

EXAMINATION OF THE STROUD DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

INSPECTORS' MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

Response of Tritax Symmetry (Gloucester) Limited

Matter 4 Employment needs and requirement

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Issue 4 – Are the identified employment needs supported by robust and credible evidence, justified and consistent with national policy? Is the Plan’s proposal to accommodate 79 ha of employment land soundly based?

The economic need for the District has been established through the Gloucestershire Economic Needs Assessment (2020) (ENA) (EB29), which examined a range of scenarios for future economic growth. The ENA recommends that the amount of additional employment land needed should be between 62 and 72 ha for the plan period, to accord with the highest two scenarios: a scenario based upon the expected labour supply and a slightly higher labour demand growth scenario based upon supporting growth in the key local industrial strategy sectors.

- 4.1 The assessment is based on an extrapolation of historic trends rather than actual need. Historically suppressed land supply leading to low availability and therefore take up will generate a low growth trend. The success of Javelin Park and Quedgeley demonstrates the need in the market for suitable employment sites of the right size in the right locations.
- 4.2 Javelin Park was identified as an existing Key Employment Site in the 2015 Local Plan. Following the partial development of the site the remainder lay vacant until 2020 when development by Graftongate commenced. The site already includes a 120,000 sq ft warehouse unit sold to International Plywood. A further four units are being developed comprising 17,516 sq ft, 26,465 sq ft, 38,227 sq ft and 41,288 sq ft of space.
- 4.3 Phil Silk, managing director of Graftongate, said in respect of Javelin Park:
“Having recently completed the infrastructure works and secured planning permission we have decided to speculatively build these units given the strength of the market and having identified a lack of supply particularly of the sizes being built.”
“This is a significant commitment by the business to take plans forward quickly but also recognition of the strength of the Gloucester economy currently.”
- 4.4 Robert Smith of Bruton Knowles, joint agents for the site, added:
“The shortage of suitable premises for small to mid-size growth and growing businesses across multiple sectors is escalating demand, so the design of flexible use units at Gloucester 12 is expected to attract wide interest. Other larger scale developments planned for the M5 corridor Growth Zone at Junctions 9 and 10 will take over 3 years to progress.”
- 4.5 Quedgeley East/St. Modwen Park Gloucester comprises a 58 acre (23.5 ha) development site. To date, 10 units have been delivered with the first phase being complete in December 2019. G61, 70,000sqft is the latest building to have been completed and is ready for immediate occupation. A further 3 units ranging from 33,000 – 49,000sqft are envisaged to be delivered during 2024. Half the site is occupied.