>	
Justification for including the off-site land	<p>Initially, the off-site land was considered to ensure the development was able to meet the requirement for a 10 per cent net gain in biodiversity, and for this to be delivered locally. This then led to wider consideration of the opportunity to deliver significantly more than 10 per cent alongside other potential benefits for the local community. While not required by policy to mitigate the proposed development, IM Properties is committed</p>

	to ensuring its developments deliver direct benefits for local people that extend beyond the boundary of its sites.
Limited benefit beyond Titchmarsh	<p>IM Properties is committed to ensuring its developments deliver direct benefits for local people that extend beyond the boundary of its sites. Its commitment to delivering social value is informed by Sustainable Futures – IM Properties’ sustainability vision and its three central themes of People, Place and Planet.</p> <p>Potential social value opportunities at Thrapston Business Park are outlined in the Social Value Strategy submitted with the planning application.</p> <p>Alongside this, the off-site land would deliver a significant gain in biodiversity locally, while the site itself would deliver significant public access improvements and provide other opportunities across the wider area, including a safe crossing of the A605 for pedestrians and cyclists as part of the new access roundabout.</p> <p>IM Properties is working with North Northamptonshire Council and the Greenway Project to ensure our proposals are fully integrated into local plans and assist in the development, connectivity and usability of the Rights of Way network.</p>
Proposed approach – north-western parcel	Immediate neighbours were keen to protect their views to the west over the Nene Valley and to avoid any significant increase in public access routes across this land. Therefore, the focus is on habitat creation / enhancement rather than tree planting, although there is potential for a community orchard on part of the site. Detailed proposals for this land would be subject to further consultation with the local community if the planning application is approved.
Proposed approach – larger southern parcel	The proposals for this larger parcel reflect local support for habitat creation / enhancement, increasing public access, woodland planting, and increasing capacity for water storage. Detailed proposals for this land would be subject to further consultation with the local community if the planning application is approved.
Other options	The off-site land has potential to incorporate a range of uses and activities that are compatible with the key aim of achieving a significant net gain in biodiversity. Detailed proposals for the off-site land would be subject to further consultation with the local community if the planning application is approved.
Provision for dog walkers – car park and waste bins	The objective for the off-site land is that it enhances the local landscape and supplements existing amenities and routes, rather than becoming a major attraction. The intention is that it would be accessed from the local area on foot or by bicycle, rather than in the car.
Timing of delivery	Specific proposals for the off-site land, including timing of delivery, is expected to be subject to further discussion with NNC and secured by a planning condition / obligation.

Future management and protection	Specific proposals for the off-site land, including management, is expected to be subject to further discussion with NNC and secured by a planning condition / obligation. However, it will be managed for a minimum period of 30 years.
<b>Social value and community</b>	
Justification for consulting on social value	<p>IM Properties is committed to ensuring its development deliver direct social benefits for local people that extend beyond the boundary of its sites. Potential social value opportunities at Thrapston Business Park are outlined in the Social Value Strategy submitted with the planning application.</p> <p>The extent and nature of the social value opportunity at Thrapston Business Park will be shaped by IM Properties' understanding of the local issues and context, and how the design, delivery and long-term stewardship of the site might align with this. Consultation with the local community is also key and starting this dialogue early is the best way to identify potential social value opportunities.</p>
Potential options and opportunities for a Thrapston community fund	While not a material consideration in the determination of the planning application, IM Properties is exploring the creation of a community fund for Thrapston, Titchmarsh and surrounding villages that could be used for supporting local community projects. These community projects could range from improving public spaces and facilities, to improving community buildings, or supporting community projects and initiatives that can benefit individuals of all ages and backgrounds. In this instance, the two-stage consultation and engagement programme did not identify specific community projects or initiatives, but the dialogue will continue with the relevant authorities and local community during the determination of the planning application.
Skills and training initiatives	<p>IM Properties is proposing to work closely with prospective and new occupiers of its sites to explore ways to help local people access new jobs and improve their skills.</p> <p>IM Properties is delivering extensive construction-related skills, training and education programmes in other parts of the West and East Midlands, and would bring relevant elements of this approach to Thrapston to ensure local skills are developed and job opportunities are created during the construction phase of the proposed development.</p> <p>IM Properties is also collaborating with other parts of the business to provide broader educational support to make a positive contribution to whole school outcomes.</p> <p>For example, in relation to the Mercia Park scheme, IM Properties is working with its contractor and supply chain to provide job, work experience and training opportunities; engaging with local businesses to maximise contract and supplier opportunities locally; and supporting local schools, colleges and universities to inspire young people to consider careers in the construction and built environment sectors. The business also set</p>

	up an on-site 'Future of Construction' Training Centre that is being used by its contractor and local training providers to host skills courses and recruitment days, and opened a Sustainability & Innovation Hub to showcase new technologies being used in the development and provide a space to host educational visits.
<b>Other</b>	
IM Properties interest in the site	The freehold interest in the site is owned by the Peterborough Diocesan Board of Finance (PDBF). IM Properties has entered into an option agreement with the PDBF.
Justification for progressing a planning application	<p>It is IM Properties' view that the emerging Local Plan does not account adequately for strategic employment land needs, and the employment land requirement for North Northamptonshire should be significantly higher. IM Properties previously submitted representations to the local plan and is continuing to promote the site at the examination.</p> <p>In the meantime, DSV has an immediate and pressing requirement for its new facility and the planning application would deliver this. The proposals would also create an opportunity to meet the wider unmet need for high-quality new employment space.</p>
Phasing of development	<p>It is proposed that the first phase of development (relating to the detailed element of the hybrid application) would involve creating the site's infrastructure and building the DSV unit. The site infrastructure includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new roundabout on the A605 and internal spine roads within the site</li> <li>• Earthworks to reprofile the site and prepare the development's main building plots</li> <li>• Utilities, drainage, landscaping, footpaths and cycleways</li> </ul> <p>It is anticipated that the development will commence in 2023 and that completion will be within five years (by the end of 2028).</p>

## Conclusion

76. IM Properties has demonstrated its commitment to community consultation and engagement in bringing forward its proposals for Thrapston Business Park.
77. The two-stage pre-application consultation and engagement programme was tailored to the nature and scale of the proposals, and ensured key stakeholders and the local community were made aware of the proposals and given access to key information through a wide range of channels.
78. The consultation programme provided appropriate opportunities to comment on and raise questions about the plans for the site, 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 (because of advice given to the local community by the local interest group), the combined feedback (oral and written) gave a clear insight into their key interests and concerns, and helped to mould and shape the proposals.
79. In summary, the feedback revealed a range of comments, opinions, questions and suggestions, which were carefully considered by IM Properties as it refined and developed its plans. IM Properties has taken on board and responded to this feedback, ensuring that the issues and concerns raised are fully addressed within the suite of materials submitted with its planning application.
80. In formulating its proposals for the site, IM Properties has drawn on its considerable experience of designing, building and operating successful business parks across the Midlands to deliver proposals for a best in class employment park for Thrapston.
81. IM Properties will continue to engage and keep local residents, businesses and elected representatives updated during determination of the planning application and, subject to approval, during the construction phase.
82. The consultation telephone line and email address will remain active so that local people are able to communicate with the project team, while the dedicated project website will also continue to be periodically updated at key milestones.