

Greater Norwich  
Development Partnership

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**Greater Norwich  
Employment Sites and  
Premises Study**

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Appendix 4: South  
Norfolk District Council

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Appendix 4: South  
Norfolk District Council

April 2008

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## **Executive Summary**

Howards Commercial and Arup have inspected and collated information in respect of employment sites within the South Norfolk District Council area.

The area is extensive, covering South Norfolk in a sweep from the A11 corridor around towards Lowestoft, with a considerable range of employment sites in the area. These vary from small sites situated on the outskirts of rural settlements to large ongoing developments located adjacent to one of the main regional road networks.

### **State of Property Market**

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The office sector has performed well over the past year in South Norfolk, with the industrial sector in second place in terms of market activity, followed by the retail market. For investors, the market is becoming less open to those with relatively limited funds. The sub-prime market area is increasingly being avoided, as the yield spread with the prime market has tightened to below sustainable levels.

The subsequent success of lettings throughout the South Norfolk District Council area is variable due to the wide variety not only of the geographical area but the nature, type and availability of the stock in those areas.

### **Current Demand**

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Demand varies with take up of units and varies throughout the region. This is not too dependent upon the quality of the units available. There has been gradual take up of newly developed office and industrial space on the Gateway 11 Estate which has attracted both Service and Blue Chip covenant occupiers, mainly due to its advantageous location south of Norwich and adjacency to a good road network. There still remains some 36 acres of land within the Gateway 11 Estate to be developed in order to provide a further 41,800sq.m. (450,000sq.ft.) of business accommodation. Demand in the Wymondham area including the Gateway 11 scheme remains high with a number of the older estates appearing to be fully occupied. There have been in-fill developments which have found tenants in a relatively short time, particularly those of a higher specification and smaller size.

Demand throughout the area varies with those sites further to the south and to the east away from the A11 corridor taking longer to find new occupiers for vacant units. Some would appear to go through periods of low demand; the Little Money Road, Loddon estate in particular, where the majority of units are now occupied and it is intended to further develop an in-fill area of the site in due course.

Those which are at a disadvantage are those situated in more rural areas with transport infrastructure and communications are comparatively poor. We are mindful of the Chequers Road, Long Stratton Estate where the local road network access is particularly poor. Conversely the Hingham Business Centre on the outskirts of Hingham is accessed via secondary routes but remains for the most part let throughout the range of smaller through to the industrial sheds on that site.

### **Average Rents**

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Rents vary widely throughout South Norfolk District area. These peak in the region of £7.00 per sq.ft. in respect of the new developments on the Gateway 11, Wymondham Estate down to as little as £2.50 per ft. for small secondary units in more rural locations. Averages appear to be in the region of £3.50 to £5.00 per ft. for typical units situated on the Diss, Harleston and Loddon estates. Dependent upon quality, the smaller units provide pro-rata higher rental rates are in the region of £4.25 to £5.00 per sq.ft. for smaller units with gross internal areas of approximately 1,000sq.ft.

### **Conclusion**

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Many of the sites we have inspected have been developed to their full geographical potential, although it was noted that in one or two instances in-fill developments were about to start which would then exhaust the land supply in those areas. As stated previously, there is currently ongoing

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development at the Gateway 11, Wymondham development. Like many estates, this development is subject ultimately to boundary restrictions which will prevent further development in time to come.

Overall there is a shortage of available freehold land suitable for development on the majority of the estates noted within the South Norfolk District Council area.

South Norfolk	Site Area (in Hectares)	Floor Space (in sq.m)	% Office Use	% Industrial Use	% of site vacant	Employment Totals for Sites*
Diss Vinces Road Industrial Estate	12.35	24000	30	70	3	861
Harleston	8.999	45000	10	90	1	1615
Hethel (Lotus)	19.65	43500	20	80	Not Applicable	1561
Hingham Ironside Way	4.407	14400	10	90	2	517
Loddon East of Low Bungay Road	48.969	19000	15	85	3	682
Longwater Costessey	32.221	30000	20	80	2	1076
Long Stratton - Chequers Road	5.701	11500				413
Norwich Research Park (1)	21.8	308000	15	85	Not Applicable	11051
Wymondham (Ayton Road)	13	29000				1041
Wymondham (Gateway 11 Business Park)	19.5	Not Available				N/A

\*Based on an average "rule of thumb" density of 300 sq. ft. per employee to obtain an indicative estimate only.

# 1 Longwater, Costessey

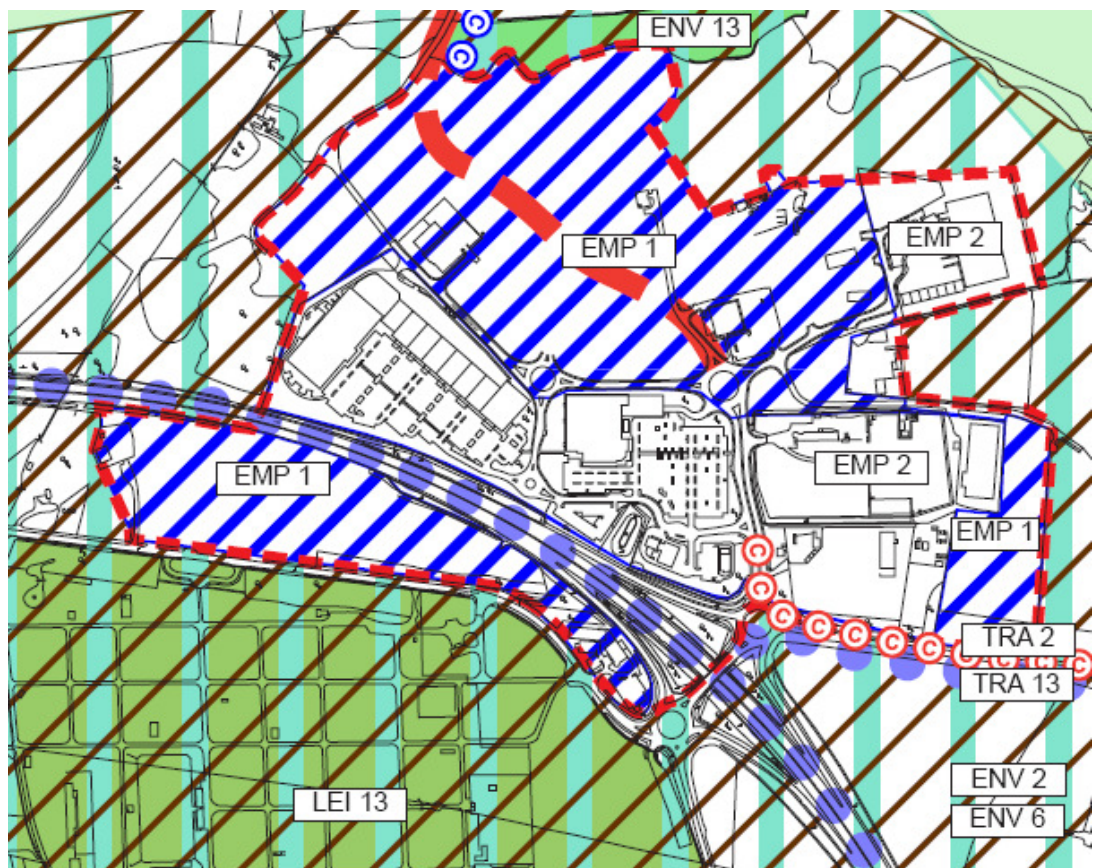
## 1.1 Brief Description

The subject estate is a newly formed business park which has been developed over the last 10 years, providing both retail and business units. The park is situated adjacent to the south Norwich A47 bypass and has a main feeder road into both the retail and business park area with further roadways leading around the park area.

There is an occupied warehouse and car park located at the east of the site. To the north east the land is divided between small to medium sized business units (photograph 29), open land and a fitness centre. There is also a large plot of open land to the west of the fitness centre (photographs 30 and 31). There is some heavy industry located to the northwest of the site.

The site is surrounded by various different industrial uses. There are two quarries, located at the far east and west of the site. There is a large Sainsbury's store and car park located to the south of the site and to the south west there is a group of several warehouses, also with attached car parking. To the northeast of the site there are several concrete ready mix plants.

**Figure 1: Employment Land Allocations at Longwater - Costessey**



The South Norfolk Local Plan designates 37 ha for employment land at Longwater, under policy EMP1. It is noted that there may be some total 89 ha of land available for employment development, comprising partially semi-derelict land and various mineral workings, although it is unrealistic to include this potential land quota within the Local Plan period, it is evident that there is capacity for development of the site to the north.

## 1.2 Site Area

The estate has a site area of 32.221 hectares and is bounded by open land and residential development.

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### **1.3 Floor Space**

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The total floor space of the current buildings on the estate is approximately 30000 sq m. There is a split between office and industrial users of approximately 20%: 80%.

### **1.4 Summary of Age of Building**

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The buildings on the estate are relatively new build with evidence that a variety of building materials were used in their construction. Given the nature of the development, the units are generally seen to be in good condition. See attached photographs.

### **1.5 Occupancy Levels**

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There are 5 new build units available to let, representing approximately 2% of the overall floor space on the estate. The units are currently occupied under B1, B2, B8 and sui generis planning uses. Occupiers include Uniglaze, Porsche, Norfolk Cement and Carrefour Health and Beauty. The Estate has had some difficulty in filling vacant units

### **1.6 Constraints/Suitability**

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The Park has main access directly off the A47 southern bypass road. On site access is good, with a large space available for turning areas. General parking availability is good. The Local Plan designates a potential 37 hectares of land for employment use at Longwater. The good accessibility to the Park and proximity to primary radial routes suggests that this land should certainly be developed further for employment use.

The main constraints for the development of the site are major junction improvement requirements at the A47 and electricity supply. In 2005 costs of £2m -£3m were quoted to in order to provide electricity to the site. Further investigations are required to identify whether EDF have carried out the necessary infrastructure improvements required to supply the site.

If additional growth is recommended for this location then further analysis will be required and significant funding made available to open up the site.

### **1.7 Public Transport**

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The site is well served by public transport and is served by the Eastern Counties bus service route numbers 16/ 16A (the Pink Line), which serves Costessey and Old Catton via Dereham Road, City Centre and Catton Grove. This service runs every 10-15 minutes. Konect Buses also runs the number 9 service between Wicklewood – Wymondham – N&NU Hospital – Costessey P&R and Longwater, yet this is fairly irregular, about every 2 or 3 hours.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

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The Longwater Business Park is a recent development with a range of good quality modern units, generally occupied by larger local and national covenants. There are some vacant units available at present. The South Norfolk Local Plan designates 37 ha for employment land at Longwater, under policy EMP1. It is noted that there may be a total potential 89 ha of land available for employment land development, comprising partially semi-derelict land and various mineral workings. Although it is unrealistic to include this potential land quota within the Local Plan period, it is evident that there is capacity for development of employment land to the north of the site, along with the appropriate remediation and site assembly.













## 2 Vinces Road Industrial Estate, Diss

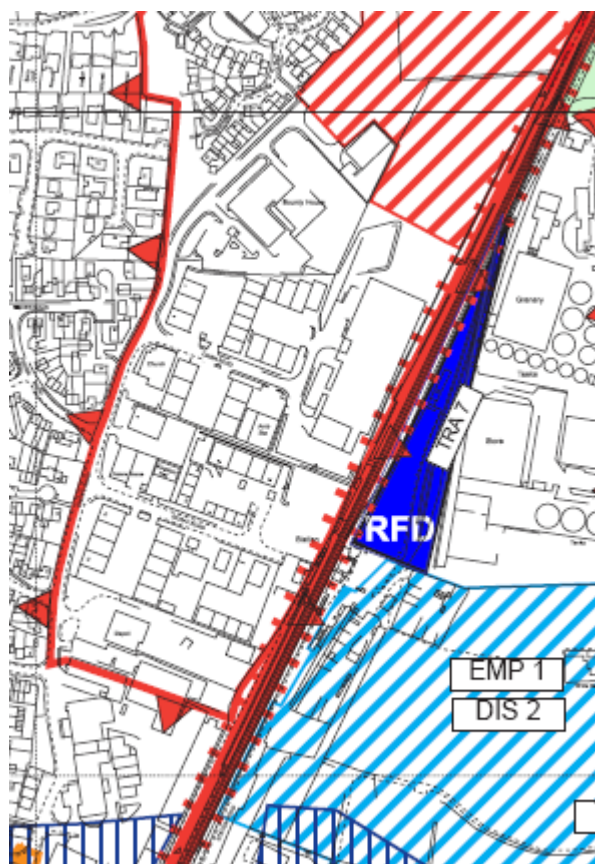
### 2.1 Brief Description

The subject site is an established industrial estate located to the west of Diss railway station and is served by Vinces Road which leads directly off the A1066 Victoria Road.

The estate comprises of a range of units dating from the 1960s, set out along feeder roads with formed terraces, forecourts and turning areas.

Vinces Road Industrial Estate is not allocated by the South Norfolk Local Plan.

**Figure 2: Vinces Road Industrial Estate, unallocated in South Norfolk Local Plan**



### 2.2 Site Area

The estate has a site area of approximately 12 hectares and is bounded by the railway line to the east and some 1960s/70s residential development to the west side, off Vinces Road.

A map of the site area is attached.

### 2.3 Floor Space

The total floor space of the current buildings on the estate totals approximately 24000 sq m. The split between office and industrial users is approximately 30%:70%.

### 2.4 Summary of Age of Building

The age of the buildings on the estate range from the 1960s to date, and there is evidence of some further in-fill units currently under construction. There is evidence of a variety of

building materials on the estate, ranging from brick under corrugated asbestos roofs to modern plastic coated profile sheet steel clad units.

The general condition of the units ranges between fair to good. A number of the buildings look fairly aged, and are generally showing signs of wear. See attached photographs.

## **2.5 Occupancy Levels**

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Presently, there are two vacant units, representing approximately 3% of the overall floor space on the estate. The units are currently occupied under B1, B2 and B8 planning uses with some minor A1 use in some units.

## **2.6 Constraints/Suitability**

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The estate has main access from urban standard adopted roads. On site, general access is good, with adequate turning areas. Parking availability is reasonable given the location of the railway station which has a generously sized car park.

## **2.7 Public Transport**

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The site is next to Diss railway station, where an half hourly service runs between London (Liverpool Street) - Stratford - Chelmsford - Colchester (North Rail Station) - Manningtree - Ipswich - Stowmarket - Diss - Norwich. The site is fairly well served by the Simonds bus service 2. This service runs between Diss and Norwich, via Roydon, Scole, Dickleburgh and Long Stratton with services running 5 times a day. The site is also served by a Diss circular bus service, the number 17, which runs hourly between 9am and 2pm. Anglian Buses also runs a service, the number 580 between Great Yarmouth and Diss vis Beccles, Bungay and Harleston, passing along Victoria Road. This service is hourly.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

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The Vince Road Diss Industrial Estate is an established estate with a range of medium to good quality units, the majority of which are mostly occupied by small to medium sized local and regional business users. There is little vacant space on the estate.











### 3 Mission Road / Sandy Lane: Diss

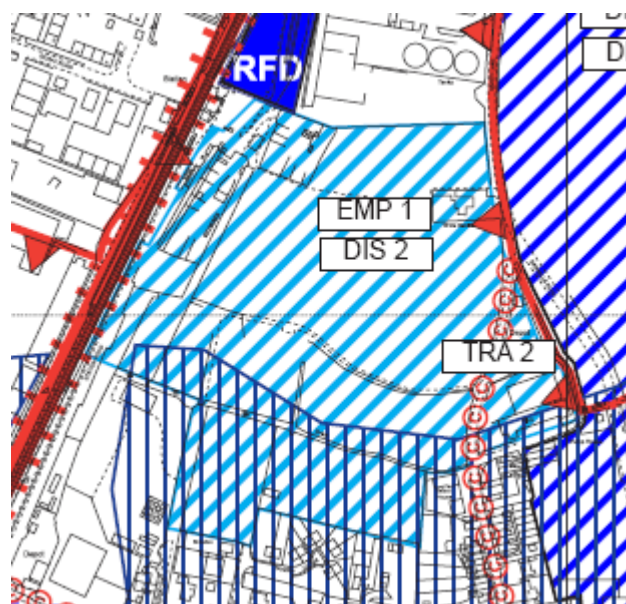
#### 3.1 Brief Description

The subject site is located to the southeast of Diss town centre and is adjacent to the rail line between Norwich and London. The A1066 lies at the south of the site, to the north and east there is open farmland.

The site is designated as both mixed use and future employment land under policy DIS2 and EMP1. The mixed use designation comprises a new housing estate, some existing industrial land and open land which currently has animals grazing on it. 7.1 hectares of land is designated for mixed use, including employment use.

The land to the east of the site has some existing industrial units. There are several large warehouses with attached car parks and also an industrial park with car park. Further north of the site there is a large area of open space

Figure 3: Mission Road/ Sandy Lane Local Plan Allocation



#### 3.2 Site Area

The site has an area of approximately 8 hectares.

#### 3.3 Constraints/suitability

The site has good transport links for both road and rail. On site access is good, both Sawmills Road and Mission Road serve the site from the A1066. The main constraint for the site is in the south where the land is in a flood risk area.

#### 3.4 Public Transport

The site is next to Diss railway station, where an half hourly service runs between London (Liverpool Street) – Stratford – Chelmsford – Colchester – Manningtree – Ipswich – Stowmarket – Diss – Norwich. The site is served by the Simonds route 2. The site is also served by a Diss circular bus service, route 17, which runs hourly between 9am and 2pm. Anglican Buses also runs an hourly bus service, route 580, between Great Yarmouth and Diss via Beccles, Bungay and Harlston, passing along Victoria Road.





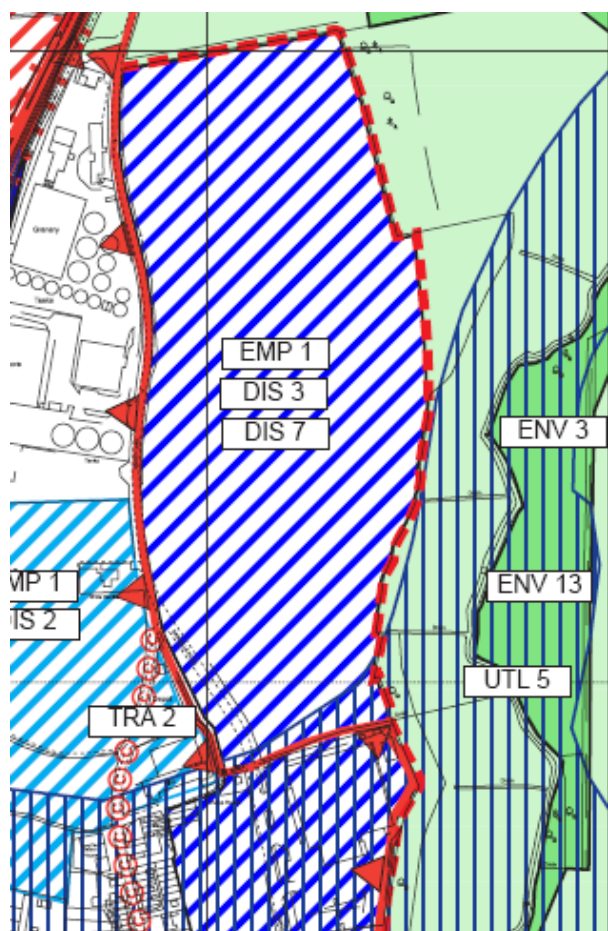
## 4 Sandy Lane/ Sawmills Farm: Diss

### 4.1 Brief Description

The subject site is located to the southeast of Diss town centre and is adjacent to the rail line between Norwich and London. The A1066 lies at the south of the site, to the north and east there is open farmland.

This 15.2 ha site is allocated by the South Norfolk Local Plan for B1, B2 and B8 employment uses, under Policy DIS3. There is also a development brief for the site, dating back to May 1990. Subsequent studies have investigated issues of site servicing arrangements and infrastructure constraints which have limited the site's potential expansion as employment land.

**Figure 4: Sandy Lane/ Sawmills Farm Employment Land Allocation**



### 4.2 Suitability and Constraints

The site area is approximately 15.2ha. The site has good transport links for both road and rail. On site access is good, both Sawmills Road and Mission Road serve the site from the A1066. The main constraint for the site is in the south where the land is in a flood risk area. Policy DIS3 stipulates that widening of Sandy Lane at the site frontage is required. This site is a large area of employment land and has capacity to meet the needs of the Diss catchment. However, there are substantial costs to overcome the site's infrastructure constraints.



## 5 Border Valley Industrial Estate, Harleston

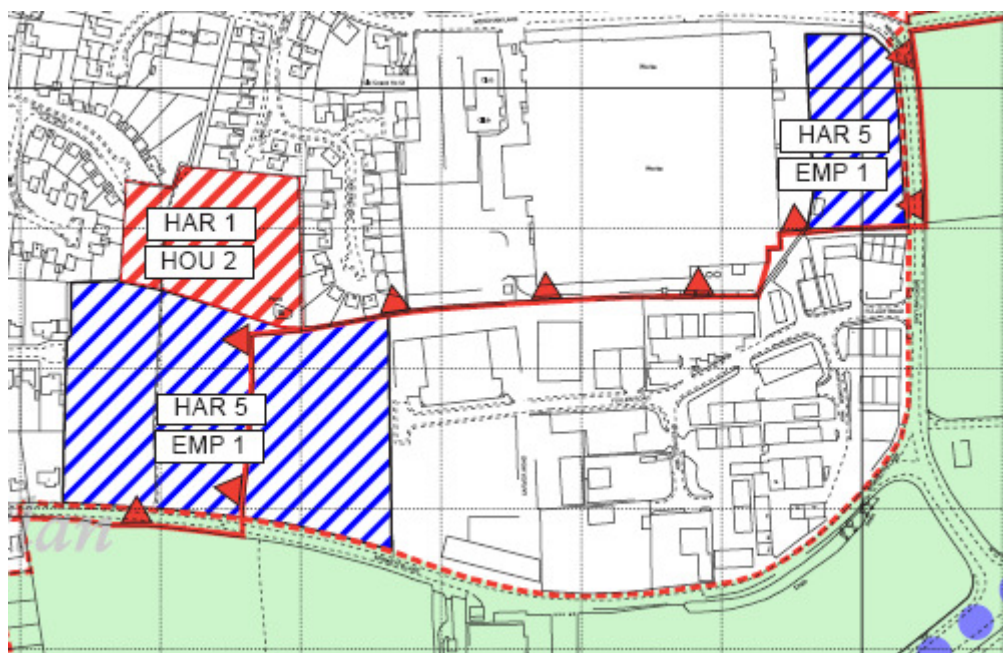
### 5.1 Brief Description

The subject site is an established industrial estate which has been gradually developed and extended over a period of time. The estate is located on the southern outskirts of Harleston, a south market Norfolk town situated north of the A143 Lowestoft/Bury St. Edmunds road.

The estate comprises of a variety of units ranging from small 1,000sq ft. units to large B8 storage use sheds. The estate is served by a main spine road (Fuller Road) with two principal roads, Mayflower Road and Speedwell Road branching off - the smaller units have mainly developed along these two roads. The larger units have been developed on the remaining side of Fuller Road with the estate having been extended by modern larger units to the far west of the site. The estate is not itself allocated in the South Norfolk Local Plan.

The estate has two employment allocations adjacent. Spirketts Lane is a 3.6ha site to the west of the Border Valley Industrial Estate and the eastern allocation is known as the former Howard Rotavator yard, and is 1 ha in size. These sites are allocated for employment land development alongside the existing industrial estate.

**Figure 5: Harleston Employment Land Allocation**



### 5.2 Site Area

The estate has a site area of approximately 8.9 hectares and is bounded by agricultural land and the southern outskirts of Harleston.

A map of the site area is attached.

### 5.3 Floor Space

The total floor space of the current buildings on the estate totals approximately 45000 sq m. The split between office and industrial users is approximately 10%: 90%.

### 5.4 Summary of Age of Building

The age of the buildings on the estate ranges from 1960s to contemporary new build. There is evidence that a variety of building materials have been used in the construction of the

site, ranging from brick units under corrugated asbestos roofs to B8 sheds of plastic coated profile sheet steel cladding.

The general condition of the units varies between fair to good. See attached photographs.

### **5.5 Occupancy Levels**

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There is presently one vacant unit, representing approximately 1% of the overall floor space on the estate. The units are currently occupied under B1, B2, B8 and sui generis planning uses with a very small amount of A1 and D1 use.

### **5.6 Constraints/Suitability**

---

The estate has main access from Mendham Road, a road leading from the A143 bypass road to Harleston town centre. On site general access is good, with good turning areas and forecourts. Parking availability on site is fairly low. In terms of development of the employment allocations, the Spirketts Lane site has experienced great resistance from the landowner for development. This is a major barrier to development.

### **5.7 Public Transport**

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The site is served by Anglian Coach Service number 580, which stops in nearby Broad Street and runs between Great Yarmouth and Diss, via Beccles, Bungay and Harleston. The service runs hourly only. Service 004 also runs from Harleston to Norwich, but only 4 times per day and only twice from Norwich to Harleston.

### **5.8 Conclusion**

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The Border Valley Harleston Estate is an established estate with medium to good quality units, which are occupied by a range of small to large both local and regional business users. The estate has a low vacancy rate and is almost fully occupied, thus the allocation for employment land at this site should remain in order to encourage further growth and development of the estate. There is demand for industrial space in South Norfolk, particularly freehold development, so it is estimated that the market will be able to sustain development on this allocation.











## **6 Hethel (Lotus)**

### **6.1 Brief Description**

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The Hethel site was originally an Airfield and is now an established industrial estate located in Hethel, southeast of Norwich. Access to the estate is from the A11 via Wymondham Road. The estate is privately owned by Lotus Cars and is used for the manufacture and testing of cars.

The estate comprises of a range and style of mixed industrial and office use units.

### **6.2 Site Area**

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The estate has a site area of approximately 19.5 hectares and is bounded by rural land. A pro-map of the site area is attached.

### **6.3 Floor Space**

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The total floor space of the current buildings on the estate totals approximately 43500 sq m.

### **6.4 Summary of Age of Building**

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Lotus moved to the Hethel facility in 1966 to occupy a range of existing airfield buildings which have subsequently been replaced and/or expanded with a range of modern high specification business units.

Very few of the original buildings remain and car production is now carried out in modern units.

As the photographs show, the site is well maintained and provides a range of buildings suitable for a modern high technology engineering environment.

### **6.5 Constraints/Suitability**

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The estate has access from Wymondham Road, a short distance from the junction of the A11 exit for Wymondham town centre. Accessibility is poor – the roads serving the site are narrow and potentially need upgrading and resurfacing.

### **6.6 Public Transport**

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The site is not well served by public transport, as most of the local bus services go through Wymondham or Hethersett, which are both on the northern side of the A11.

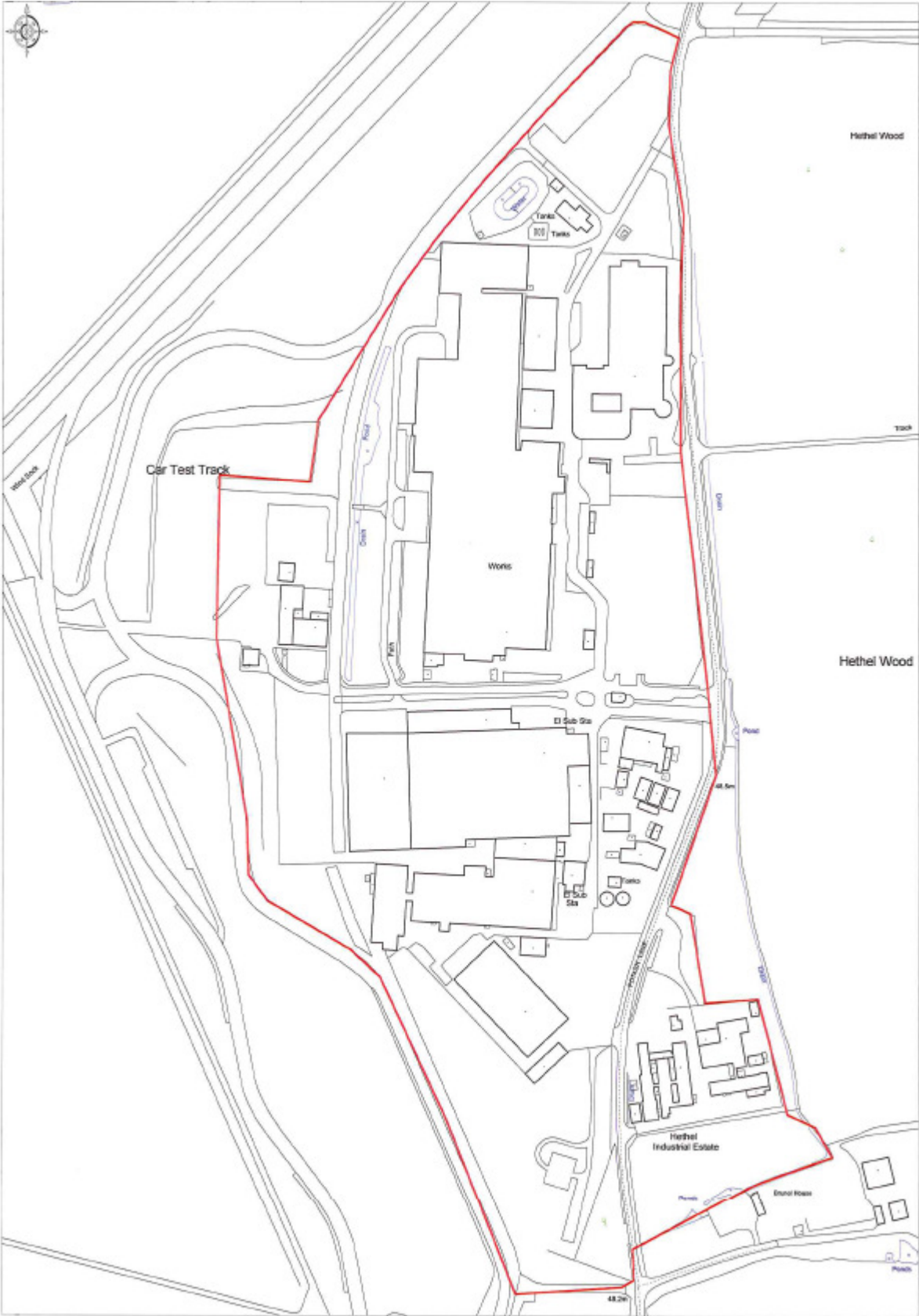
### **6.7 Conclusion**

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The Estate provides a high profile state of the art facility for modern industry. Potential for of the expansion of the site could be investigated for employment land.



Figure 6: Pro Map outline of Hethel site



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## 7 Hingham

### 7.1 Brief Description

The subject site is an established estate which has undergone peripheral expansion, situated on the eastern outskirts of the Norfolk village of Hingham which is located approximately 15 miles south west of Norwich. The estate has direct access off the B1108, Norwich Road.

The estate comprises of a development of late 1960s/early 1970s low eaves storage units, served by concreted turning areas and forecourts off a main access spine road, (Ironsides Way) which has been expanded to the peripheries by way of larger production and warehouse units serviced by concrete access roadways. The existing estate is now fully developed.

2.5ha of land to the north of Norwich Road is allocated as an extension to the existing industrial estate.

Figure 7: Hingham Employment Land Allocation



### 7.2 Site Area

The estate has a site area of 4.407 hectares and is bounded by agricultural land and residential outskirts to the eastern fringes of Hingham.

A map of the site area is attached.

### 7.3 Floor Space

The total floor space of the current buildings on the estate totals approximately 14400 sq m. The split between office and industrial users is approximately 10%: 90%.

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#### **7.4 Summary of Age of Building**

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The age of the buildings on the estate ranges from the 1960s to contemporary new build. The building types ranging from timber, blockwork and asbestos roofed units to more modern profile steel sheet clad distribution sheds. There is also a relatively new build brick under tiled office block to the western side of the estate.

The general condition of the units can be described as fair to good. A number of the buildings show obsolescence in the nature of their construction and materials which were generally showing signs of wear. See attached photographs.

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#### **7.5 Occupancy Levels**

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There is presently one small B1 vacant unit, representing approximately 2% of the overall floor space on the estate. The units are currently occupied under B1, B2 and B8 planning uses with some A1 use.

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#### **7.6 Constraints/Suitability**

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The estate has main access from a through rural road. On site general access is good, with adequate turning areas. Parking availability on site is fairly poor.

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#### **7.7 Public Transport**

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Hingham is served by the Konect Bus route, service number 3 which runs between Norwich – N&NU Hospital – Hingham – Walton – Shipdham, which runs hourly. The site is short walk from the Market Place in Hingham, where the bus stops.

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#### **7.8 Conclusion**

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The Hingham Business Centre is an established estate with medium to good quality units, which are occupied by small to large mostly local business users. The site is fairly fully occupied, with one small vacant unit. Furthermore, the Local Plan allocation, HIN1 has largely been developed. Thus, there is limited capacity for further development of employment land.







## 8 Loddon

As well as the existing Loddon Industrial Estate at Little Money Road which is allocated in the South Norfolk Plan as an employment site (EMP2 – see section 8.1), there are two further employment allocations considered in this site review of Loddon's employment land – LOD1 (and 2) (see section 8.2) and LOD3. (see section 8.3)

### 8.1 Loddon Industrial Estate

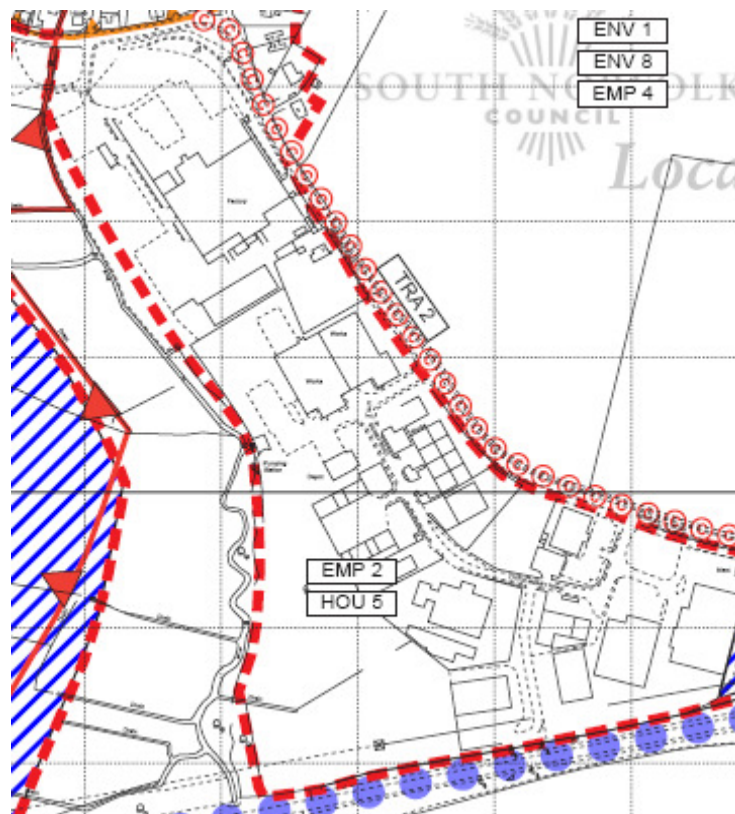
#### 8.1.1 Brief Description

The site is an established industrial estate undergoing further periodic in-fill development south of Loddon, situated approximately 13 miles south of Norwich on the A146 Norwich to Beccles road.

The estate comprises of a range of smaller terraced industrial units and larger bespoke office and industrial processing/warehouse units. Little Money Road provides the main access/spine road on the estate.

The South Norfolk Local Plan designates the industrial estate for both employment use and housing, although policy HOU5 suggests that housing would only be permitted if there was a demonstrable balance between housing and employment provision in Loddon.

**Figure 8: Loddon Industrial Estate**



#### 8.1.2 Site Area

The estate has a site area of 48.69 hectares and is bounded by the A146 bypass and Beccles Road.

A map of the site area is attached.

#### 8.1.3 Floor Space

The total floor space of the current buildings on the estate totals approximately 19000 sq m. The split between office and industrial use is approximately 15%: 85%.

**8.1.4 Summary of Age of Building**

The age of the buildings on the estate ranges from the 1960s to the 1990s with a variety of building styles ranging from basic corrugated sheet steel clad to later brick and plastic coated profile sheet steel clad under dual pitched roof units.

The general condition of the units can be described as being good in relatively modern order. See attached photographs.

**8.1.5 Occupancy Levels**

At present, one of the smaller terraced units and 300.72sq.m. of office space is vacant, representing approximately 3% of the overall floor space on the estate. The units are currently occupied under B1, B2, B8 and sui generis planning uses, and there is a car sales/servicing outlet on site.

**8.1.6 Constraints/Suitability**

The estate has main access from adopted roads. On site general access is good, with generous parking and turning areas to many of the units.

**8.1.7 Public Transport**

The site is served by a variety of nearby bus routes. Loddon town centre is served by the Anglian Bus service number 570 which serves the Haddiscoe – Loddon – Alington – Norwich route, with 4 buses per day. Service 577 serves the Loddon to Beccles/ Great Yarmouth via Thurlton route, which runs 4 times a day. Anglian Buses also runs service number 1, which serves the Loddon to Norwich route via Surlingham, yet this service only runs once a day.

**8.1.8 Conclusion**

The Loddon Industrial Estate is an established estate which has undergone and about to undergo further in-fill development with presently medium to good quality units, occupied by small local to larger regional business users. The majority of units on the estate are now occupied and it is intended to further develop an in-fill area of the site in due course. Expansion of the estate and the potential capacity for employment land should be considered alongside the further two allocations in Loddon, as discussed below.



