

Land Availability **Employment**



APRIL 2013



Bromsgrove
District Council

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Introduction

Bromsgrove District Council as a Local Planning Authority is required to review employment development within the District. In order to meet economic requirements, local planning authorities should prepare and maintain a robust evidence base to understand both existing business needs and likely changes in the market (NPPF, para.160). Furthermore, local planning authorities should use this evidence base to assess the needs for land and floorspace for economic development for all forms of economic development over the plan period (NPPF, para. 161).

The purpose of this Monitoring Report is to collate data on employment land supply in Bromsgrove District. All sites with planning permission for employment use at a snapshot date of 1st April 2013 are visited to gain accurate figures for employment completions, units under construction and units not yet started. The information is required for the preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report and used to track the progress towards meeting the employment land requirement set out within the emerging District Plan, which a draft was consulted on during January 2011 and a submission version is expected autumn 2013. It will also help with the review of existing adopted Local Plan policies, contribute to DCLG employment flow returns, and provide background information for the emerging District Plan. The study is available in both printed form and on the Councils website at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/planning.

The Strategic Planning team at Bromsgrove District Council produces the Employment Land Monitoring Report annually. This employment report sets out the Council's latest position on employment land supply at 1st April 2013.

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The NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and supersedes guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 4 'Planning for Sustainable Economic Development' (PPS4).

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. One of the roles of sustainable development is the need for the planning system to provide an economic role. This can be achieved through the contribution of building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.

The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country's inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future. The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. To help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century (NPPF, para. 20). Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.



Bromsgrove District is a Green Belt authority. This restricts the type and amount of development that is acceptable in the area. Green Belt policies generally restrict the amount of employment land, but there has been some development of 'windfall' sites in recent years, including ones in the countryside usually in the form of barn conversions. These are expected to continue to come forward as Government advice in the NPPF states that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; as well as promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

Employment Land Requirements

The employment requirements for Bromsgrove District were originally set by the Worcestershire County Structure Plan. This expected the District to provide 55 hectares (ha) of land for employment uses within Classes B1, B2, and B8 between April 1996 to March 2011. This figure did not include 30ha of land at Ravensbank Business Park, which was allocated to meet some of the needs of Redditch Borough.

These policies within the Worcestershire County Structure Plan have been deleted and were replaced by Regional Planning Guidance in the form of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).

In 2009 the RSS underwent a partial review and the Inspectors Panel Report agreed with Policy PA6A of the Preferred Option, which indicates Bromsgrove should make provision for a continuing five-year supply reservoir of 7ha of readily available employment land outside the town centre throughout the plan period. However, the Panel Report stated that instead of multiplying this figure three times, it is more logical to apply a times four basis for the total indicative requirement over the 20 year plan period. This means there should be an indicative long-term requirement of 28ha up until 2026. In meeting both the five-year reservoir and the longer-term requirements priority should be given to the identification and development of brownfield land in accordance with these figures.



Employment Land Availability Report

More recently, further work was undertaken as part of an updated Employment Land Review (December 2012), which provided further evidence on the employment land required across the District. This work had a new base date of 2011 for the plan period and provided a target required up till 2030. The Employment Land Review (ELR) together with this monitoring document forms the evidence base to support these development targets.

Based on the outputs of a small area forecasting model, the ELR indicates that a minimum of 19.9 hectares of land above that in current occupation is required in the District to accommodate the forecast growth in employment floorspace in the area up to 2030. This forecast requirement should be viewed as an absolute minimum in terms of the amount of land needed, as in reality, a much greater amount of land is required to allow for choice and churn in the market place. For example, projecting forward past employment completion rates in Bromsgrove would suggest a significantly higher land requirement than the minima generated by the forecast.

The ELR stressed that the forecasts represent the absolute minimum amount of land needed to accommodate the sectors activities. In other words, the figures simply represent the amount of land needed to 'fit' the level of additional floorspace forecast to 2030 above that existing at the moment in respect of the different B Class employment uses. In reality, a much larger amount of land will need to be made available to allow for losses of existing employment sites to other uses during the plan period as well as to ensure a balanced portfolio of employment land in terms of sufficient choice of available sites and locations over the period up to 2030. The figures generated by the ELR forecasts do not allow for local market churn, the associated need for there to be a selection of vacant sites and premises to offer sufficient opportunities for new business start-ups, expansion, relocation and inward investment for a range of business sizes as well as accommodating aspirations for economic growth based on specialist knowledge sectors.

On the basis that further land would need to be made available to ensure a balanced portfolio of employment land and the need to strike the right balance between housing and employment growth a minimum target of 28ha is considered appropriate.



Bromsgrove's Employment Land Supply

Page 11 of this document details the Council's position in relation to employment land supply. It identifies a total supply of 28.52 hectares of employment land within the District which contributes towards the employment requirement of 28 hectares of employment land for the emerging Bromsgrove District Plan period up to 2030. It must also be noted that there is allocated employment land within the District at Ravensbank and Longbridge for the employment needs of Redditch and Birmingham respectively.

Employment contributions to the land supply can be classified as follows:

- Site which had a valid planning consent
- Outstanding Local Plan sites with capacity remaining at 1st April 2013
- Sites newly allocated as part of the emerging District Plan
- Windfall contributions

Windfall employment sites are taken to be those sites that are neither an allocated nor committed site. They are essentially sites that did not fall within the Use Class Orders B1, B2, or B8, but by virtue of planning consent for change of use now come within one of the 'B' Use Classes.

Windfall employment sites do not include land already in employment use, such as redevelopment sites or the re-use of existing industrial land. The District Council also excludes from the figures any intensification of uses or land held by existing companies/employment generations for their own expansion plans. However, development of areas of vacant land within land zoned for employment purposes are counted, as this brings previously under-utilised land into productive employment use.

Employment Use Classes

Under the Use Classes Order (1987) the B use classes are defined as:

- B1** – Business (including offices that are not within A2, research and development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech uses and light industry).
- B2** – General industry i.e. manufacturing.
- B8** – Storage and distribution (including wholesale warehousing, distribution centres and repositories).



Employment Completions

The emerging Bromsgrove District Plan must make provision for an indicative long-term requirement of 28ha up until 2030. For the purposes of this monitoring report, employment land relates to business, industrial, storage and distribution uses only, as defined by classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and applicable 'sui generis' uses. It does not include land for retail purposes.

In order to simplify the process; a threshold has been set so that only employment land developments for 'B' Class uses of 0.1 hectares and above are monitored.

Figure 1: Annual employment land completions 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2013

(Excluding land allocated at Ravensbank Business Park and Longbridge)

Year	Allocations (Sqm)	Windfalls (Sqm)	Total Completions (Sqm)
April 2011 - March 2012	31,370	0	31,370
April 2012 - March 2013	1,972	3,200	5,172
TOTAL:	33,342	3,200	36,542 (3.65ha)

Figure 1 shows that of the 28ha required as an indicative long-term requirement of readily available employment land up until 2030, development has already been completed on 3.65ha of land since 2011. This is 13.1% of the District's total employment land requirement.

Figure 2: Employment Sites Completed 1st April 2012 - 31st March 2013

(Excluding land allocated at Ravensbank Business Park and Longbridge)

Site Name/Address	Application No.	Parish	Classification	Use Class	Commitment	Area (m ²)
Former Focus DIY, Parsonage Drive	2012/0606	Cofton Hackett	Brownfield	B8	Completed	3200
Saxon Business Park, Plot 5, Phase 2	2012/0568	Stoke Prior	Brownfield	B1, B2, B8	Completed	1972
Total						5,172 (0.52ha)

Figure 2 highlights the completions during this monitoring year (2012-2013). There was a total of 5,172m² of employment land completed this year, which is 0.52ha. This occurred on two sites, with 3,200m² completed solely for B8 use and 1,972m² completed for a combination of B1, B2 and B8 uses.



Bromsgrove's Employment Allocations and Commitments

a) Sites with valid planning consent (including windfalls)

Figure 3: Sites with Valid Planning Permission at 1st April 2013

(Excluding land allocated at Ravensbank Business Park and Longbridge)

Site Name/Address	Ref. (if app)	Parish	Classification	Use Class	Commitment	Area (m ²)
Plot 2B, Saxon Business Park	13/0167	Stoke Prior	Brownfield	B1	Not Started	1,147
Wythall Green Business Park	12/0435	Wythall	Greenfield	B1	Not Started	65,000
Holly Tree Farm	10/0167	Wythall	Greenfield	B1	Not Started	1,279
Total						67,426 (6.74ha)

b) Outstanding Local Plan sites with capacity remaining at 1st April 2013

Figure 4: Outstanding Local Plan Sites (Without Valid Planning Consent) With Capacity Remaining at 1st April 2013

(Excluding land allocated at Ravensbank Business Park and Longbridge)

Site Name/Address	Ref. (if app)	Parish	Classification	Use Class	Commitment	Area (m ²)
Bromsgrove Technology Park	BROM 7 (land remaining)	Bromsgrove	Brownfield	B1, B2	Not Started	101,300
Land at Buntsford Hill Phase 3/ Buntsford Gate	BROM 8A (land remaining)	Bromsgrove	Greenfield	B1, B2	Not Started	4400
Land adjacent Sugar Brook Mill Buntsford Business Park	07/0704 (expired permission)	Bromsgrove	Greenfield	B2	Not Started	4400
Land between Hanbury Road, Shaw Lane and Westonhall Road	BROM 6 (land remaining)	Stoke Prior	Greenfield	B1, B2, B8	Not Started	18,000
Land at Harris Business Park, Plot 19	05/0377 (expired permission)	Stoke Prior	Greenfield	B1	Not Started	3100
Total						131,200 (13.12ha)



c) Sites newly allocated as part of the emerging District Plan

Figure 5: Sites Newly Allocated As Part Of The Emerging District Plan

(Excluding land allocated at Ravensbank Business Park and Longbridge)

Site Name/Address	Ref. (if app)	Parish	Classification	Use Class	Commitment	Area (m ²)
Land at Perryfields Road	BROM 2 (part of emerging District Plan ref)	Bromsgrove	Greenfield	B1	Not Started	50,000
Total						50,000 (5.0ha)



Cross-Boundary Employment Allocations and Commitments

Ravensbank Business Park

At 1st April 2013, there was a total of 15.62ha of employment land available at Ravensbank Business Park. This partly consists of 5.32ha of the remaining allocation of 30ha as part of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan (2004) for Redditch-related employment needs.

The remaining amount consists of 10.3ha in the form of a site allocated as part of the emerging District Plan to satisfy possible future Redditch employment needs. These allocations are listed in **figure 6**.

Figure 6: Vacant Land at Ravensbank at 1st April 2013

Site Name/Address	Ref. (if app)	Parish	Classification	Use Class	Commitment	Area (m ²)
Land at Ravensbank	E2 (Local Plan ref.)	Beoley	Greenfield	B1, B2, B8	Not Started	53,200
Ravensbank ADR	BE3 (Local Plan ref.)	Beoley	Greenfield	B1, B2,	Not Started	103,000
Total						156,200 (15.62ha)

Longbridge

The Longbridge Area Action Plan (AAP) was adopted in April 2009 to regenerate the area of Longbridge. The area straddles the boundary of Birmingham and Bromsgrove and consists of 195ha. At 1st April 2013, within the Bromsgrove boundary, 53,000m² (5.3ha) of land still remained available for employment use. This allocation is listed in **figure 7**.

Figure 7: Vacant Land at Longbridge at 1st April 2013

Site Name/Address	Ref. (if app)	Parish	Classification	Use Class	Commitment	Area (m ²)
The Cofton Centre Ravensbank	N/A	Cofton Hackett	Brownfield	B1, B2, B8	Not Started	53,000
Total						53,000 (5.3ha)



Conclusion

Figure 8 below provides an update on the provision of employment land for each component of employment land supply up to 1st April 2013.

Figure 8: Employment Land Supply 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2013

(Excluding land allocated at Ravensbank Business Park and Longbridge)

	Square Metres (Sqm)	Hectares (Ha)
Completions up to April 2013	36,542	3.65
Sites with valid planning consent (including windfalls)	67,426	6.74
Outstanding Local Plan sites with capacity remaining	131,200	13.12
Newly allocated sites as part of emerging District Plan	50,000	5.0
Total commitments / allocations at 1st April 2013	248,626	24.86
Employment Target 2011-2030	280,000	28
Total Employment Land April 2011 - April 2030	285,168	28.52

At 1st April 2013 a total of 24.86ha of land was available for employment use within Bromsgrove District Council. There are currently 6.74ha of employment land with valid planning permission and 13.12ha remaining on sites that were allocated by the Bromsgrove District Local Plan. The remaining amount of employment land is in the form of 5ha at the newly allocated site at Perryfields Road in Bromsgrove, which will form part of the emerging District Plan. This particular location forms part of a much larger urban expansion of Bromsgrove Town, which will also include residential and community facilities.

Since 2011 (the beginning of the plan period) there have been 3.65ha of completed development, which combined with the land not yet completed, equates to 28.52ha against the District Plan employment target of 28ha for Bromsgrove District between 2011 and 2030.





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