

**EAST HERTS EMPLOYMENT LAND REVIEW UPDATE 2013**

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PART TWO – Individual site reports (available separately).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In 2008, consultants Halcrow were commissioned to carry out an 'Employment Land and Policy Review', Chapter 6 of which assessed the quality of the district's employment sites on a 'fit-for-purpose' basis, grading them Green, Amber or Red as appropriate. Halcrow noted that with the exception of Bishop's Stortford, the East Herts towns fulfil a local rather than regional role and that much of the existing office space was old and of poor quality. However 61% of employment land was classified as Green (to be safeguarded for employment use), 35% as Amber (to be considered for improvement or redevelopment for employment use) and 4% Red - (to be considered for release if better new employment sites could be allocated to replace them).

2. Against a background of continuing economic uncertainty and initiatives by the Coalition Government to support economic growth, the Council has now agreed to review the Halcrow work and, where appropriate, identify opportunities for interventions to improve the quality and quantity of employment land and local jobs. Since 2008, the planning policy context has changed significantly with the demise of regional planning and economic development agencies, the simplifying of national planning policy guidance and more recently, measures to enable offices to be converted to residential without express planning consent. Work by consultants DTZ as part of the evidence base for the emerging District Plan has confirmed that Bishops Stortford has the strongest prospects for employment growth, linked to its location close to the M11 and the likely growth of Stansted Airport.

3. All the sites reviewed by Halcrow have been re-visited and assessed against the same criteria. A small number of sites have been re-graded and several have been examined at a more detailed level than in the Halcrow report. Relatively few sites have been lost to employment use and in the majority of cases, the Council has been successful in retaining an element of employment use. In general, the districts employment sites have survived the recession with relatively low levels of vacancy.

4. Opportunities for interventions fall into three categories:

(i) relatively low-key improvements to signage and estate environments which, while investing in the quality of estates, is unlikely to deliver significant increases in the number or quality of jobs (Mimram Road);

(ii) Minor capital works to overcome constraints which may lead to wider opportunities to restructure and improve employment areas (Caxton Hill);

(iii) Major capital works to unlock constraints and bring forward brownfield land for development (Mead Lane) or to improve the functioning of key estates in prime locations (Raynham Road, Bishops Stortford).

5. However the resources and time required to achieve even the lowest level of improvements should not be underestimated. Even the provision of new signage will require consultation with and the agreement of, tenants and landowners, possible land acquisitions and safety audits. More complex schemes such as Mead Lane may require the diversion of statutory services, road closures, changes to traffic signalling and other facilitating works. There will also be the need to make available the resources and skills to support these interventions and work proactively in partnership with major land owners to progressively improve the districts employment land. The report concludes with recommendations covering these issues.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At its meeting in July 2012, the Council agreed a report proposing four new strategic themes as a revision to the Economic Development Strategy and identifying project funding that would deliver these. One theme is to *'create a more business friendly environment in*

*our towns and town centres and deliver targeted initiatives to support the viability of employment land in the district*. Funding of up to £144,000 from the New Homes Bonus was agreed to support Hertford Futures, Bishops Stortford 2020 Vision and an Industrial Estates Modernisation Programme based on a review of work carried out by consultants Halcrow and published in October 2008 (East Herts Employment Land and Policy Review) Progress on delivering this last aspect of the strategic theme forms the basis of this report.

- 1.2 This review comes at a time when the Coalition Government's focus is on stimulating economic development, increasing the supply of housing and reducing bureaucracy and red-tape which it believes is holding back the country's competitiveness. These ambitions can be seen in the recent proposals to make it easier for offices to be converted to residential uses, discussed in 3.4 below.

## **2. EMPLOYMENT LAND AND POLICY REVIEW 2008 (HALCROW)**

### **Methodology:**

- 2.1 In 2008, the Council commissioned consultants Halcrow to carry out an Employment Land Review with the primary objective of *'assessing the supply and demand for employment land and premises in East Herts over the period to 2021 and assist in preparation of the East Herts Local Development Framework and main Development Plan Documents.'* The Review consisted of three main stages:
- Assessing the existing supply and demand for employment land,
  - assessing future requirements and
  - making policy recommendations for a future portfolio of sites.
- 2.2 The approach adopted by Halcrow was based on that set out in the ODPM Guidance note on Employment Land Reviews, published in December 2004 and 'East of England Employment Land Review Guidance (March 2008). It comprised:
- A visual survey of sites (January – June 2008) to ascertain the baseline in terms of existing supply
  - An examination of a range of potential employment growth scenarios (suggesting a net increase in need of between 2 and 5ha), and
  - A traffic light assessment of existing employment estates where 'Green' sites should be safeguarded for employment use, 'Amber' sites considered for improvement or redevelopment for employment use and 'Red' sites should be considered for release for other uses provided that better new employment sites are allocated to replace them.
- 2.3 It is this final part of the Halcrow report (Chapter 6) that forms the basis of this review. Work on updating the employment growth forecasts has been commissioned separately to form part of the baseline data for the emerging District Plan and, where appropriate, this is referred to in Sections 3.9 to 3.11 below.
- 2.4 The DCLG and East of England Guidance was based on the concept of 'fitness for purpose', balancing a 'market-led' approach against a planning/sustainable development –led view. It therefore tries to balance commercial factors – where businesses want to locate (and why) against factors such as access by public transport, the sequential test, contribution to regeneration, distances travelled to work and jobs/workforce ratio.

## **KEY FINDINGS**

- 2.5 Halcrow identified 42 major employment locations in the district although in some cases it clustered together several sites in different ownership where they were in geographical proximity and shared the same classification. It also did not account for a number of smaller

locations in rural areas so the total number of employment areas within the district is probably in excess of 60.

## 2.6 Key findings included:

- East Herts towns (perhaps with the exception of Bishops Stortford) are not considered by the market as prime commercial property locations – they fulfil local rather than regional needs;
- The majority of office space was built pre-1940 and is not attractive to modern occupiers;
- Apart from Bishops Stortford, the main problem is poor road links;
- In 2008 there was an oversupply of both office and industrial premises and very little new development in the pipeline.
- Low demand reinforces the low quality of the stock forming a further barrier to attracting new occupiers.
- Bishops Stortford bucked the trend with low vacancy and good links to the strategic road network.
- Most estates ranked 'Amber' could benefit from some refurbishment and better signage/branding;
- Where there is a high vacancy rate, 'Red' estates could be considered for release provided that better quality employment locations could be found to replace them;
- Predicted structural change up to 2021 will see a reduced demand for B2 (general industry) premises but increased demand for B1 (offices, R+D) and B8 (warehousing and distribution). Whether redevelopment of existing B2 areas for B1 takes place will depend on the overall location and attractiveness of the estate.

## 2.7 In terms of 'fitness for purpose'

- 61% of employment land was classified as 'Green' (74ha)
- 35% as 'Amber' (42ha)
- 4% as 'Red' (5ha).

## 3. POLICY AND OTHER CHANGES SINCE 2008

### THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL ECONOMY:

- 3.1 The timing of the survey work on which Halcrow was based coincided with the 'peaking' of the economy in 2008 followed swiftly by first national recession since 1975 which officially lasted from spring 2008 to summer 2009. This followed the bursting of the housing bubble in the US in mid 2007, the collapse of Lehman Brothers in September 2008 and, in the UK, cuts in interest rates and pumping of money by the government into ailing money markets. The economy recovered in late 2009-2010 only to slip back into recession in late 2010. At the time of writing, a triple-dip recession appears to have been avoided although it is generally accepted that it will take a number of years before the economy returns to peak 2008 levels of employment and economic activity. It would be reasonable to expect these harsher economic conditions to be reflected in the level of occupancy of local employment estates. However, in terms of the local effects of the 'credit crunch' and recession, the economies of the east of England, Hertfordshire and East Herts appear to have weathered the storm better than some other parts of the UK with lower levels of unemployment and company failures.

### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.2 At the time of the Halcrow report, the planning policy background was radically different to what it is today. The then Governments 'Sustainable Communities Plan' designated the 'London-Stansfeld-Cambridge-Peterborough corridor as one of four 'Growth Areas' with an emphasis on the creation of new housing and jobs. Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) was in

the process of being replaced with Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and a Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England was published in May 2008 (The East of England Plan) which indicated a job growth target for Hertfordshire of 68,000 new jobs by 2021. In parallel, the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), prepared by the East of England Regional Development Agency (RDA) in 2004 and updated in a consultation draft in September 2007 suggested that the Stansted/Harlow sub region (including part of East Herts) should become an important regional centre for growth, maximising economic development opportunities afforded by its proximity to London, Stansted and Cambridge.

3.3 On coming to power in 2010, the coalition government announced that it would abolish Regional Spatial Strategies and replace RDA's with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). PPGs and PPS have been replaced with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which, in terms of economic development, includes the following statements:

- *The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth*
- *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.*
- *Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing*
- *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*

## **CHANGES TO PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

3.4 In January 2013, the Coalition Government announced that following a consultation, it intended to implement changes to permitted development rights to enable changes of use from offices (B1(a)) to residential as part of a package of measures to support economic growth. The new rights will be initially time-limited for a period of three years after which they will be reviewed and will be accompanied by a prior approval process covering transport and highway impacts, details of which have yet to be announced. Local Authorities have been given the opportunity to make the case for exemption for specific parts of their area and a number, particularly in London are expected to do so. Uttlesford District Council is to seek an exemption for a zone covering Stansted Airport, expressing concern that if empty office blocks close to the airport were converted to residential, then an up-turn in airport traffic could result in pressure to build new offices in the rural area.

3.5 This Council has decided not to apply for an exemption, taking the view that any changes of use are only likely to affect 'character' buildings in the rural area and the changes will not have a significant effect on the overall stock of office buildings. While the market for non-prime office floorspace is depressed and residential values are higher, emptying buildings and changing their use in three years is challenging and many purpose-built offices do not lend themselves to conversion.

## **LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES**

3.6 The East Herts Local Plan 2007 sought to make provision for modest growth in housing and employment in the district's towns and some villages while retaining their quality and market town character. In terms of economic development, it aims to

*A. To maintain high and stable levels of economic growth and employment in the District by encouraging a strong and diverse local economy with a wide range of employment opportunities, whilst ensuring effective protection and enhancement of the environment and the prudent use of resources.*

*B. To support and seek to implement the Economic Development Strategies for the County and the District.*

3.7 Its objectives include:

*1. Wherever possible to direct employment generating uses to brownfield sites within the main settlements.*

*3. To maintain the attractiveness of the District as a location for business.*

*4. To maintain the current range of employment sites to meet the needs of the local economy and to monitor future requirements.*

3.8 Relevant policies related to economic development and employment are set out in Appendix A. Until the emerging District Plan is adopted, the 2007 Local Plan (together with the National Planning Policy Framework where there is consistency between the two) remains the planning policy guidance for new development in East Herts.

## **EMERGING EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN**

3.9 Alongside the update of Halcrow, work is on-going to develop the evidence base for the District Plan. Consultants DTZ were commissioned in 2012 to report on likely future patterns of employment growth in the district, to consider the socio-economic factors that will influence where that growth takes place, to consider the implications for the distribution of planned development and to produce employment forecasts to 2031.

3.10 The consultants note that East Herts is not a self-contained economy but functions as part of a wider sub-region and tends to play a supporting role to adjacent urban centres and Stansted Airport. Each of the surrounding authorities has significant large scale sites (or potential sites) better located to capture major investment and jobs and while the economy of East Herts is likely to continue to grow, it will be through the attraction of small and medium sized employers. Bishop's Stortford is seen as the town with the strongest prospects for employment growth because of its location close to the M11 but opportunities in Hertford and Ware are likely to be more restricted and there is likely to be a need to rejuvenate and adapt existing employment estates and potentially identify new sites for B1 development.

3.11 While noting the uncertainties that accompany economic forecasting, the consultants suggests that over the next 19 years (to 2031), an additional 9,700 jobs are likely to be created in East Herts of which at least 6,100 will be in the financial and businesses services sector.

## **GROWTH OF STANSTED AIRPORT**

3.12 From 1997 to 2007, Stansted saw rapid expansion of passenger numbers on the back of a

boom in low cost air travel, peaking at 24 million in the 12 months to October 2007. Since then, passenger numbers have been in decline, dropping to 18 million in 2011 and 17.5 million in 2012. Freight tonnage peaked in 2005 at 237,000 tonnes, fell to 198,000 tonnes in 2008 but has recovered slightly to 202,600 tonnes in 2012.

- 3.13 In May 2010, Stansted Airport Ltd withdrew its planning application for a second runway (G2) following the decision by the Coalition Government not to support expansion. Subsequently, the airport has been sold by British Airports Authority to the Manchester Airports Group and it can reasonably be expected that the new owners will seek to grow the airport's capacity in terms of both passengers and freight with possible benefits for parts of the East Herts economy. The coalition government has embarked upon a review of airport capacity in the south-east but will not publish its conclusions until after the next election.
- 3.14 At the time of writing, Uttlesford District Council is considering the release of up to 18ha of employment land at Stansted for non-airport related employment uses. Consultants DTZ suggest that this is likely to appeal to warehouse and light industrial users, and one local agent anticipates that the land could attract existing users from the Woodside Estate in Bishop's Stortford.

#### **4. THE 2012/13 REVIEW:**

##### **METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The approach adopted follows the Halcrow approach of a visual inspection of the 42 employment areas examined in the report (together with the Haslemere Estate and the Sheppards Garage/Mill Site in Bishops Stortford) to update the checklist, together with conversations with commercial property agents and where it is possible to identify them, owners or managers of the major employment areas. Within the resources available for the task, it has not been possible to visit every business nor to accurately quantify the amount of land that sits within the various business use classes other than by visual inspection and/or the Companies name/web search. On occasions, it can be difficult to ascertain whether premises are indeed vacant or in use – a visual inspection may reveal no sign of activity or evidence of a company name while a web search may suggest that a business still operates. Finally, the identification of properties as vacant may not necessarily suggest a lack of market demand for that property in that location but may be the result of legal processes which for the time being, prevent a property from being let. An example is 'The Chase' on the Foxholes Estate in Hertford where the majority of the modern B1 units on this prime estate are vacant. Enquiries reveal that this is due to legal procedures following the merger of two major telecoms companies and the offer for sale of the freehold.
- 4.2 In other situations, properties noted as vacant at the time of inspection may be occupied soon after while other properties advertised as 'to let' may still be occupied by existing tenants pending a move to alternative premises.

##### **TRAFFIC LIGHTS COMPARISON**

- 4.3 Using the traffic light approach, Appendix B provides the results of the 2013 review in comparison with the assessments provided by Halcrow in 2008. The majority of the Halcrow assessments are still considered to be valid with the following exceptions:
- Upgraded Red to Amber – Caxton Hill, Hertford
  - Upgraded Amber to Green – Merchant Drive, Hertford: Mimram Road Hertford: Langley House, Station Road, Standon:
  - Downgraded Green to Amber – Millside, Bishop's Stortford; Standon Business Park:
  - Downgraded Amber to Red – The Spinney, Stanstead Abbots.

- 4.4 In other cases, areas not subject to a detailed assessment by Halcrow have been individually graded (Mead Lane, Hertford and Raynham Road, Bishop's Stortford).

## GAINS AND LOSSES

- 4.5 Since 2008, a small number of sites have been wholly or partially lost to 'traditional' employment uses. These include parts of the Twyford Industrial Estate in Bishop's Stortford, part of the Taylor Trading Estate in Hertford, the Watton Business Centre and Widbury Hill in Ware. In all these cases, and to a greater or lesser degree, an element of employment has been retained though in the case of the Twyford Industrial Estate and Widbury Hill, no progress appears to have been made in the provision of the 'new' office buildings. Terlings Park in Gilston now has consent for residential redevelopment.

## 5. MAIN SETTLEMENTS

### BISHOP'S STORTFORD

- 5.1 Both the DTZ report and local agents confirm that Bishop's Stortford is the district's most important employment location due to its proximity to the M11 and Stansted Airport although the distinction is made between employment areas close to M11 Junction 8 and those closer to the town centre. In terms of the employment estates within the town, the majority of the assessments by Halcrow are still considered relevant. Goodliffe Park, Stort Valley Industrial Estate, Southmill Trading Centre, Stortford Hall Industrial Park, and the Woodside Industrial Estate score highly due to their good quality buildings and layout. Further business units at Woodside are expected to be constructed in 2013. The Birchanger Industrial Estate is older with some circulation and parking issues but again scores green due to its good location- while not the most attractive area, it works.
- 5.2 The Haslemere Estate was not reviewed by Halcrow but comprises a relatively modern estate offering good quality units and site layout. However vacancy rates are high and it suffers from poor location on the 'wrong' side of the town and poor signing from the main road network. It should be retained for employment use and better signing provided. The town centre site comprising the Flour Mill, Stonemasons Yard and former Sheppard's Garage was also absent from the Halcrow study but provides an opportunity for redevelopment to support the economic well-being of the town centre.
- 5.3 Twyford Road was treated by Halcrow as a single estate – however it comprises two distinct areas – the older (but well occupied) Twyford Industrial Estate and the more modern (circa 1985) Twyford Business Centre. Poor access is the main issue and the relatively low rents achieved (£6-£7 ftsq) reflect the level of demand. In the longer term, opportunities should be explored to redevelop the area and replace the employment floorspace in a better location.
- 5.4 The Millside Estate is also well-occupied but contains poor quality buildings – again replacement of the floorspace could be considered but in a better location.

Estate	Settlement	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	Comments	Opportunities for enhancement
Goodliffe Park,	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality Estate, good location	N/A
Stort Valley Industrial Estate	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	As above	N/A
Birchanger Industrial Estate	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good location but mixed quality	N/A
Millside Estate	Bishop's	Green	Amber	Poor location and quality	N/A



	Stortford				
Southmill Trading Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality and popular estate	N/A
Stortford Hall Industrial Park,	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality Estate, good location	N/A
Woodside Industrial Estate	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	As above	N/A
Twyford Road	Bishop's Stortford	Amber	Amber	Poor location and mixed quality	N/A
Haslemere Estate	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Green	Not included by Halcrow in 2008	Signing from London Road
Mill site, Stonemasons Yard and former Sheppard's garage, Dane Street	Bishops Stortford	N/A	Amber	Major town centre employment site now partly vacant	Redevelopment opportunity to support the economy of the town centre

5.5 The most significant employment area in Bishop's Stortford is at Raynham Road. This was treated by Halcrow as a two areas - Raynham Road (rated Amber) and The Links Business Centre (Rated Green) but it is essentially made up of four distinct areas each with different characteristics but together sharing the same problems of access and image. For the purpose of this review, they are treated as follows:

Estate	Settlement	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	Comments	Opportunities for enhancement
Raynham Road (East)	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Amber	Mixed quality and parking issues	Access and signage
Raynham Road (West)	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Green	At extreme western end of Raynham Road	As above
Raynham Close/Myson Way	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Green	Good quality units mostly in use.	As above
The Links Business Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality small units	As above

5.6 The individual elements of Raynham Road are described in more detail in the schedules in Part 2. Three of the four areas are rated green and it should be noted that the owners of the area described as Raynham Road West (Howard Property Trust) are progressively redeveloping poor quality industrial units with new 'trade/industrial/warehouse' units.

5.7 The main issue with the whole Raynham Road area lie close to its junction with Dunmow Road where excessive parking associated with Hilton Coachworks (a highly congested site) spills out onto Raynham Road resulting in a cluttered environment and sometimes difficulties for larger vehicles accessing units to the west. Given the DTZ comments regarding the advantages of location close to Junction 8 and the Airport, it is recommended that improvements to access and parking be investigated and that the area be retained for employment use. For the purposes of this Review, it is rated Green. The costs of improving the junction with Dunmow Road could cost between £150,000 - £300,000 excluding land acquisition. The land in question forms part of the detached playing field to Birchwood School and the agreement of both the school and HCC would be required.

## BUNTINGFORD

Estate	Settlement	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	Comments	Opportunities for enhancement
Buntingford Business Park	Buntingford	Green	Green	Good quality estate but large unit	N/A

				currently vacant	
Park Farm Industrial Estate	Buntingford	Green	Green	Average quality and good layout/parking	N/A
Sainsbury's Distribution Depot	Buntingford	Green	Green	Established distribution depot	N/A
Silkmead Industrial Estate, Hare Street	Buntingford	Amber	Amber	Farm estate of average to poor quality buildings in an unsustainable location	N/A
Watermill Industrial Estate	Buntingford	Amber	Amber	Average to poor quality estate with access constraints	Improved access

5.8 **Buntingford Business Park** provides good quality employment space although one unit (approximately 30% of the total floor area) is currently vacant. An adjoining site owned by Veolia has permission for a car park which should ease the current parking difficulties. **Park Farm** is a well laid out employment area with average quality units and good circulation/parking and should be retained for business use. Prologis have consent to redevelop the former **Sainsbury's Distribution Depot** for B8 purposes. **Silkmead Industrial Estate** is essentially a rural business area, made up mainly of converted wooden farm buildings while the **Watermill Industrial Estate** is of average quality and is constrained by restricted access.

## HERTFORD

5.9 In terms of the overall supply of employment land, Hertford (together with Ware) provide the bulk of the district's stock. As noted by DTZ, employment land here tends to serve a more local market (compared to Bishops Stortford) and agents comment that much of the stock is second hand and of average to poor quality. However there are wide variations both in the quality of the stock and the attractiveness of the estates.

Estate	Settlement	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	Comments	Opportunities for enhancement
Foxholes Industrial Estate	Hertford	Green	Green	Premier employment area but some parking problems	Improvement of signage and removal of clutter at A414 Junction
Hartham Lane Green	Hertford	Green	Green	Good town centre employment area	N/A
Pegs Lane	Hertford	Green	Green	Good location but inflexible buildings	Work with owners to facilitate the redevelopment of Sovereign House
Windsor Industrial Estate	Hertford	Green	Green	Good quality estate, fully let	Improvements to signage
Taylor Trading Estate	Hertford	Amber	Amber	Average to poor quality – possible consider for release	N/A
Wareham's Lane	Hertford	Amber	Amber	Good location and access. Mixed quality units	Better signing
Mimram Road	Hertford	Amber	Green	Average quality units and good layout.	Better Signing
Caxton Hill	Hertford	Red	Amber	Mainly poor quality units and access problems but long term potential for mixed redevelopment	Pursue vehicular link to Foxholes and encourage long term mixed development in conjunction with the provision of new employment uses at Mead Lane

- 5.10 The newest and most prestigious estate in Hertford is **Foxholes Business Park**, described by one local agent as ‘the only business park in town’. It benefits from good quality buildings and layout and its location close to the A10. However its attractiveness is compromised by indiscriminate parking and advertising clutter at the junction of John Tate Road and the A414, associated with the Mercedes Benz Garage located close to the junction.
- 5.11 The Great Northern Works and other business units in **Hartham Lane** are also popular, well-located and serve a local need. The complex in **Pegs Lane** is dominated by public sector employment and while well-located in terms of the town centre contains a large vacant 1960’s office building – Sovereign House – which is unlikely to be re-occupied for employment use. While a redevelopment for B1 office use would be preferred, a mixed development containing residential and business use may create more value and be the way to bring this important site back into beneficial use.
- 5.12 The **Windsor Industrial Estate** is a modern estate with good quality units and full occupancy while the nearby **Taylor Trading Estate** is of poorer quality, no doubt reflected in the decision to allow part to be redeveloped for (primarily) residential purposes. Consideration should be given to the long term release of this site if alternative and better quality employment land can be provided elsewhere in the town.
- 5.13 **Warehams Lane** is of strikingly mixed quality but benefits from a good location close to the town centre and on the A414 and appears fully occupied. It should be retained and redevelopment for B1 encouraged. The nearby **Mimram Road** area is of better quality with a low vacancy rate but would benefit from improved signage from the A414.
- 5.14 **Caxton Hill** was rated Red by Halcrow, reflecting its (generally) poor quality buildings, lack of flexibility, poor access and potential conflicts with adjoining residential development. The estate comprises two main areas – the northern part comprising the modern print works of Stephen Austin, the extensive premises occupied by Fluorcarbon and various smaller industrial premises in Caxton Road and Extension Road, some of which are vacant and most of which are of poor quality. The remainder of the estate comprises the Hertford Industrial Estate consisting of brick mainly single storey warehouse units of poor to average quality worth around £4 - £5 ft sq, a number of which are vacant.
- 5.15 Access to the whole estate is from Ware Road resulting in industrial and employee traffic having to pass through Hertford. There are long standing proposals to open access from John Tate Road on the adjoining Foxholes Estate and close the Caxton Hill access to non-emergency vehicles. While this could encourage redevelopment of at least the Hertford Industrial Estate for new B1 units (as an extension to Foxholes) the difficulties in securing land owner agreement should not be underestimated. In the longer term, the older industrial properties at the northern end of Caxton Hill could be redeveloped for residential purposes with alternative employment provision being provided on Mead Lane (see below). The estate is therefore rated Amber as opposed to Red.
- 5.16 The main area of employment land in the town comprises **Dicker Mill** and **Mead Lane**, both accessed via Mill Road. **Dicker Mill** is a sprawling estate of generally low quality but popular units serving the needs of smaller businesses in Hertford. While circulation and parking can be haphazard, again it works well and should be retained for employment use.

It is not clear how Halcrow treated the large employment area known as **Mead Lane**, only describing land and premises in Marshgate Drive and Merchant Drive. For the purposes of this Review, the Mead Lane area is described in the following terms:

Estate	Settlement	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	Comments	Opportunities for enhancement
Dicker Mill	Hertford	Green	Green	Average to poor quality buildings but serving a local need and well occupied.	Better access and restructuring following the provision of improved access to Mead Lane
Marshgate Drive	Hertford	Amber	Amber	Mainly vacant land part of which has consent for residential development	As above
Merchant Drive/Fountains Drive	Hertford	Amber	Green	Good quality modern units but shares the access constraints of the remainder of Mead Lane	For 2013, this also includes Fountains Drive
Mead Lane Business Centre	Hertford	N/A	Green	Good quality buildings and layout	Better access
Centros Mead Lane	Hertford	N/A	Green	Good quality buildings	Vacant site in 2008
Mead Lane: Lockhouse Industrial Estate & Adjoining	Hertford	N/A	Amber	Not clear if/how Halcrow assessed in 2008. Average to poor quality buildings and yards	As for Dicker Mill
Mead Lane Conbar House, Expo House, Orland House and Chelsing House	Hertford	N/A	Amber	As above but individual buildings/sites of average to good quality	As for Dicker Mill

- 5.17 Policy HE5 of the East Herts Local Plan 2007 supports the redevelopment of land west of **Marshgate Drive** and south of the river for residential purposes. Some development has already taken place (former TXU site) and consent granted for residential development on the remainder (former Marshall Panelcraft). Land on the east side of Marshgate Drive and south of the river is mainly vacant and includes an extensive area in the ownership of National Grid, being the former Hertford Gas Works. North of the river, there are good quality industrial units (6-11 Marshgate Drive).
- 5.18 **Mead Lane Business Centre**, lying to the east of Marshgate Drive provides good quality industrial and office units, most of which are occupied. Further east lie **Conbar House, Expo House (vacant) Orland House and Chelsing House**. Orland House is a large modern office/warehouse, currently being extended. Backing onto the river is the **Lockhouse Industrial Estate and adjoining units**, the lowest quality area within Mead Lane and containing a mix of buildings and yards. This area would benefit from redevelopment for B1, perhaps in conjunction with the adjoining National Grid Land.
- 5.19 **Centros** comprises a recent (last 5 years) development of good quality office/industrial/distribution uses while **Merchant Drive and Fountains Drive** also comprise good quality and well laid out employment units.
- 5.20 Taken together, the various brownfield sites that make up the wider Mead Lane area represent the most significant opportunity to improve the quality of and increase the stock of employment land within the district's urban areas. However problems of restricted vehicular access have so far, prevented this potential being realised and it is again rated as Amber.
- 5.21 In 2011, a draft Urban Design Framework for Mead Lane was prepared which sought to identify opportunities to overcome the access constraints and facilitate new residential and employment development on unused/underused land as well as wider amenity and recreational benefits. Key to realising these aspirations and unlocking development on the brownfield land is the creation of a new link road immediately to the north of the station (Station Sidings Link Road) and the provision of a secondary emergency access in the Station frontage area. If constructed, the new road would enable further land to be brought

forward for development and the Council might consider working in partnership with a number of landowners to deliver a comprehensive regeneration scheme. If new high quality business units were to be provided in accordance with the draft brief, then it might be possible to release other lower quality employment land such as part of Caxton Hill. Improvements to access to Mead Lane may also facilitate and encourage redevelopment and improvement of the Dicker Mill site. The costs of the highway works considered necessary to implement the Draft Urban Design Brief have been assessed separately.

## WARE

- 5.22 In common with Hertford, Ware contains a diverse mix of employment land and buildings. Good quality, modern development can be found at Broadmeads, Ermine Point/Gentlemens Field, and Crane Mead Business Park and at the town's major employment location, GSK. By contrast, Marsh Lane contains a mix of open yards and older industrial buildings but the occupancy level is high and the area clearly serves a local need. Approval has been granted for the redevelopment of the Watton Business Centre for an ASDA food store, housing and the retention of the day nursery, no doubt recognising the potential employment (and other) benefits.
- 5.23 The extensive 9 ha site at Widbury Hill has been lost on appeal for mixed (but mainly) residential development. In determining this appeal, the Inspector noted that the location of the site and the difficulties of access made it unattractive for warehouse use and that it was unsuitable for conversion to smaller units. Finally, the Crane Mead complex, dominated by Swains Mill, represents an opportunity for redevelopment for B1 office development.

Estate	Settlement	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	Comments	Opportunities for enhancement
Broadmeads	Ware	Green	Green	Good quality estate and occupier	N/A
Ermine Point Business Park & Gentlemen's Field	Ware	Green	Green	Congested layout but otherwise well-functioning estate	N/A
Watton Business Centre	Ware	Green	N/A	Consent granted for a foodstore, residential and retention of nursery.	N/A
GSK	Ware	Green	Green	Site is of strategic importance and should remain protected for employment use.	N/A
Crane Mead and Crane Mead Business Park	Ware	Amber	Amber	The Business Park is made up of modern buildings and functions well. By contrast, Crane Mead, dominated by Swains Mill, is currently underused but represents an opportunity to encourage B1 development.	N/A
Marsh Lane	Ware	Amber	Amber	A mix of open yards, older industrial buildings and a relatively modern development, The Peerglow Centre. But a well-located sustainable site which should be retained and progressively redeveloped for B1 uses.	N/A

Widbury Hill, Star Street	Ware	Amber	Amber	Consent granted on appeal for mixed development. The area remaining for employment use (retained part of the coachworks and the yet-to-be built offices) together comprise an important resource in this part of Ware and it is recommended that it is retained for employment use and rated Amber.	N/A
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## THE RURAL AREA

- 5.24 The Halcrow study focussed on the district's major employment areas, most of which are within or on the edge of the principle settlements, the exceptions being the Silkmead Estate at Buntingford, GSK at Bury Green and Terlings Park and Clarklands and Italstyle north and south of Sawbridgeworth. There are however, a number of smaller employment sites within the rural area, sometimes comprising converted farm buildings, which together make an important contribution to the district's economy. The overall quality of the buildings and site may be poor to average (resulting in low rents) but these rural sites often benefit from a spacious layout, lower levels of crime, more 'freedom' in the way tenants can run their business and fewer parking problems than 'urban' estates. They may also provide the ideal location for what would otherwise be 'bad neighbour' uses.
- 5.25 While their locations are generally not sustainable (in the sense that they can be easily accessed by non-car modes of transport), they do fulfil a local need for low cost accommodation for smaller perhaps 'rurally-based' businesses which in some cases may be supported through the Rural Development Programme (RDPE). More significant interventions in the form of redevelopment, new buildings or additional signage is unlikely to be acceptable in policy terms but it may be helpful to initiate a 'Halcrow-type' survey to better understand their locations and the type of businesses they accommodate.

## 6. OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERVENTIONS

6.1 Opportunities for interventions fall into the three broad categories describe below:

- (i) Relatively low key improvements to signage/branding both within employment areas and from the main road network, perhaps linked to environmental improvements to raise the attractiveness and overall quality of the estates and enforcement action to remove the clutter of unauthorised signage. Examples include Mimram Road and Foxholes in Hertford.
- (ii) Minor capital work to ease existing constraints, facilitate the construction of new business units or improve the overall offer, thereby encouraging landowners to invest in new development. At Caxton Hill/Foxholes, long-held aspirations to remove a concrete barrier could deliver a number of environmental and employment benefits.
- (iii) Major and generally longer term investment opportunities to overcome access constraints and facilitate major development/redevelopment. One such example is Raynham Road in Bishop's Stortford where the existing restricted access leads to traffic congestion and delays in peak periods and Mead Lane, Hertford where the provision of an alternative access could facilitate the redevelopment of brownfield sites for employment and housing development, enabling the Council to deliver on a number of long term

aspirations.

- 6.2 In terms of (i) above, while new signing and/or environmental improvements may serve to make employment areas more attractive and function better, they are unlikely to result in more or better quality jobs and therefore may be questioned in terms of value for money. However they would send positive messages to tenants and landowners that the Council is concerned to support the district's economic base and wants to work with them to improve employment areas.
- 6.3 Minor capital works such as removing the concrete barrier at Caxton Hill could deliver significant long term benefits in facilitating the restructuring of the Caxton Hill Estate. At the Watermill Estate in Buntingford, the Council has recently sold a small area of land enabling an improvement to the access and facilitating the construction of additional business units.
- 6.4 The greatest potential benefits lie in progressing a small number of longer term schemes to improve the two major employment areas of Mead Lane, Hertford and Raynham Road in Bishop's Stortford – Mead Lane because it offers the opportunity to bring back into use a significant area of brownfield land in a sustainable location close to Hertford Town Centre and Raynham Road to take advantage of the estates good location in relation to the M11 and Stansted Airport.
- 6.5 However while some opportunities such as signage and environmental improvements may appear to be relatively straight forward, they are likely to involve a number of land ownership, safety audit and other consultation issues which may take a considerable input of time and resources to overcome, a view confirmed by work so far undertaken to secure the removal of the barrier at Caxton Hill. There are therefore no easy or quick wins. More complex schemes such as Mead Lane and Raynham Road involving land acquisitions, multiple ownerships and significant capital works such as moving undergrounds services and installing traffic signalling will require considerable investment.
- 6.6 If the District Council wishes to adopt a more proactive and interventionist approach to employment areas, then it will need to take a long term view, work in partnership with landowners, tenants and other agencies and identify the resources (either in-house or externally) to work at the interface between planning and economic development.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The 2008 report by Halcrow revealed that the majority of the district's employment areas were fit for purpose and functioning well. The situation has not changed significantly in the interim and despite the recession, the number of vacant units is low. In addition, the amount of employment land lost to other uses is minimal. While there is a political will to be seen to be supporting the local economy, there are relatively few opportunities for interventions that would deliver more and better jobs in the short term. Even minor works such as signage and environmental improvements are likely to involve a considerable input of resources although they would confirm the Council's support for the local economy and may encourage both tenants and landowners to improve their properties. More significant benefits could be achieved by concentrating on perhaps two major interventions in Hertford and Bishop's Stortford.
- 7.2 This report therefore recommends:
- (i) that the Council undertakes a targeted and proactive programme of interventions designed to raise the quality of existing employment areas by working with tenants and landowners to improved signage and environmental conditions;

(ii) That the Council works with landowners, HCC and Hertfordshire Highways to improve access to and signage for the Raynham Road Estate in Bishop's Stortford to take advantage of its location close to Junction 8 of the M11 and Stansted Airport;

(iii) That the Council works with landowners, HCC and other agencies to overcome the current access constraints on further development at Mead Lane and bring forward brownfield land for development in accordance with the Draft Mead Lane Urban Design Framework

(iv) That the Council continues to pursue the provision of a vehicular link between the Foxholes Estate and Caxton Hill as a first stage in restructuring uses at Caxton Hill

(v) That the Council identifies the resources needed to support these interventions.

Shared/economic and cultural development/economic development manager/david.hughes/east herts employment land review 2013 last updated 28.03.13

## **APPENDIX A:**

### **EAST HERTS LOCAL PLAN 2007: PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES:**

**EDE1. Employment Areas:** The District Council has identified Employment Areas which are reserved for industry, comprising Use Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and, where well related to the transport network, Class B8 (Storage or Distribution). These Employment Areas are listed in Part II of this Plan (Settlement Planning).

**EDE2: Loss of employment sites:** Outside the identified Employment Areas, development which would cause the loss of an existing employment site, or one that was last in employment use, will only be permitted subject to all the following criteria being met:

- (a) the retention of the site or premises for employment use has been explored fully without success, evidence of which must be provided;
- (b) the proposed use does not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of the adjacent area or nearby occupiers; and
- (c) access, parking and servicing arrangements are satisfactory.

**EDE3: Employment Uses Outside Employment Areas:** Outside identified Employment Areas but within the six main settlements (listed in Policy SD2) and the Category 1 and 2 Villages proposals for employment use may be permitted, subject to all the following criteria being met:

- (a) the proposal would not result in the loss of satisfactory residential accommodation;
- (b) the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby occupiers;
- (c) the site is capable of accommodating the proposal along with the necessary access, parking and servicing arrangements;
- (d) the proposal is of an appropriate scale; and
- (e) the proposal is environmentally acceptable.

**EDE4: Storage and Distribution Uses:** Storage and Distribution developments will only be permitted:

- (a) On sites that are already in Storage and Distribution Use and which are well related to the transport network,  
OR
- (b) Within identified Employment Areas (in accordance with Policy EDE1).

**EDE7: Live/Work Units:** New employment development will be expected to:



- (a) be built to a high standard with the design, scale, siting, and landscaping respecting the character and local distinctiveness of the area;
- (b) have adequate servicing and manoeuvring space, along with appropriate levels of car and cycle parking; and
- (c) be accessible by passenger transport and other non-car modes of travel.

**EDE8: New Employment Development:** New employment development will be expected to:

- (a) be built to a high standard with the design, scale, siting, and landscaping respecting the character and local distinctiveness of the area;
- (b) have adequate servicing and manoeuvring space, along with appropriate levels of car and cycle parking; and
- (c) be accessible by passenger transport and other non-car modes of travel.

## APPENDIX B: COMPARISON BETWEEN HALCROW 2008 AND EHDC 2013 ASSESSMENTS

<u>Estate</u>	<u>Settlement</u>	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Opportunities for enhancement</u>
Goodliffe Park,	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality estate, good location	N/A
Stort Valley Industrial Estate	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	As above	N/A
Birchanger Industrial Estate	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good location but mixed quality	N/A
Millside Estate	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Amber	Poor location and quality	N/A
Southmill Trading Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality and popular estate	N/A
Stortford Hall Industrial Park,	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality estate, good location	N/A
The Links Business Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality small business units	As part of improvements to the Raynham Road Estate
Woodside Industrial Estate	Bishop's Stortford	Green	Green	Good quality estate, good location	N/A
Raynham Road / Dunmow Road Industrial Estate	Bishop's Stortford	Amber	N/A	Halcrow treated Raynham Road/Dunmow Road as one estate. However it comprises three distinct areas each with different characteristics so for the purposes of this review, they are considered separately.	See below
Raynham Road (East)	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Amber	Mixed quality and parking/access issues	As part of improvements to the Raynham Road Estate
Raynham Road (West)	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Green	At extreme western end of Raynham Road	As part of improvements to the Raynham Road Estate
Raynham Close/Myson Way	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Green		As part of improvements to the Raynham Road Estate
Twyford Road	Bishop's Stortford	Amber	Amber	Poor location, mixed quality	N/A
Haslemere Estate	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Green	Not included by Halcrow in 2008	Better signage
Mill site, Stonemasons Yard and former Sheppard's Garage	Bishop's Stortford	N/A	Amber	Not in included in Halcrow 2008	Redevelopment opportunity to support economy of the town centre
<u>Estate</u>	<u>Settlement</u>	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Opportunities for enhancement</u>
Buntingford Business Park	Buntingford	Green	Green	Good quality estate but large unit currently vacant	N/A

Park Farm Industrial Estate	Buntingford	Green	Green	Average quality good layout, parking and close to A10	N/A
Sainsbury's Distribution Depot	Buntingford	Green	Green	Established distribution depot soon to be redeveloped	N/A
Silkmead Industrial Estate, Hare Street	Buntingford	Amber	Amber	Farm estate of average to poor quality buildings in an unsustainable location	N/A
Watermill Industrial Estate	Buntingford	Amber	Amber	Average to poor quality estate with access constraints	Improved access
Former GSK	Bury Green	Amber	Amber	Inflexible site in rural area	N/A
Terlings Park	Gilston	Amber	N/A	Consent granted for residential development	N/A
Dicker Mill	Hertford	Green	Green	Average to poor quality buildings but serving a local need and well occupied	Better access and restructuring following the provision of improved access to Mead Lane
Foxholes Industrial Estate	Hertford	Green	Green	Premier employment area but some parking/clutter problems	Improvement to signage and removal of clutter at A414 junction
Hartham Lane Green	Hertford	Green	Green	Good town centre employment area	N/A
Pegs Lane	Hertford	Green	Green	Good location but inflexible buildings	Work with owners to facilitate redevelopment of Sovereign House
Windsor Industrial Estate	Hertford	Green	Green	Good quality estate, fully let	N/A
Marshgate Drive	Hertford	Amber	Amber	Mainly vacant land part of which has consent for residential development	Better access and restructuring following the provision of improved access to Mead Lane
Merchant Drive/Fountains Drive	Hertford	Amber	Green	Good quality and well occupied buildings but sharing access constraints with the remainder of Mead Lane	Better access and restructuring following the provision of improved access to Mead Lane
Centros Mead Lane	Hertford	N/A	Green	Vacant site in 2008 – good quality buildings	Better access following the provision of improved access to Mead Lane
Mead lane Business Centre	Hertford	N/A	Green	Good quality buildings and site	Better access as above

Estate	Settlement	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	Comments	Opportunities for interventions
Mead Lane: Lockhouse Industrial Estate & Adjoining	Hertford	N/A	Amber	Not clear if/how Halcrow assessed in 2008	As for Dicker Mill
Mead Lane Conbar House, Expo House, Orland House and Chelsing House	Hertford	N/A	Amber	As above	Better access following the provision of improved access to Mead Lane
Mimram Road	Hertford	Amber	Green	Average quality units and good layout	Improved signage/removal of clutter
Taylor Trading Estate	Hertford	Amber	Amber	Average to poor quality – possibly consider for release	N/A
Wareham's Lane	Hertford	Amber	Amber	Good location and access. Mixed quality units	Better signing
Caxton Hill	Hertford	Red	Amber	Mainly poor quality units and access problems but long term potential for mixed redevelopment	Pursue vehicular link to Foxholes and encourage long term mixed development in conjunction with the provision of new employment uses at Mead Lane
High Cross	High Cross	Green	Green	Good quality estate	N/A
Clarklands Industrial Estate	Sawbridgeworth	Green	Green	Average quality but no conflicts with adjoining uses	N/A
Italstyle	Sawbridgeworth	Green	Green	Isolated estate subject to flooding	N/A
Hayters	Spellbrook	Green	Green	Good quality estate	<u>N/A</u>
Standon Business Park	Standon	Green	Amber	Poor quality buildings	Encourage mixed development
Station Road	Standon	Amber	Green	Modern building now occupied	N/A
The Maltings Green	Stanstead Abbots	Green	Green	Well managed popular estate	N/A
Leeside Works	Stanstead Abbots	Green	Green	Good location and occupancy	N/A
Riverside Works	Stanstead Abbots	Green	Green	As above	N/A
The Spinney	Stanstead Abbots	Amber	Red	Poor location and buildings. Release for redevelopment	N/A
Estate	Settlement	Halcrow 2008	EHDC 2013	Comments	Opportunities for interventions
Warrenwood Industrial Estate	Stapleford	Green	Green	Poor to average quality estate but meets a local need	
Thundridge Business Park	Thundridge	Green	Green	Good quality business park	N/A

Broadmeads	Ware	Green	Green	As above	<u>N/A</u>
Ermine Point Business Park & Gentlemen's Field	Ware	Green	Green	As above but with some parking issues	<u>N/A</u>
Watton Business Centre	Ware	Green	N/A	Consent granted for redevelopment	<u>N/A</u>
GSK	Ware	Green	Green	Site of strategic importance and should remain protected for employment use	<u>N/A</u>
Crane Mead and Crane Mead Business Park	Ware	Amber	Green	The Business Park is made up of modern buildings and functions well. By contrast, Crane Mead, dominated by Swains Mill, is currently underused but represents an opportunity to encourage B1 development.	<u>N/A</u>
Marsh Lane	Ware	Amber	Amber	A mix of open yards, older industrial buildings and a relatively modern development, The Peerglow Centre. But a well-located sustainable site which should be retained and progressively redeveloped for B1 uses	<u>N/A</u>
Widbury Hill, Star Street	Ware	Amber	Amber	Consent granted for mixed development including new B1 offices.	N/A

## APPENDIX C: EXAMPLE OF AN INDIVIDUAL SITE REPORT

### EAST HERTS EMPLOYMENT LAND REVIEW UPDATE 2013

#### Part 1. Summary

<b>Estate: Caxton Hill, Hertford</b>				
<b>Owner: Various</b>				
<b>Managing Agent:</b> Hertford Industrial Estate – Jones Lang LaSalle – rest unknown				
<b>EH 2007 Local Plan:</b> HE8 Employment Areas: In accordance with Policy EDE1 the following sites are defined as Employment Areas on the Proposals Map and will be primarily reserved for industry, comprising Classes B1 Business and B2 General Industrial uses: <b>Caxton Hill/Ware Road.</b>				
<p><b>Halcrow 2008 Comments and Rating:</b> Caxton Hill is an older traditional estate primarily offering small warehouse units, with the quality of its stock being relatively poor. It scores poorly in terms of visibility as it is not accessible via the A414 and there are some adjacent residential properties backing onto the estate causing potential use conflicts. The estate seems to have poor flexibility and some vacant units. It should be considered for release over the planning period provided that a better quality new site can be allocated for employment use.</p> <p><b>Assessment: Red</b></p>		<p><b>EHDC 2012 Comments and Rating:</b> The estate comprises two main areas – the northern part comprising the modern print works of Stephen Austin, the extensive premises occupied by Fluorcarbon and various smaller industrial premises in Caxton Road and Extension Road, some of which are vacant and most of which are of poor quality. The remainder of the estate comprises the Hertford Industrial Estate consisting of brick mainly single storey brick warehouse units of poor to average quality worth around £4 - £5 ft sq, a number of which are vacant. Access to the whole estate is from Ware Road resulting in industrial and employee traffic having to pass through Hertford. There are long standing proposals to open access from John Tate Road on the adjoining Foxholes Estate and close the Caxton Hill access to non-emergency vehicles. While this could encourage redevelopment of at least the Hertford Industrial Estate for new B1 units (as an extension to Foxholes) the difficulties in securing land owner agreement should not be underestimated. In the longer term, the older industrial properties at the northern end of Caxton Hill could be redeveloped for residential purposes with alternative employment provision being provided on Mead Lane.</p> <p><b>Assessment: Amber</b> <b>See Appraisal Criteria below</b></p>		
<b>Opportunities for Enhancement:</b> See above re. alternative access				
<b>Proposal:</b>	Partners	Costs	Timeframe	Priority

#### Part 2. Occupiers @January 2013

Caxton Hill	
Stephen Austin Printers	Fluorcarbon - PTFE & Polymer mnfr/distributors
Units ABCD -	Wordwide Recovery Systems – vehicle engineers
Extension Road	
Hertford Offset Printers (Graphic House)	RePlas – plastic injection moulding

Woodland Beds/Kitchens (Manufacture) – Unit B	
Hertford Industrial Estate	
1/2. Anchor & Renton Plastic Mouldings	3. Marble Granite/Studio 3 Kitchens
4. KA Foil Catering Equipment	5. Dehra ??
6. HDM The Halycon Group - classic goggles & accessories	7. Progressive Mouldings & Assembly – plastic mouldings
8.?	9. Turnlea Ltd ?
10a Budget Tyres	11. Bottom Line Technologies – document processing systems
12. Hawberry King – valuers & auctioneers	13 ?
14 ? Plastics	15,16,17, MG Caravans
18 ?	19. Sanctuary Housing
20/21 Dicker Mill Coachworks	22/23 Enterprise Rent-a Car
24/25. Caxton Hill Motors	26/27 EO services ltd/.Everybody Organic – local food suppliers
28/29 AM Printers	30/31 VTS Steel Fabricators

### Part 3– Appraisal Criteria

#### Estate Appraisal Criteria 1: Fitness for purpose

1. Is estate fit for its current purpose?	In part	2. What is the demand/vacancy rate?	average
3. What is the quality of the land like?	Average to poor	4. Good accessibility/parking?	No

#### Estate Appraisal Criteria 2: Sustainability

Is the estate sustainable for its present use?	No	Is there conflict with adjacent uses?	Some conflict on boundaries
Does the estate have good accessibility and parking provision	In part		

#### Estate Appraisal Criteria 3: Marketability

Is the estate marketable?	Low demand	Is the estate in a good position?	yes
Is the estate visible	no	Is the estate flexible?	no
Is the general quality of the environment good?	Average to poor	Is there any conflict with adjacent uses?	Some conflict on boundaries
Is the market perception positive?	No		