

**Issue 04      Economy and Self Containment (WEL9)****Introduction - The Joint Promoters Approach to Employment**

1. The employment offer of Welborne is primarily located in the south of the master plan, to the south of the access road from the A32, close to the links from the upgraded Junction 10 and to the M27, and in and adjacent to the District Centre. This falls into BST's ownership. There is additional employment land located to the east of the A32 close to the M27 on land owned by BDL.
2. There will be employment opportunities in the local centres, and of course home working which will be facilitated by fast broadband and the supporting infrastructure that will serve the community.
3. BST has formed an Employment Group which has researched the potential market demand for the employment offer in the New Community, and tested a range of options relating to the mix of business uses.
4. The key findings of a market based assessment of the potential for employment uses in the New Community are summarised below:
  - The mix between business class B1 and B2/B8 uses should be broadly in balance,
  - Market testing has concluded that the strongest areas of demand are within Class B2 industry, Class B8 warehousing and distribution, Class B1c light industry and Class B1b research and development.
  - A lower proportion of Class B1a (offices) use is now proposed than was recommended by the PUSH strategy, because research indicates that demand is weakest in this use class, and that Southampton city centre and Portsmouth city centre are promoting themselves as attractive locations for office occupiers in the next 10 to 20 years.
  - There should be linkages between employers that locate in the new community and secondary, further and higher education at Welborne and in the Borough and region. A training and skills programme should form part of the wider governance of the new community to ensure residents are equipped with the skills that the Welborne business community needs.
  - The principle of a business incubation centre and a strategy to encourage entrepreneurship and the growth of small businesses on the site, as well as flexible working practices from home supported by high speed fibre optics and broadband.
  - The provision of flexible communal office space and the provision of a range of facilities, social, sport, retail and leisure to support businesses that locate in the New Community is supported.
  - The other key finding of BST's market research is that the area to the north of the M27, and to the west of the A32, is the most attractive location for business, due to its visual prominence, and also increased level of accessibility provided by an all moves Junction 10. It also benefits from excellent access by BRT and local bus services, and proximity to the District Centre.
  - The preferred strategy is to focus the main employment floorspace to the south of the District Centre, to provide a wide range of opportunities for offices, research and development, light industry, manufacturing and warehousing in the highly attractive sites that can be created to the north of the M27.

5. Other benefits of this approach are:

- The employment floorspace will generate footfall which will support the viability of the District Centre during the week days. It will also create demand for other leisure and hotel facilities, and create activity in the parks and open spaces created in the first phases.
- The land to the north of the M27 is also subject to high levels of noise pollution, and is not well suited for residential development. Industrial and warehouse development, and offices can form a buffer to help reduce the impact of noise on residential areas in the southern half of the site.
- The Plan has the flexibility to deliver an employment mix that would create a wide range of job opportunities for residents of the New Community, and also of residents of Fareham as a whole.
- The employment is located in the most accessible and visually prominent part of the community. The highway infrastructure will be delivered in the early phases of the construction of the new community.

6. The Joint Promoters welcome the policies in the submission draft. Unlike previous drafts of the Plan, there is no cap on employment floorspace, and prescription on the balance between offices and other B class uses is avoided. This will allow sufficient flexibility to meet market demands as they change over the next 25 years, in accordance with paragraph 23 of the NPPF.

#### **4.1 Bearing in mind the objective of self-containment, is the relationship between employment and housing provision appropriate in terms of timing?**

7. The Joint Promoters believe the location of the employment in the south of the site, close to the J10 and M27 and BRT is vitally important and enhances the prospects of attracting a range of occupiers in the first phases of the whole project.
8. Improved deliverability means faster rates of development, and accelerated rates of job creation.
9. There is therefore an opportunity to create a wide range of job opportunities to serve the first residential phases of the New Community, and to establish sustainable lifestyles from the outset.
10. The District Centre and Village Centre are in the early phases of the new community. They will be important sources of employment, as well as being very attractive to new occupiers and their employees.
11. There is also an opportunity to improve the self-containment of Fareham Borough, by providing a wider range of job opportunities, in a location that will be very well served by public transport. Fareham Borough currently has one of the highest levels of out-commuting by car in the PUSH area.
12. In summary, the Plan encourages early delivery of employment, and this is necessary to create sustainable patterns of transport, and to support the viability of the district and village centres and community facilities in the early years of the new community.

#### **4.2 Is the scale of employment provision justified? What is the Council's fallback position should demand for employment land not materialise?**

13. The land to the north of the M27 is subject to high levels of noise pollution, and is not well suited for residential development.
14. Industrial and warehouse development, and offices can form a buffer to help reduce the impact of noise on residential areas in the southern half of the site.
15. The noise conditions improve to the north of the employment area as defined on the concept masterplan. There is a logical transition from employment to residential.
16. The Joint Promoters are confident that demand will materialise for the broad range of employment uses supported by the policy. Earlier versions of the employment policy for the new community were much more reliant on offices.

17. Research has demonstrated that the strongest areas of demand are within Class B2 industry, Class B8 warehousing and distribution, Class B1c light industry and Class B1b research and development.
18. A lower proportion of Class B1a (offices) use is now proposed, and the policy is no longer prescriptive on the quantum of floorspace to be provided in each business class. The new policy allows sufficient flexibility to meet market demands as they change over time. The policy is in effect future proofed.
19. If, despite this flexibility and the locational advantages of the Welborne employment offer, the employment floorspace fails to materialise, the options for the land adjacent to the motorway and J10 are limited due to the noise pollution.

**4.3/4.4 Are the locations of the proposed employment development appropriately justified? Is the type and range of proposed employment uses appropriately justified?**

20. For the reasons set out above the Joint Promoters believe the locations and mix of employment is justified, and reflects market research and experience, and consultation with businesses who may consider locating at Welborne.

**4.5 Is the Council's approach sufficiently aspirational - will it result in a high level of self-containment? Is there more the Council could do to facilitate home working and sustainable travel?**

21. The Joint Promoters believe that striving for high-levels of self-containment, and maximising the economic contribution of the new Community is a key objective. There is a tendency for the aspiration to achieve 6,000 homes to restrict the land available for employment, and other uses.
22. The policies are now flexible enough to deliver a substantial employment offer, but there is a risk that the area devoted to employment may be "squeezed" during the development control process by the overriding objective of maximising housing.
23. The demand for home working can be reflected in the design of homes and the provision of broadband communications, and the supporting infrastructure. This is an important consideration for the detailed design stage.

**4.6 Is the Council's approach to office provision (for example safeguarding 3ha of land for later in the plan period) clear and justified? In terms of the sustainability of Welborne why is office development not proposed for earlier in the plan period?**

24. The proposed amendment to the office policy clarifies that the Council do not want to hold back the delivery of offices. Offices will form part of the employment mix in the first phases of development, but at a scale that reflects demand, and alongside a mix of research & development, light industry, and manufacturing and distribution, and other commercial uses.

**4.7 Does the Council have a fallback position should the upgrade of junction 10 of the M27 be delayed (on which the provision of much of the employment floor space relies)? Will the Council's phasing strategy weaken the achievement of self-containment?**

25. FBC to respond.