

## Part II: Summary Proof of Evidence on Employment Need from a Market Perspective for Land North East of Junction 10 M42, Tamworth

Prepared for:

**Hodgetts Estates /  
HPG Developments**

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Author

David Binks MRICS



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## 1. About the Author

- 1.1. I, David Binks MRICS, am a chartered surveyor specialising in Industrial & Logistics (“I&L”) agency with over 30 years’ experience in this sector. I am an International Partner and Head of I&L agency for the Midlands at Cushman & Wakefield (C&W) and currently based in their Birmingham office.
- 1.2. I hold extensive experience from a market perspective in demand and supply of I&L property.
- 1.3. C&W is one of the largest commercial property consultancies serving the UK. It is a multi-disciplinary practice, but it is particularly well known for its expertise and experience within I&L and office property.
- 1.4. C&W is an active agent in the Warwickshire, Staffordshire, and wider West Midlands and produces bi-annual and quarterly research in relation to the I&L sector, including regular ‘thought leadership’ papers considering key themes.
- 1.5. The content of my proof of evidence contains my professional opinion and is produced in full accordance with my professional code of conduct. I am aware of my duties to the Inquiry to provide my opinion irrespective of by whom I am instructed. I can therefore confirm that the content of this proof is true to the best of my knowledge or belief.

## 2. Scope of Evidence

- 2.1. To fully understand the strategic employment land need position that is relevant to the Appeal Site the accompanying Cushman & Wakefield Employment Land Study May 2024 ("C&WELS") is provided at Appendix 1 of the Joint Appendices that accompanies my proof of evidence.

### The C&WELS

- 2.2. The C&WELS provides the most comprehensive and current evidence base for strategic employment land in the location of the Appeal Site.
- 2.3. It evidences the widespread and accepted position within the sector that there is very strong demand at a regional, sub-regional, and local level for 'Big Box' developments, which are defined at paragraph 4.1 of the C&WELS, and an astonishingly low supply of sites, particularly at the sub-regional level and in North Warwickshire.
- 2.4. Unless otherwise indicated references to paragraphs and figures in my proof of evidence relate to that Study.
- 2.5. The C&WELS was authored by myself and my colleagues including Jonathan Turner MRICS. I authored Sections 4,5, & 6.
- 2.6. I strongly advise the Inspector to read the C&WELS in full to gain a comprehensive understanding of the employment land need position in relation to this Appeal.

### Proof of Evidence

- 2.7. From a market perspective, my proof of evidence:
- Provides an explanation of how large-scale strategic sites are delivered (Section 3)
  - Provides Demand & Supply Data from the C&WELS in relation to the Appeal Site (Section 4)
  - Outlines the consequences of not meeting the evidenced immediate need for strategic employment land (Section 5)
  - Details the appropriateness of the Site to meet the identified immediate need (Section 6)

### 3. Summary of Proof of Evidence

- 3.1. The area around J10 M42 in North Warwickshire has been a long-standing supplier of strategic scale employment land for large scale logistics with the redevelopment of the large coal mining site at Birch Coppice (commencing in the late 1990s and completing in 2014), Core 42 (commencing in 2015 and completing in 2022), recent developments at Centurion Park (2014-2016) and St Modwen's Tamworth Logistics Park (commencing in 2017 and completing in 2022). All of those developments have been highly successful with large scale logistics facilities (B8 Use Class) being by far the predominant use.
- 3.2. The J10 M42 location, is superbly well and strategically located for the uses proposed in relation to the rest of the UK with readily available access to the strategic road network (and subsequently major freight ports) and within close proximity are the only two operational strategic rail freight terminals (SRFI) in the West Midlands (Birmingham Intermodal Freight Terminal known as "BIFT" at Birch Coppice c. 1 mile and Hams Hall SRFI c.8 miles).
- 3.3. These unique characteristics have encouraged major European and Global corporates to base their UK and European headquarters in the Borough (including Aldi and FedEx/TNT in Atherstone and UPS and Euro Car Parts at Birch Coppice).
- 3.4. At the national level, in terms of buildings available or under construction presently the supply position represents 1.4 years based on 2023 take up figures or 1.23 years based on the pre pandemic 5-year annual average. Rents and land values are also rising strongly.
- 3.5. The pre pandemic structural/key market drivers of E-commerce, near/re shoring (particularly since Brexit & Covid), and the changes to electrification in the automotive sector remain strong. In addition, since the pandemic, new drivers have emerged such as the intense focus from occupiers to upgrade their property portfolios especially given ambitious Net Zero targets and UK efficiency standards legislation.
- 3.6. The average annual take up of the Golden Triangle over the last 5 years was approximately 15.1 million sq. ft. meaning, comparing this to the current availability of sites in the Golden Triangle of 13.9 million sq. ft there is approximately 11 months' supply remaining of large-scale strategic sites.
- 3.7. Within Area A as detailed by LP6, take up over the last 5-year period 2019-2023 has reached 7.6 million sq. ft, and 11 million sq. ft. if J11 M42 is included, averaging 2.2 million sq. ft per year. If the pandemic years 2020-2022 are excluded then the 5 year take up was 9.25m sq, ft averaging 1.85m sq. ft per year.
- 3.8. Current supply of logistics (B8) Big Box development land along the M42 Corridor is limited to one site capable of accommodating up to 550,000 sq. ft of logistics buildings across two plots at Peddimore (and up to 1.2 million sq. ft of B2) (See Figure 43 on page 89). That equates to 3 to 3.5 month's logistics land supply at the 5-year average take up rates (2019-2023/ex pandemic years). This represents a critical level and is causing ongoing harm to economic growth and productivity of businesses in the region such as JLR which operate within a global marketplace.
- 3.9. The supply of sites at the local level stands at 0 (zero) years' supply in terms of large scale B8 logistics space capable of accommodating the immediate need.
- 3.10. I am aware that there are specific and ongoing commercial discussions with a major employer in North Warwickshire with an interest in taking up to 75% of the proposed scheme by land area. Discussions have been long standing (since 2020/21) in relation to this scheme with meetings held with professional advisers, occupier corporate technical specifications provided, and drawings at tender stage. I can confirm that if permission is granted that this interest is very likely to result in an immediate take up of land.

- 3.11. The proposed development can be delivered very quickly (within a 2–3-year timeframe) which is considered ‘immediate’ in both market terms and the context of delivery of large-scale strategic employment sites. It would be difficult in market terms to find a more ideally located site, geographically within the heart of the Golden Triangle, on the M42 and the A5 corridors, close to the only two operational SRFI in the West Midlands at Birch Coppice at Hams Hall and within easy reach of an existing (and growing) labour force.
- 3.12. In market terms, the location, with easy access to the strategic road network (motorways and trunk roads) and the only two operational rail freight terminals in the West Midlands is unquestionable. It is established and evidenced by the pace of take up of space in the location over an extended period of 20+ years. It is frankly the ideal site in market terms.
- 3.13. My proof concludes by stating that:
- The Appeal Site is located on the final remaining quadrant of an established I&L Big Box location at Junction 10 of the M42 outside of the Green Belt.
  - From a market perspective, the immediate need for strategic employment land is established by the C&WELS at a regional, sub-regional, and local level. The Appeal Site is readily available, easily serviceable, with specific and ongoing strong interest in the scheme from a number of occupiers.
  - The Site enjoys an almost unique set of attributes (which are detailed in the C&WELS) and is clearly suitable for the specific market segment for which it is proposed representing an outstanding opportunity which stands out regionally, sub-regionally, and locally.
  - I expect take-up of the scheme to be extremely rapid. My expectation, considering the speed of delivery of similar developments in close proximity, is that the development will be completed, and generating employment, within 12-18 months of the start of construction.
  - I can think of no better Site within North Warwickshire or the wider sub-region to meet the immediate need and immediate demand for strategic employment land.

Author:  
David Binks:  
International Partner  
Head of Logistics & Industrial Agency (Midlands)

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