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**CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL  
LOCAL PLAN 2011-2031 EXAMINATION  
HEARING STATEMENT  
BEHALF OF HINTON PROPERTIES (GROVEFIELD WAY) LTD  
MATTER 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
January 2019**

## **HEARING STATEMENT**

**Matter 2: Economic Development  
January 2019**

### **Prepared for**

Hinton Properties (Grovefield Way) Ltd

### **Prepared by**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Hinton Properties (Grovefield Way) Ltd have been engaged with the emerging Cheltenham Plan process since its inception making submissions at each stage of preparation and commenting on evidence base studies – see **Appendix 1**.

Hinton Properties (Grovefield Way) Ltd controls land with Cheltenham Borough to the west of Grovefield Way. This land was removed from the Green Belt through the Adoption of the JCS and has now been identified as an employment allocation (E3) in policy EM3 of the emerging Plan.

The site at Grovefield Way has been subject to two hybrid planning applications for B1 led mixed use development. Both schemes also included A1, A3 and D1 use classes. Despite being recommended for permission by officers, both were refused by planning committee. More recently, both schemes have been subject to a co-joined Section 78 Planning Inquiry. The decision notices are appended at **Appendix 2**.

This statement provides Hinton Properties (Grovefield Way) Ltd responses in respect of the questions and new matters that have since arisen in respect of the emerging Cheltenham Plan. It focuses on the consistency of emerging policy with the JCS and national policy. It highlights the need for employment policy to reflect the JCS evidence base and current market conditions to ensure employment land is delivered to meet the acute shortage within Cheltenham.

## Matter 2: Economic Development

### Main Issue: Do the employment policies of the CP deliver Policy SD1 of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS)?

***Question 1: The JCS Policy SP1 sets a provision of a minimum of 192 has of B-class employment land for the JCS area. The strategic allocations will provide for some 84 has. How has Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) calculated the appropriate level of employment allocations to provide with the CP?***

#### JCS Context

The JCS Economic Update Note of February 2016 (EUN) followed the round table sessions on employment matters and provided the basis for the reshaped strategic employment land provision within the JCS area. This concluded that the total potential employment land supply could reach up to 238 Ha and, accordingly, would not limit the potential for economic growth. At that time, calculations were based on a land supply emerging from the following:

- Proposed JCS allocations at that time of 84 Ha;
- An additional employment allocation at Brockworth Strategic Allocation (SA4) of 3 Ha;
- The proposed inclusion of the strategic allocation at West Cheltenham to include 40 Ha;
- An existing undeveloped capacity within Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester of 63 Ha; and
- And other potential sites suitable for employment that would amount to approximately 48 Ha of new employment land.

Prior to the adoption of the JCS in December 2017, the nature and deliverability of the employment allocations changed, altering the supply assessed by the EUN. Despite this, the JCS was not able to fully reflect this in the final text which still shows employment allocations at Ashchurch and a greater B Class employment provision at North West Cheltenham.

Some of the primary differences between the current situation and the EUN assessment of 2016 are:

- The loss of the MOD Ashchurch allocation of 20 Ha;
- The reduction of the NW Cheltenham Allocation by 13 Ha (provides only 10 Ha of B Class Employment);
- The loss of 14.2 Ha of the Ashchurch Allocation (A9) to retail; and
- The increase of the West Cheltenham Allocation to 45 Ha from 40 Ha.

The Strategic allocations in the JCS are therefore only expected to deliver 84 Ha of new employment land during the plan period as opposed to the anticipated 127 Ha in the EUN or the 112.2 Ha set out in Table SA1 of the JCS. The residual provision to meet the minimum requirement will therefore need to be made through allocations in the District Plans (inc. Cheltenham).

The EUN anticipated that the proposed SALA sites would deliver 48 Ha of new employment land during the plan period which would materialise through the emerging District Plans.

It is apparent that Tewkesbury Borough Council is expected to provide the largest number of new employment sites given its position geographically.

The EUN anticipated that the proposed SALA sites would deliver 48 Ha of new employment land during the plan period. The remaining capacity was anticipated to come through the residual land available on existing allocations. After a detailed scrutiny of these sites, it is apparent that they will

only deliver 10.4 Ha of employment land. With regard to extant consents, the supply position was purported as being 32.291 Ha. The actual supply available from this source is 10.2 Ha.

The current Employment Land Supply from the JCS Authorities can therefore be summarised as follows:

• Strategic Allocations:	84 Ha
• Existing undeveloped capacity (based on previous allocations and extant planning permissions):	20.6 Ha
• Allocations coming forward (Tewkesbury Borough Council):	45 Ha
<b>Total:</b>	<b>149.6 Ha</b>

### **Cheltenham requirements**

There remains 42.4 Ha of additional employment land to be found within the JCS area in order for the minimum requirement of employment land to be met. Local Plans, including Cheltenham's, need to provide sufficient flexibility to deliver a 'pipeline' of new sites to accommodate for every business need and ensure the growth of the economy.

The Cheltenham Plan seeks to deliver new allocations through Policy EM3. It lists four named sites as follows:

- Land south of Jessop Avenue, town Centre (E1) – Already constructed, size 0.34 Ha
- Land south of Hatherley Lane, The Reddings (E2) – Permission granted in 2018, size 0.8 Ha
- Land north-west of Grovefield Way, The Reddings (E3) – Permission granted in 2014, size 6.4 Ha
- Land at Cheltenham Walk, town centre (E4) – Size 0.68 Ha

On the face of it, the new sites listed in EM3 would provide 8.28 Ha of employment land. This is still worryingly low considering the requirements. However, these figures and sites need to be approached with some degree of caution.

Jessop Avenue is an existing employment site which has already been constructed. This should not therefore be included as a NET new employment site and should instead be listed in EM1. Furthermore, whilst the site at Grovefield Way benefits from planning permission (as does Hatherley Place), the site size quoted is incorrect – **it should be 4.17 Ha NOT 6.4 Ha**, as the BMW part of the former larger site has now been constructed.

With the above taken into account, the already low number of 8.28 Ha of proposed 'new' employment allocations is reduced to a total of **5.71 Ha**. This requires amendment and, evidently, new sites should be included to ensure the NET employment land requirements, as envisaged by the JCS, are met.

**Question 2: Are Policies EM1 and EM2 in accordance with NPPF paragraph 22?**

For the purposes of this examination, NPPF 2012 is the relevant policy document. Paragraph 22 states clearly that:

*22. 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.*

Policies EM1 and EM2 still seek to safeguard existing designated or non-designated employment land or buildings for B-class uses or Sui Generis uses.

This does not respond positively to NPPF 22 or indeed market signals and, in the long term, may be counterproductive simply because it will not create the right business environment so desired by B-class occupiers.

The Council's desire to safeguard employment sites just for B Class employment without complimentary ancillary uses is driven by a historical undersupply in the market place which can only be resolved by a marked change in direction of the emerging Local Plan.

The LEP identifies that there is a short-term deficit of good quality employment land and whilst this may be addressed to some extent with the delivery of land at West Cheltenham and North West Cheltenham, there remains a need to provide a pipeline of smaller employment sites in order to speed up the delivery of new employment land as well as to provide a variety and choice in the market place. Therefore, the Council needs to be more ambitious in identifying new employment sites in the Local Plan to maintain the economic health of the town and to support local businesses.



In order to make sites attractive, the LEP state quite rightly that business parks should be in accessible locations and accommodate some ancillary uses on site (up to 20%) to make them more attractive to end users. This was clearly stated in the LEP's letter dated April 2018 (**Appendix 3**).

It is surprising that the LEP letter has been ignored by the Council with no evident changes made to EMP policies following the first round of Plan consultation. The LEP's status should not be discounted – they are a key advisory body forming part of the JCS' Joint Task Force as noted at paragraph 4.1.13 of the adopted JCS.

The need for greater flexibility is also reflected at paragraph 4.1.15 of the JCS where it is noted that employment uses, such as retail (covered in policy SD2), leisure facilities, education, health services and residential care (uses outside the B-classes), are predicted to provide over two-thirds of the projected growth across the area. The background to SD1 states that whilst these sectors do not usually generate a specific employment land requirement, the mix of future job opportunities generated will be as important as specifically allocating parcels of land for employment provision.

The inclusion of such ancillary employment uses is common place on many business park developments and is instrumental in gaining occupier interest. Given the significant dearth of attractive employment sites, the emerging Cheltenham Plan and its associated policy wording should not adopt a conservative approach which seeks simply to recycle existing employment sites and allocate a small number of sites, without identifying any significant new employment land within the plan. This approach does not align with the more flexible approach advocated by NPPF 22.

Notwithstanding NPPF 22, NPPF 21 similarly echoes the point regarding the need for flexibility. It states:

*21. Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations. Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment,*

*including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:*

- *set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth;*
- *set criteria, **or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;*** (Our emphasis)
- *support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. **Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances;*** (Our emphasis)
- *plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries;*
- *identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement; and*
- *facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit*

In light of the above, Hinton Properties (Grovefield Way) Ltd are of the firm opinion that Policies EM1, EM2 and, indeed, EM3, should be amended provide greater flexibility to facilitate a wider range of employment uses to come forward in consistency with the thrust guidance arising from NPPF 21 and 22.

***Question 3: Are all sites allocated in the CP (Policy EM3) suitable and available for delivery as employment sites?***

As set out above, four sites are listed in EM3. Jessop Avenue has already been constructed for B-class purposes. Notably, the original permission also included ancillary A-class class uses meaning that if considered against the current strict draft wording of EM3, the development would be in conflict. This notwithstanding, Jessop Avenue should not be listed in EM3 and should instead be listed in EM1.

Hatherley Place has been granted planning permission and is available.

Land north-west of Grovefield Way benefits from extant planning permission for a B-class business park. This was originally granted in 2007 (on appeal) and later renewed as recently as 2014. Even more recently, hybrid planning applications were submitted for B-class led mixed use developments. Despite both schemes being recommended for permission by Officers, both were refused at planning committee and were recently considered through a Section 78 Public Inquiry in January 2019.

It should be strongly noted that there was a significant gestation period following the original granted of planning permission to the submission of the more recent hybrid schemes; the first of which was submitted in 2016. The outline scheme granted planning permission for 100% B-class development. This was not attractive to the market (as recognised in the LEP's letter) and ancillary non- B-class named users were needed to assist in the delivery of the site. Once these users were introduced (accounting of less than 20% of the floorspace proposed), named B-class office occupiers came forward. These include Bloor Homes, who seek office space for their new regional HQ, and Ridge and Partners LLP, who are a growing development consultancy. The need for flexibility and its inherent link to employment land deliverability, is evidenced in the responses provided by local commercial agents submitted during the application processes – **Appendix 4**.

Both note that business park occupiers no longer find B-class only business park desirable and, instead, require business parks to provide a greater range of uses to stimulate interest, confidence and provide facilities for workers.

Whilst the site at Grovefield Way is suitable and available for the delivery of employment led development, EM3 should be wording such that a wider range of ancillary employment development can be included on new employment sites to ensure it is responsive to market demands and modern business park requirements.

***Question 4: Does the CP provide adequate support for the expansion of existing small/medium sized businesses and provide opportunities for new business start-ups through Policy EM6?***

EM6 does not set prescriptive restrictions on land use and would ensure there is flexibility in the delivery of new small/medium sized businesses and start-ups. To support this further, it is considered that new sites should be identified within the Borough where small-medium size businesses could invest, thus helping to directly meet this need.

**Question 5: Should any further provision be made for economic development which falls outside B-Class uses?**

The Employment Land Review published in July 2007 in support of the JCS noted that the job growth in non-B class categories will be particularly important within Cheltenham over the next 20 years (para. 8.23)<sup>1</sup>. It stated that these sectors, which include leisure, retail, education and health, are expected to account for over 80% of job growth within the Borough. This is reflected in the adopted version of the JCS which states clearly at para. 4.1.3 that 'employment is to be considered in a wider sense than the traditional industrial office and warehousing (B1, B2 and B8 uses)'. Paragraph 4.1.15 then acknowledges the ELR, noting that 'non-B class uses are predicted to provide over two-thirds of the projected job growth across the area'. The ELR also notes that given the extent to which non-B class sectors are expected to contribute to the local economy in Cheltenham and the resultant pressure for land to be made available for non-B class uses, this will become a *'particularly significant consideration'*. It is noted therefore that flexibility in respect of land use in current draft policy wording is noticeably absent and there are currently no policies in support of a broader range of non-B class uses.

Providing non-B class facilities ancillary to the main business uses on large employment sites helps to make them more attractive to incoming firms and improves the quality of the working environment for employees. Ancillary facilities also help employment sites to develop sustainably by reducing the need for traffic movements. The release or development of land for non-B class uses would therefore not have a detrimental effect upon the supply of land for business uses. The ELR notes further that non-B class uses would have 'no deleterious impact' upon the local economy in terms of constraining the land supply. It goes further and states that it could serve *"a beneficial role by providing important and necessary functions to use by business and workers."*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cheltenham Borough Council Employment Land Review 2007 by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners

<sup>2</sup> Para. 8.104 of the Cheltenham Borough Council Employment Land Review 2007 by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners

At national policy level, it has already been highlighted in earlier responses that the NPPF 2012 supports the need for alternate non-B class uses and resists the long-term protection of employment sites for a particular use. The glossary of NPPF 2012 also recognises that ‘economic development’ is defined as development including not just B use classes, but also public/community uses and main town centre uses (inc. retail). This underscores the fact that uses falling outside of B-class uses should also be recognised for the significant contribution they make towards job creation and economic growth. Indeed, in 2013, the largest employment sectors in Cheltenham were business administration and support services, health and retail. Notably, the latter are non-B class uses.<sup>3</sup>

In light of the above, it is therefore strongly apparent that provision within employment policy should be made for uses that fall outside of B-class uses to help support this growing and significant part of the local economy.

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<sup>3</sup> Page 26 of the Cheltenham Economic Assessment 2014 by Athey Consulting, January 2015



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**Appendix 1**



CHELTENHAM PLAN 2011 TO 2031

PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION (REGULATION 19) FEBRUARY 2018

REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF **Hinton Group (Grovefield Way) Ltd**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This representation relates to the site known as Land North-West of Grovefield Way, The Reddings ('the Site'), which is currently included as site E3 in policy EM3: New Employment Allocations of the pre-submission Cheltenham Plan 2011 – 2031 dated February 2018 ('the Draft Plan'). Hinton Group (Grovefield Way) Ltd ('Hinton') controls this land.
- 1.2. Hinton seek to secure permission for the following development at the Site (hereafter referred to as 'the Proposed Allocation'):

*Hybrid application seeking detailed planning permission for a 5,034 sq.m of commercial office space (Use Class B1), 502 sq.m day nursery (Use Class D1), 1,742 sq.m supermarket food retail unit (Class A1), a 204 sq.m coffee shop retail unit and drive-thru (Use Classes A1 and A3), with associated parking, landscaping and infrastructure works. Outline planning permission sought for the erection of 8,034 sq.m of commercial office space (Use Class B1), together with associated car parking, landscaping and infrastructure works, with all matters reserved (except access).*

- 1.3. This representation is intended to demonstrate why the Draft Plan ought to support this Proposed Allocation. Accordingly, this representation advances the following propositions:
- i. **Proposition 1:** Policy EM3 supports the Proposed Allocation, but the policy requires further clarity
  - ii. **Proposition 2:** There is a significant need for employment land in Cheltenham
  - iii. **Proposition 3:** The Proposed Allocation reflects the need for flexibility
  - iv. **Proposition 4:** The planning history pertinent to the Site supports the Proposed Allocation
  - v. **Proposition 5:** There are no site specific issues pertinent to the Proposed Allocation
  - vi. **Proposition 6:** The Proposed Allocation amounts to sustainable development that ought to be supported by the Draft Plan

**2. Proposition 1: Policy EM3 supports the Proposed Allocation, but the policy requires further clarity**

2.1. Policy EM3 currently says:<sup>1</sup>

***POLICY EM3: NEW EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATIONS***

*The following sites which are shown on the Cheltenham Plan Proposals Map have been identified as locations for new employment development and are delineated on Plans E1 – E4 below. The red lines on Plans E1 – E4 mark the boundaries of the allocations and are separately and collectively part of this policy.*

- a) Land south of Jessop Avenue, Town Centre (E1)*
- b) Land south of Hatherley Lane, The Reddings (E2)*
- c) Land north-west of Grovefield Way, The Reddings (E3)*
- d) Land at Chelt Walk, Town Centre (E4)*

*Proposals for traditional B class employment uses or Sui Generis uses that exhibit the characteristics of traditional B class employment will be supported at these locations subject to being in accord with other relevant policies embodied within this Plan.*

*The contents of Policy EM3 reflect the evidence bases of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy and the Cheltenham Plan.*

***This policy contributes towards achieving the Cheltenham Plan Vision: Theme B - objectives a, b and e.***

- 2.2. Table 11 ('Employment Land Allocations') of the Draft Plan (at pages 142-143) then includes the Proposed Allocation as E3, albeit the words 'refused' are cited next to it.
- 2.3. Policy EM3, therefore, seems to support the Proposed Allocation. Indeed, the inclusion of the Proposed Allocation within Table 11 of the Draft Plan would seem to suggest that this allocation is what is envisaged as one of the new 'employment land allocations' within Policy EM3.
- 2.4. If that is the intention of the policy, then Table 11 ought to be included within the blue box of Policy EM3 for the sake of clarity. This reflects the principle that the reasoned justification within a plan cannot modify the text of the policy itself (i.e. only the text within the blue box applies for interpreting the policy) – per **R.(oao Cherkley Campaign Limited) v Mole Valley DC** [2014] EWCA Civ 567.

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<sup>1</sup> Page 15 of the Draft Plan

- 2.5. However, it would be preferable for the policy to indicate specific support for the allocations within Table 11 as proposals that are consistent with the policy. However, the policy should still be wide enough such that it could embrace different employment schemes at these locations. This approach would be consistent with the need for flexibility in local planning policies.
- 2.6. In any event, Hinton submit that the Proposed Allocation is consistent with the terms of Policy EM3. Indeed, the Proposed Allocation is mostly for B class employment uses, with some associated non-B class uses (namely the supermarket, the day nursery and the drive thru coffee shop). These uses are consistent with the policy's ambition of supporting Sui Generis uses that exhibit the characteristics of traditional B class employment. This is further demonstrated by the fact that allocation E1 (Land South of Jessop Avenue) also includes non-B1 uses – specifically A2/A3 uses at the ground floor. Presumably those uses are also considered to be consistent with Policy EM3.
- 2.7. Furthermore, the evidence base for the Draft Plan, specifically the Economy Background Paper (January 2018), supports the point that a wider view of employment ought to be adopted:

*3.26 Employment is now considered in a wider sense than traditional office (B1), industrial (B2) and warehousing (B8) use classes. **Uses such as retail, hotels, tourism, leisure facilities, education, health services and residential care can also be large employment providers.***

However, the policy would benefit from greater clarity as to what is meant by a '*Sui Generis uses that exhibit the characteristics of traditional B class employment*'. Hinton submit that the non-B class uses associated with the Proposed Allocation would be an example of this – this being consistent with Table 11 of the Draft Plan. However, this should be made clearer within the body of the policy to avoid confusion.

**3. Proposition 2: There is a significant need for employment land in Cheltenham**

- 3.1. It is uncontroversial to acknowledge that there is a critical need for decent employment land within Cheltenham. Indeed, the JCS Examination Inspector's final report noted this as follows:

*116. Of significance is the Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners Employment Land Assessment Update of October 2015, which **indicates that the current lack of employment land within the JCS area threatens the economy by undermining the ability of existing companies to expand and new firms to invest in the area.** It therefore concludes that the JCS should target the creation of 39,500 new jobs (in place of the 28,000 new jobs in the Plan) and set a framework for the delivery of a minimum of 192ha of B-class employment land (in place of the 64.2ha of employment land in the Plan).*

- 3.2. The need for decent employment land is demonstrated by the evidence base for the Draft Plan, specifically the Economy Background Paper (January 2018), which says:

*1.32 Evidence compiled as part of the background work to the Cheltenham Plan largely reflects the results of previous economic / site studies undertaken in Cheltenham since 2007. Together they have presented a consistent view on the existing portfolio of sites and premises re-iterating market strengths but also key factors that need to be addressed. The issues identified by the reports and the new site analysis can be summarised as follows:*

- **Cheltenham has a large quantum of office space but is not enough to meet demand nor necessarily fit for purpose;**
- *The offer is mostly concentrated in small size office space in regency and older buildings (80 per cent are less than 500 sq. m);*
- *There is a **continued lack of quality, A-grade office space,** particularly in the Town Centre;*
- *The ongoing loss of B1 and A2 sites and premises to residential use has increased pressure on the remaining employment stock. This pressure will continue if regency stock proves to be equally attractive to the residential market in future;*
- *A number of structural weaknesses in the portfolio of available premises exist, particularly in terms of a **lack of business / enterprise parks;***
- *There is limited business start-up space, particularly serviced and supported space for incubator or innovation development;*
- *Many existing industrial sites need upgrading to improve market attractiveness and offer. Upgraded sites will be likely to improve the Gross Value Added (GVA) performance and attractiveness to higher value manufacturing and engineering, finance and business services;*
- *There are a number of significant and important businesses on single occupier sites where there are constraints to the potential expansion of those businesses at that location;*

- *There are relatively low vacancy rates within industrial sites even though some developments are of average or poor quality. This could reflect the lack of availability of alternative premises;*
- *There is a significant proportion of ageing stock, particularly those premises that no longer meet modern business needs and single occupier sites that are adversely affected by amenity or access constraints;*
- *Older commercial sites with buildings that have been vacant for many years and with amenity and access constraints are not proving attractive to the market and will continue to be considered as potential residential sites instead;*
- *Those employment-related planning consents being implemented invariably involve losses of B1a land within the Town Centre **whilst commitments to increase B1 space remain unimplemented**;*
- *Policy needs to maximise the employment benefits of existing sites while other strategic sites are brought to the market over time.*

3.3. The need for the Proposed Allocation is also reflected within the following Theme B Objectives of the Draft Plan:

- a) Ensure provision of sufficient sites and **range of employment land** and other opportunities for economic development to attract new businesses and to enable existing businesses to grow and develop within Cheltenham, creating an environment that supports economic growth, provision of local jobs, and flexibility within the local economy;*
- b) Promote the development of **adaptable and flexible employment space within Cheltenham** so that sites and buildings can be re-used with minimal environmental impact;*
- c) Supports opportunities for business start-ups and small / medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);*
- d) Assist in developing and maintaining an **attractive retail offer in the town centre and other designated centres**;*
- e) Helps secure a balanced economy overall which includes a focus on retail and leisure employment in the central core;*
- f) Deliver a range of sustainable transport choices through appropriate infrastructure improvements including better cross-town and local links, prioritised junctions, and improved public transport.*
- g) Encourage knowledge-intensive services businesses in high value sectors;*
- h) **Support development of Cheltenham's educational facilities to ensure that the young people have access to a wide range of opportunities.***

3.4. Accordingly, the critical need for employment land in Cheltenham demonstrates why the Proposed Allocation ought to be included in the Draft Plan. The Proposed Allocation is a deliverable scheme, where the developer is fully committed to the early completion of the scheme. Indeed, evidence has been submitted by Alder King demonstrating that this would be a particularly attractive development for the

market. Moreover, Hinton already have contractual commitments in place with a number of businesses to occupy the development – the trigger point being the grant of permission. Thus, the Proposed Allocation provides a mechanism to remedy the Council's pressing need for decent employment land in the immediate future.



**4. Proposition 3: The Proposed Allocation reflects the need for flexibility**

4.1. 85% of the floor space associated with the Proposed Allocation is for B1 office space. The remaining 15% includes a day nursery, supermarket food retail unit and a coffee retail unit. These non-B1 uses were incorporated into the Proposed Allocation in order to make the development more attractive to the market and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the B1 office spaces. The inclusion of these non-B1 uses is consistent with the need for flexibility, which is supported by:

- i. the policies in the NPPF;
- ii. the evidence base underpinning the Draft Plan and the previous JCS.

4.2. The NPPF acknowledges the need for flexibility in allocations:

*21. Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations. Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:*

- ...
  - *support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. **Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances;***
- ...
  - **facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit.**

4.3. This is also recognised specifically in respect to employment allocations, in that the NPPF recognises that the long term protection of employment allocations should be avoided:

*22. 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.*

- 4.4. The JCS evidence base similarly recognised the need for flexibility with employment allocations. Indeed, the Review of Business Parks (2011) stated as follows:

*5.8 The JCS should allow for a balanced approach to be taken across the county which protects the existing employment uses, **whilst providing a degree of flexibility** to support and nurture new activities and development.*

- 4.5. Similarly, the Employment Land Review, in specifically considering Grovefield Way, acknowledged this point:

*6.6 The other sites that were identified by the CELR are all considered to still have the capacity to come forward for employment development in the future. There is sufficient land to accommodate a range of employment requirements for different purposes **and also to provide for an element of flexibility and choice on the part of developers and occupiers**. These sites cumulatively provide for more than is required within the Cheltenham area over the JCS period.*

- 4.6. This document proceeded to recognise that this flexibility should be reflected through non-B class facilities being included with employment allocations:

*8.34 In seeking to deliver choice, flexibility and capacity for innovation, **it is also useful to reflect upon the potential complementarity of non-B Class facilities and employment locations. For example, connections with education establishments might provide a stronger basis for business support or innovation, whilst the co-location of hotel or restaurant might provide hospitality functions that would support and increase the attractiveness of business locations**. In this regard, the promotion of town centres as employment centres would provide the most sustainable basis for long term economic growth. The potential for the provision of complementary facilities in other employment locations should also be appraised in order to increase their contribution to the long term economic well-being of the area.*

- 4.7. The JCS Examiner also acknowledged this within her Final Report (dated 26<sup>th</sup> October 2017):

*123. ... provision should be made within the JCS for setting employment policies in those District Plans. This approach should ensure an adequate supply of employment land and premises and give choice **and flexibility to support the intended employment growth**.*

- 4.8. The non-B1 features of the Proposed Allocation are required on the basis that:

- i. As the report by Alder King demonstrates, the inclusion of non-B1 uses within a business park such as the Proposed Allocation is commonplace. Indeed, this is increasingly becoming an expectation of businesses looking for high quality office facilities such as this.
  - ii. The Proposed Allocation is more suited to market conditions than the extant permission through the inclusion of non-B1 uses. Indeed, the Employment Land Review specifically acknowledges that non-B1 uses increase the attractiveness of business locations.
  - iii. The inclusion of non-B1 uses within the Proposed Allocation makes this scheme more viable as compared with the extant permission. This will ensure the long-term sustainability of the scheme and ensure that the Proposed Allocation can withstand fluctuations in market conditions.
- 4.9. Accordingly, the NPPF and the evidence base for the Draft Plan supports a flexible approach to employment allocations. That flexibility should be better reflected in Policy EM3. This can be achieved by ensuring that non-B1 uses are supported by Policy EM3, under circumstances where these non-B1 uses compliment and ensure the delivery/viability of the employment use. This will ensure that appropriate developments that respond to market conditions can come forward.

**5. *Proposition 4: The planning history pertinent to the Site supports the Proposed Allocation***

- 5.1. The site has a significant and complex history of promotion through the planning system.
- 5.2. Initially, the entire site of 6.4 ha benefited from a planning permission for a B1 office park with a park & ride facility. This permission was granted on appeal (PINS Ref.: APP/B1605/06/2015866/NWF) in May 2007. The permission would have generated 22,000 sq.m of office space, but due to rapid change in market conditions, it was never implemented.
- 5.3. Part of the site has since obtained permission for erection of a flagship BMW, Mini and Motorrad Dealership including vehicle sales and servicing facilities. This development has now been completed and is fully operational.
- 5.4. The remaining part of the site (approximately 4.15 ha) currently benefits from an extant outline planning permission for up to 16,800 sq. m. of B1 Employment Use (LPA Ref: 14/01323/OUT).
- 5.5. Recently Hinton Group submitted a hybrid planning application to the Council (LPA Ref: 16/02208/FUL) for the Proposed Allocation.
- 5.6. Against officer recommendation, the Council's planning committee refused permission for this application in December 2017. Hinton have submitted an appeal against that decision.
- 5.7. The extant permission for B1 use demonstrates why the employment allocation at the Site is appropriate. Moreover, the fact that an earlier application was approved at the Site for B1 use following an appeal further demonstrates that there are no technical issues with the Site.

**6. Proposition 5: There are no site specific issues pertinent to the Proposed Allocation**

6.1. The officer report associated with the Proposed Allocation highlighted the positive features of the proposal. Indeed, the report noted that there are no technical reasons to refuse permission (whether flood risk, ecology or otherwise). It was also accepted that the inclusion of a retail use within the Site was consistent with the sequential test.

6.2. Furthermore, the report acknowledged that the non-B1 uses would have a positive impact:

*"Bearing all of the above in mind, officers do not consider that the inclusion of the non-B1 uses proposed dilutes the primary function of it as an employment site to an unacceptable degree."*(paragraph 6.6.13)

6.3. Indeed, the report concluded that:

*"The inclusion of non-B1 uses on the site, through the provisions of the s.106, will facilitate the provision of employment provision on the site, do not dilute the principle purpose of the site to an unacceptable degree and in themselves provide employment opportunities."*(para 7.4)

6.4. This point is highlighted in the Economic Impact Assessment prepared independently by Stuart Hardisty Jones Associates which confirms that the proposal would generate approximately 1,018 full time equivalent jobs once operational.

6.5. One of the reasons the Council refused permission related to urban design. However, this was contrary to the officer report, which concluded that the development was acceptable in terms of layout and design<sup>2</sup> and that the development would be experienced as a high quality business park.<sup>3</sup>

6.6. Furthermore, the Proposed Allocation would have a more positive relationship with the area than the extant permission. In particular, the extant permission would have large office buildings backing onto Grovefield Way. By comparison, the Proposed Allocation offers an opportunity to have a more open experience where the built form is less imposing on public viewpoints, being that the development is set further back from Grovefield Way and includes a superior landscaping strategy. Indeed, the

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<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 6.5.15

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 6.5.11

design of the Proposed Allocation was arrived at through an extensive negotiation with the Council, as acknowledged within the officer report, such that the development is superior to the extant permission.

- 6.7. It is further noted that one of the reasons why the planning committee refused permission was owing to highways. This was contrary to all of the technical evidence pertinent to the application and the consultation response from Highways England and the County Highways Officer. Indeed, as the officer report stated:

*The proposal meets all the technical requirements of new development, provides sufficient parking and provides options for sustainable travel. For these reasons the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of traffic, transport and accessibility.”*(para 6.7.15)

- 6.8. Accordingly, it can be seen that there are no site-specific issues pertinent to the Proposed Allocation.

**7. *Proposition 6: The Proposed Allocation amounts to sustainable development that ought to be supported by the Draft Plan***

- 7.1. The Site benefits from an extant permission for B1 employment use. Accordingly, the principle of allocating the land for employment use has already been established.
- 7.2. The only issue is whether the Draft Plan ought to support the non-B1 components of the Proposed Allocation. This policy support could be achieved through specifically identifying the Proposed Allocation as a supported development, which is indicative of Policy EM3 (arguably Table 11 already does this). Alternatively, the text of Policy EM3 could be refined to lend support to the Proposed Allocation - being that the wording of the policy is unclear. It is clear that one of these options ought to be followed in this instance.
- 7.3. Conversely, were the Draft Plan to be amended such that it was resistant to the proposed non-B1 uses at the Site, this would be entirely inconsistent with the NPPF's ambition of ensuring flexibility in allocations of this nature. Furthermore, it would also be contrary to the evidence base underpinning the JCS and the Draft Plan. This evidence base recognised that there is a need for flexibility as regards employment allocations – including this specific allocation.
- 7.4. The non-B1 uses of the Proposed Allocation are required in order to ensure that the Proposed Development is attractive to the market. Indeed, as the evidence from Alder King identifies, most businesses interested in high-end office space will wish to see non-B1 uses consistent with the Proposed Allocation. Indeed, the Economy Background Paper specifically acknowledges that non-B1 uses can make the development more attractive to the market. Furthermore, the non-B1 uses ensure the long-term sustainability of the scheme, being that this presents a more viable option than the extant permission.
- 7.5. Significantly, the Proposed Allocation will deliver high quality office space in a sustainable location. This will meet the Council's critical need for employment land, as well as realising the wider strategy of the Draft Plan (per Theme B Objectives).
- 7.6. There are no site specific constraints relative to the Proposed Allocation. Indeed, the Proposed Allocation is superior to the extant permission as regards the impacts on urban design and layout.
- 7.7. Accordingly, it is abundantly clear that the Draft Plan ought to support the Proposed Allocation.

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1. Officer's report for planning application 16/02208/FUL.
- 8.2. Cheltenham Economic Strategy: Developing Cheltenham as a Business Location.
- 8.3. Economic Impact Assessment prepared by Stuart Hardisty Jones Associates (March 2018).
- 8.4. Cheltenham Borough Council Non-Residential Land Use Monitoring Report (June 2017).
- 8.5. Summary Note on Deliverability by Alder King.
- 8.6. Transport Note by Transport Planning Associates.



# Appendix 2



Hinton Properties (Grovefield Way) Ltd  
c/o Hunter Page Planning  
FAO Mr James Griffin  
Thornbury House  
18 High Street  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL50 1DZ

APPLICATION NO: 16/02208/FUL  
DATE REGISTERED: 13th December 2016  
DECISION DATE: 14th December 2017

### REFUSAL OF PERMISSION

#### TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015

In pursuance of its powers under the above mentioned Act and Order Cheltenham Borough Council, as the Local Planning Authority, hereby **REFUSES TO PERMIT** the following development:-

Hybrid application seeking detailed planning permission for a 5,034 sq.m of commercial office space (Use Class B1), 502 sq.m day nursery (Use Class D1), 1,742 sq.m supermarket food retail unit (Class A1), a 204 sq.m coffee shop retail unit and drive-thru (Use Classes A1 and A3), with associated parking, landscaping and infrastructure works. Outline planning permission sought for the erection of 8,034 sq.m of commercial office space (Use Class B1), together with associated car parking, landscaping and infrastructure works, with all matters reserved (except access).

AT: Land At North Road West And Grovefield Way Cheltenham

in accordance with the reasons specified hereunder:-

- 1 The site has extant consent for B1 office development and is allocated for employment use (specifically B class employment or Sui Generis uses that exhibit the characteristics of traditional B class uses) within the emerging Cheltenham Plan (Pre-submission version, December 2017).  
The application is for a mixed use development with a considerable and prominent part of the site being given over to non-B1 uses including a supermarket, "drive thru" coffee shop and day nursery.  
The proposed non B1 uses will result in a reduction in the amount of the site available for B1 office development along with the high quality jobs this would provide. The amount of the site given over to non B1 uses in combination with the prominent position they would occupy on the site would result in a dilution of the character and function of the site as a business and represent in inappropriate balance between B1 and non B1 uses.  
For these reasons the proposal is considered to be contrary to policy SD1 of the Joint Core Strategy, policy EM2 of the adopted Local Plan and emerging policy EM3 of the Cheltenham Plan (Pre-submission version, December 2017).

- 2 Due to the mix of uses proposed, the development would result in an increase in traffic on the surrounding road network into the evenings and at weekends in addition to the AM and PM weekday peaks. This would have an unacceptable impact upon the local road network which is already heavily used. For these reasons the proposal is considered to be contrary to policy INF1 of the Joint Core Strategy.
- 3 The proposed layout of the site results in a predominance of hardstanding and retaining structures which result a poor appearance and do not create an attractive streetscape or strong sense of place which responds to the character of this transitional location. The position of buildings including the 'Drive thru' coffee shop and supermarket, close to the edges of the site give the layout a cramped and contrived appearance exacerbated by exterior features such as the 'drive thru' lane and external yards. The proposal is therefore harmful to the surrounding area by reason of its visual impact and also fails to create a high quality business environment in this edge of town location. For these reasons the proposal is considered to be contrary to policy SD 4 of the Joint Core Strategy and CP7 of the Local Plan.

Tracey Crews : Director of Planning

#### **Appeals to the Secretary of State**

- If you are aggrieved by the decision of your local planning authority to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- If you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.
- Appeals must be made using a form which you can get from the Planning Inspectorate at Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN or online at [www.planningportal.gov.uk/pcs](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/pcs).
- The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal, but he will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal.
- The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to him that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions they imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of any development order and to any directions given under a development order.
- In practice, the Secretary of State does not refuse to consider appeals solely because the local planning authority based their decision on a direction given by him.



Hinton Properties (Grovefield Way) Ltd  
c/o Hunter Page Planning  
FAO Mr James Griffin  
Thornbury House  
18 High Street  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL50 1DZ

APPLICATION NO: 18/01004/FUL

DATE REGISTERED: 23rd May 2018

DECISION DATE: 18th October 2018

REFUSAL OF PERMISSION  
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)  
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING  
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015

In pursuance of its powers under the above mentioned Act and Order Cheltenham Borough Council, as the Local Planning Authority, hereby **REFUSES TO PERMIT** the following development:-

Hybrid application seeking detailed planning permission for 5,914 sq.m of commercial office space (Use Class B1), 502 sq.m day nursery (Use Class D1), 1,742 sq.m food retail unit (Use Class A1), with associate parking, landscaping and infrastructure works. Outline planning permission sought for the erection of 8,034 sq.m of commercial office space (Use Class B1), together with associated car parking, landscaping and infrastructure works, with all matters reserved - except access (resubmission).

AT: Land At North Road West And Grovefield Way Cheltenham

in accordance with the reasons specified hereunder:-

- 1 The site has extant planning permission for B1 office development and is allocated for employment use (specifically B class employment or Sui Generis uses that exhibit the characteristics of traditional B class uses) within policy EM3 of the emerging Cheltenham Plan (Regulation 19 version, February 2018). The application is for a mixed use development with considerable and prominent parts of the site being given over to an A1 food retail store and a D1 day nursery.

These proposed non-B1 uses will result in a reduction in the amount of the site available for B1 office development, for which this has been allocated, along with the high quality jobs this would provide. The amount of the site given over to non-B1 uses in combination with the prominent position they would occupy on the site would result in a dilution of the character and function of the site as an employment site and represent in inappropriate balance between B1 and non-B1 uses.

For these reasons the proposal is considered to be contrary to policy SD1 of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy, policy EM2 of the adopted Cheltenham Borough Local Plan and policy EM3 of the emerging Cheltenham Plan (Regulation 19 version, February 2018).

Tracey Crews : Director of Planning

### **Appeals to the Secretary of State**

- If you are aggrieved by the decision of your local planning authority to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- If you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.
- Appeals must be made using a form which you can get from the Planning Inspectorate at Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN or online at [www.planningportal.gov.uk/pcs](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/pcs).
- The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal, but he will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal.
- The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to him that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions they imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of any development order and to any directions given under a development order.
- In practice, the Secretary of State does not refuse to consider appeals solely because the local planning authority based their decision on a direction given by him.

# Appendix 3



9 April 2018

Planning Policy Team  
Cheltenham Borough Council  
Municipal Offices Promenade  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL50 9SA

Dear Sir

**Cheltenham Plan - Pre-Submission consultation (Regulation 19)**

We write in response to the public consultation of the Cheltenham Plan Pre-Submission Consultation. We have already sent you a response on the 12 February 2018 that raises our primary concerns and the issues raised in that response are not repeated here.

In summary the C&I Group of the LEP do not believe that the Local Plan has provided sufficient employment land within the Local Plan to support the Boroughs needs within the Plan Period. Whilst it is accepted that the Borough will provide two of the largest employment areas within the JCS area (West Cheltenham 45ha and North West Cheltenham 10ha), this needs to be looked at against the backdrop of the entire JCS area where it is proposed to provide **a minimum of** 192ha of new employment land up to 2031.

The new strategic employment sites will take some time to be developed and delivered and therefore it is considered that a pipeline of smaller, more deliverable sites needs to complement the strategic sites in order to ensure that there is a meaningful supply and choice of employment sites within the JCS area. It is quite apparent that new office development is needed **now** as there is currently no choice in the market place and an acute shortage. This has only led to a sharp increase in price per square foot for existing office space and making office accommodation unaffordable for many businesses within the town. Equally, there is also an acute shortage of other B Class land and this also needs to be rectified.

We are aware of many businesses that have left the town as they have been unable to secure suitable premises.

The adopted JCS advocates that the strategic allocations will provide a total of 112.2ha of new employment land. However, this should be discounted to 98.8ha as North West Cheltenham will only be providing 10ha. This leaves a residual of 93.2ha of new employment land to be found through the local plans.

The JCS expressed all figures as a minimum, as during the round table sessions it was agreed that if more new employment land could be found this would be welcomed because all existing supply had been exhausted and there had been considerable losses to other uses especially in Cheltenham where there has been a considerable loss of office buildings to residential through permitted development rights and there has been no new employment sites coming forward. It is quite apparent that the pressure for new housing has led to the loss of many key employment sites and buildings exacerbating the shortage of employment land in the Borough as a whole. The Cheltenham Plan should therefore seek to positively address this problem to ensure that the town has a robust economy over the entire Plan period.

[www.gfirstlep.com](http://www.gfirstlep.com) [info@gfirstlep.com](mailto:info@gfirstlep.com) 01242 715480

Registered Office: GFirst LEP CIC, Oxstalls Campus, Gloucester, GL2 9HW

Company Number 09353067

The Cheltenham Plan advocates four new employment sites through Policy EM3. The combined area of these sites provides 8.28ha of employment land which is considered to be insufficient against an outstanding requirement of 93.2ha.

In addition, three of the sites that have been identified and allocated are all pre-existing employment sites (existed as an employment site before 2011) and accordingly should not be utilised to make up a supply of new sites for the Borough. These sites should be safeguarded under Policy EM1 of the Plan as 'Key Existing Employment Land and Buildings'.

Land south of Jessop Avenue was a former employment site and is currently being redeveloped to provide a new office block. Land South of Hatherley Lane is also currently in employment use and part of a larger employment redevelopment proposal. Land North-West of Grovefield Way already benefits from a planning consent for employment use. Part of the site is now occupied by a car showroom (sui-generis use) leaving only 4.15ha in office use. Cheltenham Walk is currently being used as a car park.

The C&I Group of the LEP recommend that the Council allocate new employment land on suitable and accessible sites within the Borough or adjoining its immediate boundary in order to address the shortage of employment land and premises in the Borough and to assist in the overall supply of employment land set out in the JCS. It is accepted that such allocations may comprise of new greenfield allocations adjoining the main artery routes into the town. Such sites should be approximately 0.5-2ha and deliverable through the planning process and within the first part of the Plan period.

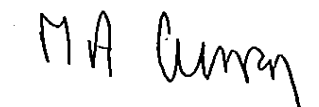
The JCS Inspector provided a broad indication of acceptable locations against the landscape constraints in the area and these should be re-investigated in order to assist in the provision of a meaningful supply of new employment sites to support the Borough.

The C&I Group of the LEP also recommend that the Council take a more practical and flexible approach to the development of new business parks recognising that it is commonplace for new business developments to provide complimentary and ancillary uses on site. Ancillary uses can comprise of hotels, cafes, pubs, restaurants, retail uses to name a few. The addition of these ancillary facilities and uses maintains the attractiveness of the park for end users and improves the viability and delivery of the B class employment. Such uses are also recognised as providing a significantly higher number of jobs than the equivalent floor area or site area of B class uses as well as providing much needed amenity.

It is considered that the Plan should make reference to ancillary uses being acceptable on employment parks provided they do not exceed 20% of the intended employment content.

We hope you find this information of assistance but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Yours faithfully



Mike Curran  
Strategic Business Manager  
GFirst LEP

Phone: +44 (0) 1242 715 486  
Mobile: +44 (0) 7850 182 141

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Registered Office: GFirst LEP CIC, Oxstalls Campus, Gloucester, GL2 9HW  
Company Number 09353067



**Appendix 4**



Our ref: JW/gd

Mr P Pratt  
Alder King  
Brunswick House  
Gloucester Business Park  
Gloucester GL3 4AA

27 November 2018

Dear Phil

#### GROVEFIELD WAY PLANNING APPLICATION

Further to our recent discussions I understand that you require some additional support for the planning application at Grovefield Way.

Accordingly I can confirm that as the most active office agent over the past 10 years in relation to the disposal of office space on the business parks situated on the M5 between Junctions 13 and 9, I can confirm that the lack of amenity has often been raised as a cause of concern from office occupiers.

The lack of easy access to amenities such as coffee shops, restaurants and convenience shops is a negative issue for companies in relation to staff retention and will affect their decision making when considering relocating, particularly from a city or town centre location to an out of town office park.

As an example Tewkesbury Business Park has suffered from the lack of such onsite amenities that has deterred companies from relocating, and conversely the business parks that can offer these amenities such as Gloucester Business Park at Junction 11A have attracted the most prestigious occupiers and continue to command the highest level of demand.

A developer who is able to provide amenity uses to compliment the business uses on a business park can expect to improve the occupier demand, and is likely to experience shorter vacant marketing periods.

I trust this provides sufficient supporting information for you at this stage and please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.



With kind regards,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Hawkins'.

John Hawkins



PM104ldp18

29 August 2018

J Hinton Esq  
Hinton Group  
Reims House  
8 The Croft  
Buntsford Drive  
Bromsgrove  
B60 4JE

**email & post** [jon@hintongroup.co.uk](mailto:jon@hintongroup.co.uk)

JOHN RYDE  
COMMERCIAL



COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS  
*Agency, Valuation & Management*

14 ROYAL CRESCENT  
CHELTENHAM  
GL50 3DA

PHONE: (01242) 576276

e-mail: [enquiries@johnryde.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@johnryde.co.uk)  
[www.johnryde.co.uk](http://www.johnryde.co.uk)

Dear Jon

## **CORINTHIAN PARK, CHELTENHAM**

As you know I am retained by Bloor Homes to seek a new regional headquarters office building in North Gloucestershire circa. 25,000 sq ft gross.

I refer to a meeting held with you and Bloor Homes and respective advisors and, subsequent receipt of development drawings and draft heads of terms on which further detailed advice is being taken.

I am in a position to confirm that Bloor Homes are seriously interested in this opportunity and of the options available this is definitely their preference. Clearly, there is more work to do in finalising an agreement, but it is my client's intention to endeavour to progress this acquisition and if you wish a copy of this letter can be realised to the Local Planning Authority.

Yours sincerely

Paul Maguire  
[paulmaguire@johnryde.co.uk](mailto:paulmaguire@johnryde.co.uk)

Subject to Contract

cc Adrian Bloor Esq Bloor Homes  
Steve Roberts Esq Bloor Homes  
Douglas Bonham Esq Colliers



TS0461b17

28<sup>th</sup> March 2017

J Hinton Esq - Development Director  
Hinton Group  
Reims House  
8 The Croft  
Buntsford Drive  
Bromsgrove B6 4JE

JOHN RYDE  
COMMERCIAL



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e-mail: [enquiries@johnryde.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@johnryde.co.uk)  
[www.johnryde.co.uk](http://www.johnryde.co.uk)

Dear Mr Hinton

**Proposed Development at Grovefield Way, Cheltenham**

I refer to our previous discussions regarding the above site which adjoins the new Cotswold BMW/Mini development and for which you have submitted a planning application for a mixed commercial scheme to include an Aldi Supermarket, a day nursery and a drive-thru Costa Coffee outlet.

In addition, the planning application includes two office buildings, one of which we are discussing regarding a potential occupier.

The remainder of your planning application proposes an outline consent for office development without being specific on the design, layout and size of the buildings.

In my opinion, this is a sensible way of dealing with the overall planning for the site at the current time as in my experience, potential office occupiers either for small or larger amounts of space prefer to understand the nature of the development and nature of other occupiers before they are likely to commence discussions in earnest.


It makes sense for this element of the scheme to allocate the land for office development but for full detailed applications to be developed once the main scheme has been established in accordance with the detailed planning application.

It is very difficult to get office occupiers to engage in discussions before receipt of a planning permission as in our experience, most office occupiers, when they decide to move, will want to ensure a scheme is deliverable before committing resource to negotiations. Unlike retailers, most office occupiers do not have a dedicated property team searching for suitable sites – it tends to be directors or employees who are challenged with this task, which takes them away from their day to day role.

Furthermore, one of the considerations that office occupiers considering space on a business park have to make is the trade-off between more open plan space, with their own front door and a better parking provision against the retail and leisure convenience that a town centre offers. Providing some form of on-site retail provision, such as that proposed, significantly minimises the impact of this. If there were to be no such complimentary uses on the site, it would likely be too big a shift in environment for many businesses (including the occupier who I am representing in discussions for a unit on the site) and their workforce.



I therefore feel the approach taken in securing a consent and delivering complimentary uses before commencing formal marketing of the office space is the best way in which to bring this scheme forward.

I trust the above comments are of assistance to you, 

Kindest regards?

Yours sincerely



**T C Smith**

[tmsmith@johnryde.co.uk](mailto:tmsmith@johnryde.co.uk)



28 March 2017

Jon Hinton  
Reims House,  
8 The Croft,  
Buntsford Drive,  
Bromsgrove  
B60 4JE

Dear Jon,

**CORINTHIAN PARK, GROVEFIELD WAY, CHELTENHAM**

Further to our discussion in respect of the proposed office accommodation at the above site, I confirm that the process typically undertaken to secure office occupiers off plan encompasses the following sequential stages: -

- Obtain an office use planning consent (ideally at least part detailed rather than just outline)
- Secure named complimentary users within the estate to provide companies with ancillary facilities and create a destination rather than a sterile business park.
- Demonstrate to potential occupiers the developer's credibility through track record, detailed development program, appointed contractor and secured funding.
- Undertake a comprehensive suite of marketing to target occupiers through boards, brochures, occupier mailing, website, PR, site launch etc.

The gestation period for office enquiries between opening discussions to delivering a completed property is typically far longer than other sectors including retail, industrial and roadside uses. This is due to office requirements often being based upon more subjective factors and/or of a bespoke element, whether they be fit-out or mechanical and electrical related. Accordingly, it is extremely rare that we have secured one named occupier for the above park, given where we are in the aforementioned process.

Please let me know if the above requires any further elaboration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas Bonham", written over a light blue circular stamp.

**Douglas Bonham MRICS**  
**DIRECTOR**