
Shaping Elmbridge A New Local Plan



Strategic Employment Land Review

June 2019



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Borough Council
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Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the preparation of the Local Plan, one of the key considerations for the new Elmbridge Local Plan is how it can support the delivery of the economic growth and employment needed in the Borough up until 2035 and support the ambitions of the Elmbridge Economic Strategy. The Council has produced this Strategic Employment Land (SEL) Review 2019 which forms part of the Local Plan evidence base and will inform the production of the new Elmbridge Local Plan.
- 1.2 The purpose of the 'Review 2019' is to undertake an assessment of the Borough's employment sites and consider the potential of these employment sites to meet the needs of the market and deliver new growth to meet demand. The assessment considers the potential of each currently designated SEL site to deliver future growth, and which of these sites are strategically important to maintain economic growth in the Borough and across the functional economic area. The assessment also examines a variety other non-designated employment sites which may have the potential to be strategically important employment locations.
- 1.3 The outputs from the 'Review 2019' together with other evidence base studies, the consultation responses to the Options Consultation 2019 and the Sustainability Appraisal will inform the identification of the Council's preferred approach for the Local Plan and site selection.

Key National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in February 2019¹. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF confirms that the economic objective remains central to achieving sustainable development.
- 1.5 Paragraph 23 states that strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing forward sufficient land and should be allocating sufficient sites to deliver the strategic priorities of the area.
- 1.6 Whilst Paragraph 31 sets out that all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence that should take into account the relevant market signals.
- 1.7 NPPF paragraph 81 states that planning policies should:
- a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;
 - b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;
 - c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and
 - d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.
- 1.8 Paragraph 82 of the NPPF highlights how planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.
- 1.9 National Planning Practice Guidance on housing and economic needs assessment² sets out guidance on how local authorities should determine the type of employment land needed. The evidence base will need to be robust and reflect local circumstances and market conditions, assessing current stock of supply and market demand. It will need to identify future needs by using employment forecasts and assessments of future employment needs.
- 1.10 In addition to national policy the Government has also indicated through the relaxation of permitted development rights relating to employment land and

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

the overwhelming drive towards delivering more housing, that careful consideration needs to be given to both the allocation of new employment sites and the continued designation of existing employment sites for greater levels of protection.

Current Strategic Employment Land designations

- 1.11 At present there are 13 sites in the Borough currently designated as Strategic Employment Land (SEL) as per the Policies Map for the Core Strategy³ (see Appendix 1: Strategic Employment Land Borough Map). These sites were initially designated in the 2000 Elmbridge Replacement Borough Local Plan and taken forward as part of the Elmbridge Core Strategy which was adopted in 2011. The Core Strategy policy that sets out the key considerations regarding the redevelopment of these sites is Policy CS23 Employment land provision. This policy designates SEL (on the policies map) and seeks to prevent the loss of these strategically important sites to non-employment uses and to ensure that the number of jobs provided on these sites is not reduced. However, it is also clear in the Core Strategy that the SEL designation would be reviewed as part of the Proposed Site Allocations Development Plan Document (later known as Settlement ID Plans).
- 1.12 However since the Core Strategy was adopted in 2011, there have been numerous changes to the planning system resulting in the Council looking to replace the Core Strategy with a Local Plan instead of Settlement ID Plans. The 'Review 2019' has been undertaken as part of the Local Plan preparation. The Local Plan will contain a vision for the Borough's employment land, a strategic economic policy and development management policies for the assessment of employment related planning applications.

³ Policies Map, <https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/core-strategy/>

Assessment Methodology

1.13 The 'Review 2019' assesses existing and potential employment sites. The assessment methodology has been carried out in line with Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Note (2004)⁴ as it is considered that this methodology is relevant and fit for purpose.

1.14 As part of the review of the SEL across the Borough, numerous sites were assessed including the existing designated SEL sites. A number of these sites have been excluded from the assessment as they have received planning permissions as set out in Table 1 below however it is only through the Local Plan process that their SEL designation can be removed.

Strategic Employment Land Sites	Planning status
Riverdene Industrial Estate SEL,	Planning permission was granted for a supermarket with flats above before the assessment of sites began and is therefore not included in the list below. Planning application reference 2014/5061.
Imber Court Industrial Estate SEL	Planning permission was granted for the re-development for residential use. Planning application reference 2015/3400.
Claygate House SEL, Claygate	Prior approval for a PD prior notification change of use from offices to residential. Planning application reference 2019/1047.
Portsmouth Road SEL, Cobham	Appeal allowed for demolition of office block for a new residential development. Planning application reference 2017/1494.
Station Avenue SEL, Walton-on-Thames	Planning permission granted for residential scheme comprising of 375 units. Planning application reference 2019/1698.

1.15 In total 31 sites were assessed, and these are set out in Table 2 below:

	Site	Size (Ha)	Designation
1.	1 Princes Road, Weybridge	0.27	
2.	58 - 68 High Street, Weybridge	0.18	
3.	58 Church Street, Weybridge	0.26	
4.	A C Court, Thames Ditton	0.32	
5.	Abbey House, Weybridge	0.35	
6.	Aissela building, Esher	0.15	

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employment-land-reviews-guidance>

Table 2: List of Sites Assessed			
	Site	Size (Ha)	Designation
7.	Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL, Weybridge	36.27	SEL
8.	BT Telephone Exchange, Thames Ditton	0.90	
9.	Ferry Works, Thames Ditton	0.59	
10.	Glaxo Smith Kline SEL, Weybridge	2.58	SEL
11.	Hampton Court Estate, Thames Ditton	1.40	
12.	Hardy House, Esher	0.06	
13.	Hersham Place Technology Park SEL, Hersham	4.21	SEL
14.	Hersham Trading Estate SEL, Walton-on-Thames	7.16	SEL
15.	Horizon Business Village, Weybridge	1.38	
16.	Idis House, Weybridge	0.17	
17.	KBC House, Walton-on-Thames	0.42	
18.	Kingston House Estate SEL, Thames Ditton	3.61	SEL
19.	Leylands House, Walton-on-Thames	0.31	
20.	Molesey Industrial Estate SEL, Molesey	14.68	SEL
21.	Nicholson House, Weybridge	0.25	
22.	River Mole Business Park, Esher	0.52	
23.	Sandown Industrial Park, Esher	3.56	
24.	St Andrew's House, Esher	0.25	
25.	Telephone Exchange, Claygate	0.72	
26.	Thames Mews, Esher	0.54	
27.	The Heights SEL, Weybridge	27.77	SEL
28.	The Pavilion SEL, Thames Ditton	1.01	SEL
29.	Walton Lodge, Walton on Thames	0.16	
30.	Weir House, East Molesey	0.23	
31.	Windsor House, Esher	0.02	

- 1.16 All identified sites have been assessed against a series of criteria to help judge whether they should be considered for designation as SEL. This assessment considers their size, the quality of the buildings and the environment, their accessibility, the capacity for further development and the nature of the existing occupiers of any site. This will enable a clear assessment as to the whether a site should be considered for designation (or continue to be) as SEL.
- 1.17 The assessment of each of the above sites was split into two parts. The first part of the assessment was to consider the size of the site and the nature of the uses on those sites. This assessment is essential in considering the strategic importance of a site either locally or sub regionally. This assessment was a desk top study and provided the basis for the second part, the on-site assessment.

Part 1: Site size

1.18 The size of the site is a key determinant as to whether a site is strategic or not. Larger sites offer wider opportunities for clustering, support a significant level of employment and if lost, would have a significant cross border impact. It is proposed that only sites of greater than 5ha will be considered appropriate for designation as SEL. However, where a site is smaller but could show potential to deliver significant increases in floorspace to meet future needs, or offers a high-quality environment supporting knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries then designation as SEL may still be considered to be appropriate.

1.19 This 5ha threshold was based upon what is suggested in the Employment Land Reviews; Guidance Note (2004) (see paragraph 5.29)⁵. Whilst this threshold is smaller than those considered in many other studies, 5ha is considered to reflect the functional economic area within which Elmbridge's economy is located and the constraints on development land in the Borough.

Part 2: Site Assessment

1.20 The second part was a site assessment comprised of a series of criteria split into three sub-sections; market signals, physical signals and sustainability signals. These were based around the following principles:

- **Sector of the employment market:** Does a site support a specific type of businesses, e.g. small start-up companies or large headquarters buildings etc? If a site offers a comparatively niche location or provision that was unusual or unique this would be a positive factor in determining whether it should become or be retained as SEL.
- **Business clusters:** Does the site currently, or have the potential to, support prominent, new or expanding sectors? In particular could it support the delivery of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries?
- **Opportunity for redevelopment:** Does the site offer further opportunities for expansion or redevelopment to meet the economic needs of the Borough or other areas in the functional economic area within which the Borough is located?
- **Sustainability:** Is the site in a sustainable location that allows access to labour markets, nearby services and local and access to the road, bus and rail networks?
- **Market signals:** Is the area attractive to the market with low levels of vacancy and high proportion of national or multinational companies?

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employment-land-reviews-guidance>

- **Physical quality:** Is the site built to a high level of design quality, including its surrounding landscaping as well as the main and any ancillary building(s)? Is the site and the building(s) modern and in good condition?

1.21 The above criteria were given numerical scores and then put into Table 3 which is set out below. The number next to each criterion is the score a site would be given if it met the requirements.

Table 3 Site Assessment Criteria	
Market Signals	
Development opportunities	
(5)	Space for expansion / new buildings without having to re-develop / demolish existing buildings
(4)	Ability to significantly extend / expand / intensify existing buildings on site as they are still relevant / suitable to the site
(3)	Area(s) with existing building(s) on that have the potential to be redeveloped
(2)	Limited space for minor extension(s) to existing buildings
(1)	No space to expand / opportunity sites within / adjacent to the site
Nature of Existing Tenants	
(3)	High Level of National and International Companies
(2)	Limited presence of National and International Companies
(1)	No national or international companies, exclusively Surrey Based
Clustering effect	
(4)	A large cluster of high tech / value businesses providing for specific niche in the market
(3)	A large cluster of low tech / value businesses
(2)	A small cluster of related businesses
(1)	The site is a single building with no clustering effect
Vacancy Levels	
(5)	90 - 100% occupancy
(4)	80 - 90% occupancy
(3)	60 - 80% occupancy
(2)	40 - 60% occupancy
(1)	Less than 40% occupancy

Table 3 Site Assessment Criteria	
Environmental Signals	
Prominence	
5-	Visible from the major road network
4-	Visible site on a main road or prominent estate
3-	On a main road or prominent estate, but tucked away from view
2-	Visible from a minor road or estate
1-	Accessible from a residential road with no visible entrance
Building Age	
4-	Post 2000
3-	1990- 2000

2- 1970-1990
1- Pre 1970
Condition of Premises
4- Good
3- Average
2- Poor
1- Derelict
External Environment
5- Excellent quality Environment
4- High quality Environment
3- Average quality Environment
2- Below average quality environment
1- Poor quality environment

Table 3 Site Assessment Criteria
Sustainability Signals
Strategic Access
5- Within 1km of a strategic road junction
4- Within 2 km of a strategic road junction
3- Within 3 km of a strategic road junction
2- Over 3km from junction or access and / or through constrained / local roads / or through town centre or residential areas
1- Over 5km from junction or access and / or through constrained / local roads / or through town centre or residential areas
Local Access
4- Easy access to strategic road network with no congestion hotspots en route
3- Site has only one congestion hotspot en route to the strategic road network
2- Site has multiple congestion hotspots en route to strategic road network
1- The site is either: directly adjacent to congestion hotspot and has multiple hotspots en route to strategic road network or; it's main access route(s) are unsuitable for the type of traffic it takes and has multiple congestion hotspots en route to strategic road network
Public Transport
3- Within a 10 min walk of main bus route, train station or cycle lanes
2- Greater than a 10 min walk of main bus route, train station or cycle lanes
1- No services within close proximity
Proximity to urban areas and access to labour and services
5- Adjacent to a Town, District or Local centre; good pedestrian access residential areas and regular public transport
4- Near to a Town, District or Local centre; good pedestrian access residential areas and regular public transport
3- Easy site access to a Town, District or Local centre; and with reasonable access to local services and regular public transport
2- Town, District or Local centre is not easily accessible with limited access to local services and regular public transport
1- Remote site, no services or residential areas in the vicinity

Summary of initial site assessments

1.22 The initial ranking in Table 5 below shows how each of the sites scored under the system set out in the methodology. Appendix 2 sets out the full scoring for each of the sites for each criteria as shown in Table 3 above.

Rank	Site name	Total score from site assessment matrix
1	The Heights SEL, Weybridge	42
2	Hersham Place Technology Park SEL, Hersham	39
3	Aissela building, Esher	38
4	Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL, Weybridge	37
5	1 Princes Road, Weybridge	36
6	A C Court, Thames Ditton	35
7	58 Church Street, Weybridge	35
8	Horizon Business Village, Weybridge	35
9	Walton Lodge, Walton on Thames	35
10	Abbey House, Weybridge	34
11	St Andrew's House, Esher	34
12	Hersham Trading Estate SEL, Walton-on-Thames	34
13	Molesey Industrial Estate SEL, Molesey	33
14	Ferry Works, Thames Ditton	33
15	The Pavilion SEL, Thames Ditton	32
16	Kingston House Estate SEL, Long Ditton	33
17	Idis House, Weybridge	32
18	KBC House, Walton-on-Thames	32
19	Hardy House, Esher	32
20	Weir House, East Molesey	32
21	Telephone Exchange, Claygate	31
22	Thames Mews, Esher	31
23	Sandown Industrial Park, Esher	29
24	Glaxo Smith Kline SEL, Weybridge	28
25	Windsor House, Esher	27
26	Nicholson House, Weybridge	27
27	River Mole Business Park, Esher	27
28	BT Telephone Exchange, Thames Ditton	25
29	Hampton Court Estate, Thames Ditton	24
30	58 - 68 High Street, Weybridge	24
31	Leylands House, Walton-on-Thames	23

1.23 Outlined below is an overview of the relative strengths and weaknesses of employment land across the Borough based on the site assessments and the criteria within these assessments.

Market Assessment

1.24 When assessing each of the sites it was considered important to assess how attractive the site was to the market and the type of companies that were attracted to each site. This approach examined whether there were any significant constraints to the redevelopment of the site, the nature of the tenants and the vacancy levels on the site.

1.25 There were many sites that were felt to be highly constrained by development on the site which could impact on its future redevelopment for an alternative use or an expansion of the current use on site. Only The Heights SEL scored 5 in this category and was considered to have minimal constraints on it. There were 2 sites that scored 4, Hersham Place Technology Park SEL and Molesey Industrial Estate SEL and 4 sites which scored 3 representing a modest level of opportunity for further development / redevelopment. There were 25 sites scoring less than 3 and were therefore considered to have more redevelopment difficulties. This part of the assessment shows that many sites did not have a great potential for further redevelopment potential.

1.26 There were 7 sites scored the maximum points available with high number of national or international companies based on those sites.

- The Heights SEL
- Hersham Place Technology Park SEL
- 1 Princes Road, Weybridge
- Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL
- Kingston House Estate SEL
- Idis House, Weybridge
- Glaxo Smith Kline SEL

1.27 However, the majority of sites had limited presence of such companies with 6 scoring only 1 for being occupied by very local companies or not occupied at all in the case of vacant units.

1.28 In terms of clustering only 2 sites, the Heights SEL and Hersham Place Technology Park SEL scored the maximum of 4 for providing a large cluster for high tech / high value companies. At the next level, 3 sites scored 3 for providing a large cluster for low tech / low value businesses and they were Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL, Hersham Trading Estate SEL and Molesey Industrial Estate SEL. The majority of the sites scored only 1 or 2 for this score denoting a limited clustering effect of the site.

1.29 The majority of the sites assessed were considered to have an occupancy rate of greater than 60% when surveyed with 28 of those sites at, or near, full

occupancy. There were 2 sites however, were at less than 40% occupancy and there were Windsor House, Esher and 58-68 High Street, Weybridge.

1.30 In terms of the market signals, the strongest performing sites which had low vacancy levels, were attractive to national and international companies and had limited constraints to any future uses are set out in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Strongest Performing Sites based on Market Assessment	
Site	Total Market Scores
The Heights SEL, Weybridge	17
Hersham Place Technology Park SEL, Hersham	16
Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL, Weybridge	14
Hersham Trading Estate SEL, Walton-on-Thames	13
Molesey Industrial Estate SEL, Molesey	13

Environmental Assessment

1.31 This part of the assessment focussed on the quality of the site in terms of its environment focussing not only on the quality and age of the buildings but also on the surrounding environment. However, another assessment was also made regarding the prominence of the site and whether it was in a key gateway into a settlement or with a visible entrance from the main road network.

1.32 None of the sites scored the maximum possible (5) as none of the sites are highly visible from the major road network (in the case of the Borough of Elmbridge this includes the M25 and A3). There were 15 sites that scored 4 for being on a main road or within a prominent estate, 3 sites scored 3 for being located on a main road or prominent estate, but being out of sight, 9 scored 2 as they were visible, but on a minor road, and 5 scored 1 as they were on a minor or being out of view and tucked behind other existing developments / areas

1.33 There were 7 sites that scored highly (4) for being built post 2000 and these were:

- Aissela Building, Esher
- 1 Princes Road, Weybridge
- 58 Church Street, Weybridge
- Horizon Business Village, Weybridge
- Abbey House, Weybridge
- Idis House, Weybridge
- The Pavilion SEL, Thames Ditton

- 1.34 There are 11 scored 3 (being built between 1990-2000), 8 scored 2 (1970-1990) and 7 scored 1 (as they are pre-1970s constructions). This shows that of the employment sites surveyed across the Borough, there is a wide variety in the age of the stock.
- 1.35 There were 17 sites that scored full marks (4) for the good condition of the building(s), with a further 10 scoring 3 if they were of average quality. There were 5 sites that scored 2 due to the poor condition of the buildings. Overall there were no sites that scored 1 for being derelict.
- 1.36 There were 4 sites that scored the maximum available (5) for having an excellent quality external environment and they were:
- The Heights SEL, Weybridge
 - Aissela Building, Esher
 - Horizon Business Village, Weybridge
 - Ferry Works, Thames Ditton
- 1.37 There were 7 sites that scored 4 as they were of high quality:
- Hersham Place Technology Park SEL, Hersham
 - 1 Princes Road, Weybridge
 - Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL, Weybridge
 - 58 Church street, Weybridge
 - Abbey House, Weybridge
 - Weir House, East Molesey
 - The Pavilion SEL, Thames Ditton
- 1.38 There were 17 sites that scored 3 as their environment was of average quality, 2 sites scored 2 as it was below average. There were 2 sites that scored 1 and there were Hampton Court Estate, Thames Ditton and Leylands House, Walton-on-Thames because they have a poor quality environment.
- 1.39 Those employment sites that were in the best physical condition providing new, high quality, buildings in a prominent location are set out in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Strongest Performing Sites based on the Environmental Assessment	
Site	Total Environmental Scores
Aissela Building, Esher	17
Horizon Business Village, Weybridge	17
The Heights SEL, Weybridge	16
Abbey House, Weybridge	16

Sustainability Assessment

1.40 In terms of access to a strategic road network, none of the sites assessed were within 1km of a strategic road junction. There were only 4 sites scoring 3 for being within 3km and they were:

- A C Court, Thames Ditton
- Horizon Business Village, Weybridge
- The Pavilion SEL, Thames Ditton
- BT Telephone Exchange, Thames Ditton

1.41 The remaining sites assessed were 3km or more away from the junction of a strategic road with a further 12 of the sites being even further constrained by having to access this network via local roads, town centre or residential areas. There were 16 sites were more than 5km from the strategic road network.

1.42 Only 2 sites, the Telephone Exchange, Claygate and Thames Mews, Esher scored 3 out of a possible 5 for having only 1 congestion hotspot en route to the strategic road network. There were 16 sites that had multiple congestion hotspots en route to the major road network, whilst the remaining sites were either adjacent to a congestion hotspot or had unsuitable road access to the site for the type of traffic it generates.

1.43 There were 24 sites scored the maximum possible (3) for their proximity to the public transport network as they are within 10 minutes' walk of a main bus route, train station or cycle paths with 5 sites scoring 2 as they were over this 10 minute threshold. There were 3 sites, the BT Telephone Exchange, Thames Ditton, Horizon Business Village, Weybridge and The Pavilion SEL, Thames Ditton) that scored 1 for not having any of the above services available locally.

1.44 There were 15 sites scored the maximum available points (5) for being adjacent to Town, District or Local Centre. They were:

- Aisslea Building, Esher
- A C Court, Thames Ditton
- 1 Princes Road, Weybridge
- 58 Church Street, Weybridge
- St Andrew's House, Esher
- Ferry Works, Thames Ditton
- Kingston House Estate SEL, Long Ditton
- Walton Lodge, Walton-on-Thames
- Hardy House, Esher
- Idis House, Weybridge
- KBC House, Walton-on-Thames
- Telephone Exchange, Claygate, Weybridge
- Clive House, Weybridge
- Windsor House, Esher
- 56-68 High Street, Weybridge

1.45 There were 5 sites that scored 4 as they were very close to a Town, District or Local centre. There were 3 sites that scored 3 as they, whilst close, were not in the immediate vicinity of a Town, District or Local Centre but they did still have relatively good access to it. There were 9 sites that scored 2 as their access to a centre was poor or the services available were limited. None of the sites scored 1, which would have been awarded if they were remote with no services in the vicinity.

1.46 In terms of access the most sustainable sites are set out in Table 7 below:

Table 7: Strongest Performing Sites based on the Sustainability Assessment	
Site	Total Sustainability Scores
A C Court, Thames Ditton	13
Telephone Exchange, Claygate	13
St Andrew's House, Esher	12
Kingston House Estate SEL, Long Ditton	12

Conclusion

1.47 After undertaking the site assessments, there are many sites that would appear to be suitable for retention or inclusion as SEL. The following 20 sites scored over 60% of the total score that was available (e.g. 32 or more out of a total available score of 53) demonstrating a high score across many the categories assessed:

Rank	Site name	Total score
1	The Heights SEL, Weybridge	42
2	Hersham Place Technology Park SEL, Hersham	39
3	Aissela building, Esher	38
4	Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL, Weybridge	37
5	1 Princes Road, Weybridge	36
6	A C Court, Thames Ditton	35
7	58 Church Street, Weybridge	35
8	Walton Lodge, Walton on Thames	35
9	Horizon Business Village, Weybridge	35
10	Abbey House, Weybridge	34
11	St Andrew's House, Esher	34
12	Hersham Trading Estate SEL, Walton-on-Thames	34
13	Ferry Works, Thames Ditton	33
14	Molesey Industrial Estate SEL, West Molesey	33
15	Kingston House Estate SEL, Long Ditton	33
16	The Pavilion SEL, Thames Ditton	32
17	Idis House, Weybridge	32
18	KBC House, Walton-on-Thames	32
19	Hardy House, Esher	32
20	Weir House, East Molesey	32

1.48 Of these 20 sites, 6 of these sites could be (on the basis of this initial assessment) be retained or incorporated into SEL sites. The remaining 14 sites are too small as they do not reach the 5Ha site size threshold required to be considered 'strategic'. They ranged in size from 0.06-1.38Ha and did not form a significant cluster of employment land / floorspace to be able to be considered in combination for their potential as SEL.

1.49 Of these 6 sites, 5 of them are existing SELs:

- The Heights, Weybridge
- Hersham Place Technology Park, Hersham
- Brooklands Industrial Estate, Weybridge
- Hersham Trading Estate, Walton-on-Thames

- Molesey Industrial Estate, West Molesey
- 1.50 These SELs (except for Hersham Place Technology Park which is 4.21Ha) are all over the 5Ha site size threshold. This means that they are all capable of providing and supporting a significant cluster of businesses and employment in one location. Although Hersham Place Technology Park site is slightly below the 5Ha threshold, the type of accommodation it provides is for small, high-tech start-ups and therefore unique within the Borough. Because of this the site still merits the protection of the SEL designation and should continue to be covered by it.
- 1.51 In addition to these 5 sites that are recommended to continue as SELs, Abbey House in Weybridge is recommended to be included within 'The Heights' SEL. This because it scored well against the criteria (34/53 – 64.15%) and could be included within the existing SEL designation with only a simple extension of the existing boundary as it is directly to the south of the current border, on the southern side of Wellington Way.

Development Potential and current employment land supply

- 1.52 As part of the Local Plan preparation, the Land Availability Assessment (LAA) 2018⁶ has identified potential land that is suitable, available and achievable for economic development, housing and other uses over the Local Plan period. Using the LAA 2018, along with Sustainability Appraisal and consultation responses, sites can be selected to be included in the Local Plan to help meet housing and economic development needs.
- 1.53 The LAA 2018 has identified a number of employment sites, that have the potential to deliver increased employment floorspace in the Borough. The LAA 2018 has also identified potential employment sites that are suitable for delivering new housing. This would result in a loss of some employment sites in the Borough in order to deliver new housing to meet identified housing need. The LAA 2018 also identified potential existing employment sites that are suitable for mixed use schemes that could retain the employment use onsite and provide new homes.
- 1.54 Every year the Council publishes the Authorities Monitoring Report⁷ which reports on the changes to employment floorspace as a result of commenced developments and sets out data on commercial vacant floorspace. The main objective of this is to monitor the supply of land and buildings that support the local economy.
- 1.55 As the Local Plan progresses, the Land Availability Assessment will continue to review existing employment sites in the Borough and their potential to

⁶ Land Availability Assessment 2018, <https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/evidence-to-inform-the-new-local-plan/>

⁷ Authorities Monitoring Report 2017-18, <https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/monitoring-reports-action-plans-and-article-4-directions/>

deliver housing and economic development. This along with data collated in the Authorities Monitoring Report will provide an important part of the employment and commercial evidence base to help inform the preferred approach and site selection in the Local Plan.

- 1.56 The assessment of existing employment land shows that there is currently a significant range of employment areas within the Borough offering a range of floorspace from the highest quality office space occupied by multinational corporations through to small industrial units for local businesses. However, what is evident is that there are a limited number of employment areas that are strategic in scale. Only 5 sites are above 5Ha in size with only 2 being over 20Ha (Brooklands Industrial Estate and The Heights in Weybridge). However, these larger sites provide floorspace for both national and multinational companies supporting high quality employment opportunities not only for residents of Elmbridge but across the wider sub region.

Strategic Employment Land Designations

- 1.57 Having undertaken an assessment of a range of sites, it is recommended that 5 existing SEL sites retain their designated status (see Appendix 3: Retained Designated Sites Map). They are:
1. Brooklands Industrial Estate, Weybridge
 2. Hersham Trading Estate, Walton-on-Thames
 3. Hersham Place Technology Park, Hersham
 4. Molesey Industrial Estate, West Molesey
 5. The Heights, Weybridge
- 1.58 These sites are recommended for retention for a range of reasons, however they all have in common that they form a larger cluster and massing of businesses and all have the potential for intensification of various areas either within or adjacent to their current boundaries, as set out on the Core Strategy (2011) policies map.
- 1.59 The Heights in Weybridge should continue to be protected by the SEL designation due to its large area, cluster of important employers and companies, potential for intensification, prestige as an employment location and proximity to the strategic road network. As well as the site being suitable for retention as SEL in its current form, the opportunities for intensification throughout the current area mean it could also significantly contribute towards future employment needs within the Borough if these are capitalised upon. It is also suitable for expansion to include an existing building (Abbey House), to be brought within its boundary.
- 1.60 Brooklands Industrial Estate is capable of significant intensification and could make a significant contribution towards meeting future employment floorspace

need within the Borough. This potential is coupled with a wide variety of businesses already being present on site, often serving national chains. In addition to this, it's close links with the major road network means it is naturally a strategic area for the Borough.

- 1.61 Hersham Trading Estate has some potential for re-development within its existing boundaries, provides a significant cluster of businesses and is over the required 5Ha SEL threshold limit. On this basis it should be retained as a SEL site.
- 1.62 Hersham Place Technology Park is below the 5Ha threshold, however due to its niche accommodation offer to the Elmbridge market, being focused on providing smaller units for start-up businesses it is suitable to protect this location with the SEL designation. Coupled with this, there is potential to intensify the site to create further units through the re-development of the car park or through an extension to / increase in the height of the smaller building adjacent to the main building on site.
- 1.63 Molesey Industrial Estate provides a cluster of employment uses and has some significant areas of the site which, if redeveloped, could provide large amounts of floorspace as well as improve the environment and stock of the estate. This re-development is already taking place, with many areas having recently been completed or in the process of being redeveloped, showing confidence in this location, and that despite some large vacant buildings, is capable to remaining an important area for employment uses. In addition, its location means it is one of the main employment 'hubs' in the north of the Borough and its gradual erosion or total loss could have implications for the sustainability of the area.

Sites unsuitable for retention as SEL

- 1.64 The following existing SEL sites after being reviewed have not been deemed to be strategic and are recommended for their designation to be removed. They are:
 - Glaxo Smith Kline (SEL), Weybridge
 - Kingston House Estate (SEL), Long Ditton
 - The Pavilion (SEL), Thames Ditton
- 1.65 The main reason for these sites not being retained as SEL sites is due to their small size, as they all fall under the 5Ha threshold. In addition to this many them are either only capable of accommodating a small number of businesses (e.g. 1-2) or are currently significantly under-occupied (with the only exception to this being the Kingston House Estate, which no longer contains a significant concentration of employment uses).

- 1.66 It should be re-iterated that although the Council does not intend to retain these sites as designated SEL, it does not necessarily want to see their employment function lost or that they are unsuited to employment uses.

Proposed changes to existing SEL boundaries

- 1.67 In addition to these areas continuing to be protected by the SEL designation, it is recommended that The Heights SEL is expanded to include Abbey House. Incorporating Abbey House into The Heights SEL would require a small extension of the existing boundary to cover the site which would be relatively simple to achieve as it is located directly to the south of the existing SEL on Wellington Way.
- 1.68 A series of maps showing proposed SELs to be retained including any required amendments to the boundaries will be published as the Local Plan progresses. These amendments will ensure consistency of all the boundaries even if there are no significant changes being made in that area (e.g. including or removing entire buildings / sites).

Sites unsuitable for designation as SEL

- 1.69 Aside from the above-mentioned sites, a number other locations were reviewed as part of the assessment. None of these were deemed suitable for designation either individually or in combination. This was primarily due to their small size and scattered distribution, meaning they did not form significant identifiable areas of employment land. They could not be considered to be strategic and is therefore not recommended for designation as SEL. Furthermore, many these sites were either within, adjacent or located close to settlement centres, and should be seen as a complementary use to the settlement centre function, rather than as strategic employment sites.

Recommendations for Local Plan Employment Vision

- 1.70 The NPPF is clear that in achieving sustainable development, the planning system needs to help build a strong and responsive economy. A key part of this is about ensuring there is sufficient land of the right types in the right places to deliver this.
- 1.71 The Borough's employment sites will make a major contribution towards the growth, strength and diversity of the local and wider functional economic area economy by providing a portfolio of employment sites. The Borough's SEL sites form an integral part of this portfolio and provide a strategic function. The SEL sites provide a mixture of Grade A offices, distribution and flexible modern industrial units.
- 1.72 A key objective of the Local Plan will be to seek to balance the future economic needs of the Borough, functional economic area and wider Enterprise M3 LEP area against the need for additional land to meet local

housing needs. The Local Plan will support the Elmbridge Economic Strategy in recognising the vital function the SEL sites have in maintaining a healthy balance of sectors and businesses across Elmbridge and supporting the Economic Strategy's ambitions for the Borough.

1.73 Together these SEL sites will provide the land needed to deliver and support the Borough's economic vision and strategic economic priorities. Their intensification and redevelopment will provide the employment floorspace required to meet future demand and facilitate jobs growth. Future investment and employment uses should be directed towards the SEL to ensure their long term success. As a result of the Strategic Employment Land Review, it recommends that the Council considers retaining retain the following SEL sites in the Local Plan:

1. The Heights, Weybridge
2. Hersham Place Technology Park, Hersham
3. Brooklands Industrial Estate, Weybridge
4. Hersham Trading Estate, Walton-on-Thames
5. Molesey Industrial Estate, West Molesey

Proposed Profiles of Retained Strategic Employment Land Area

1.74 This section of the 'Review 2019' supports the ambitions of the Elmbridge Economic Strategy by setting out an area profile for each of the proposed retained SEL areas. Each Area Profile details the mix of uses, vacant areas and building quality. It also includes a vision of what each area will look like and how the Council would seek to see it develop in future.

The Heights, Weybridge

1.75 This area primarily consists of numerous large, modern, three storey office units set in well maintained



Figure 1 Modern A Grade office space at The Heights, Weybridge

grounds but also facing onto a large expanses of car parking spaces. The occupants tend to be large multi-national companies (e.g. SONY, Samsung, P&G etc.) but also contains some smaller businesses and units at the northern end of the SEL around Locke King Road. Due to the large amounts of surface parking in the area, there is potential for the area to be intensified in a number of locations across the SEL which could provide additional high-quality office accommodation in future. In addition to these potential areas of intensification it is also suggested that this SEL is expanded to encompass Abbey House (located on the southern side of Wellington Way) as this high-quality office accommodation is similar to that already within the SEL and therefore it should also be protected.

Hersham Place Technology Park, Hersham

- 1.76 The main building in this location is of 1970s construction and three stories high. It is primarily occupied by Air Products, but other areas of it are leased to over 50 start-up and SME companies which are frequently in high tech industries. There is also a single storey building located slightly to the north which could be intensified through the addition of extra storeys and the car park also has the potential to provide additional floorspace over it as well, meaning this site should continue to be a key location for the provision of small scale, flexible floorspace within the Borough for smaller high-tech companies. An alternative approach to intensifying the site based on the existing set-up would be to comprehensively re-develop it due to the current building's age and the under-utilisation of large areas of the site which are currently used for parking. This could lead to re-modelled site containing modern accommodation that could optimise the use of land whilst continuing to accommodate not only for the main employer (Air Products), but also for numerous SME companies as well. The need to retain this location is due to this type of accommodation on this scale has no comparator within the Borough and is therefore a key location of be capitalised upon in future.



Figure 2 Hersham Place Technology Park

Brooklands Industrial Estate, Weybridge

- 1.77 This area consists of two primary industrial estates; the main Brooklands Industrial Estate which lies within the former Brooklands race circuit, and the Wintersells Road industrial estate located to the west of it. There are a wide variety of employment and industrial uses present across the area with the main Brooklands Industrial Estate hosting some major companies such as BAE systems, Amazon and John Lewis, generally in lager warehouse style units. There are exceptions to this, such as the numerous smaller units in the Trade City sub-area of the wider estate which encompasses a variety of uses from offices to self-storage. Most of the units in the SEL are not notably modern, however there has been some recent refurbishment / redevelopment of some units such as the previously mentioned Amazon



Figure 3 Dakota Building in De Haviland Drive, Brooklands Industrial Estate, Weybridge

warehouse which was occupied by the company in 2015/16, as well as the more recent development of the Dakota Building in De Haviland Drive. This recently completed development provides high quality office floorspace, and is another example of the regeneration of certain areas of this SEL, alongside the grade A office space developed at Velocity House. The second main area that this SEL covers is the Wintersells Industrial Estate which consists of a large number of smaller (often lower quality occupiers) accessed via West Byfleet. Nevertheless, the rate of occupancy in this area is high and there is still a need for the provision of all sizes and types of employment land in the Borough. The main areas that could be intensified within the Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL focus primarily upon the large areas parking spaces that surround some of the warehouse units. These could be redeveloped to provide extensions or larger-scale re-development opportunities in future.

Hersham Trading Estate, Walton-on-Thames

- 1.78 This area consists of a mix of industrial and office uses, with medium and smaller units making up the majority of the SEL, especially the North Weylands Industrial Estate. Recently there has been a slight change in the character in one part of the estate with a small number of units close to the junction of Lyon Road / Molesey Road being used for retail (A1) purposes (as opposed to the 'traditional' B1-B8 employment uses), most notably the development of the Tesco Express (with flats above) at 356 Molesey Road. Despite parts of the stock not being particularly modern, there has been some recent redevelopment in the area, for example Hawarden's Joinery at 9 Lyon Road. There is relatively little scope of intensification in this area (without undertaking substantial and comprehensive redevelopment of all or part of the area) with two main areas being the largely vacant buildings and land at 23-25 Lyon Road and 16 Lyon Road. Despite this area not being of the highest quality or comprising the most modern building stock, this area has the potential to continue to be redeveloped and improved providing a mix of employment.

Molesey Industrial Estate, West Molesey

- 1.79 This area consists of a mix of industrial, storage and distribution and office space, with a mix of old and newer stock throughout. Some areas have been recently redeveloped (e.g. 61 and 34 Central Avenue and Genesis House, 143 Molesey Avenue) showing that the area is being invested in and is of interest to new companies. In future, the Council would like to see this area (which is relatively well connected due to its close links to the B369 ((Walton Road)) continue to be redeveloped and invested in, with its older stock revitalised, intensified and updated to provide more modern and flexible accommodation to meet more contemporary demands or space. There are a number of locations that are currently vacant primarily consisting of either open hard surfaced areas that mainly contain vehicular sales as well as a

few large warehouse-style buildings that provide opportunities to update and intensify the accommodation available. The Council also seeks to resist any further encroachment of residential development within the estate, particularly at the fringes where this has happened previously. This is because of the danger of slowly losing this area to incremental change which may slowly shift the focus of the area away from employment. If this location were to be lost there may be significant implications for the sustainability of the area due to a lack of employment opportunities in the area, resulting in a greater number of people being required to commute greater distances for employment.

Employment land outside of Strategy Employment Land areas

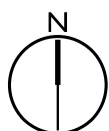
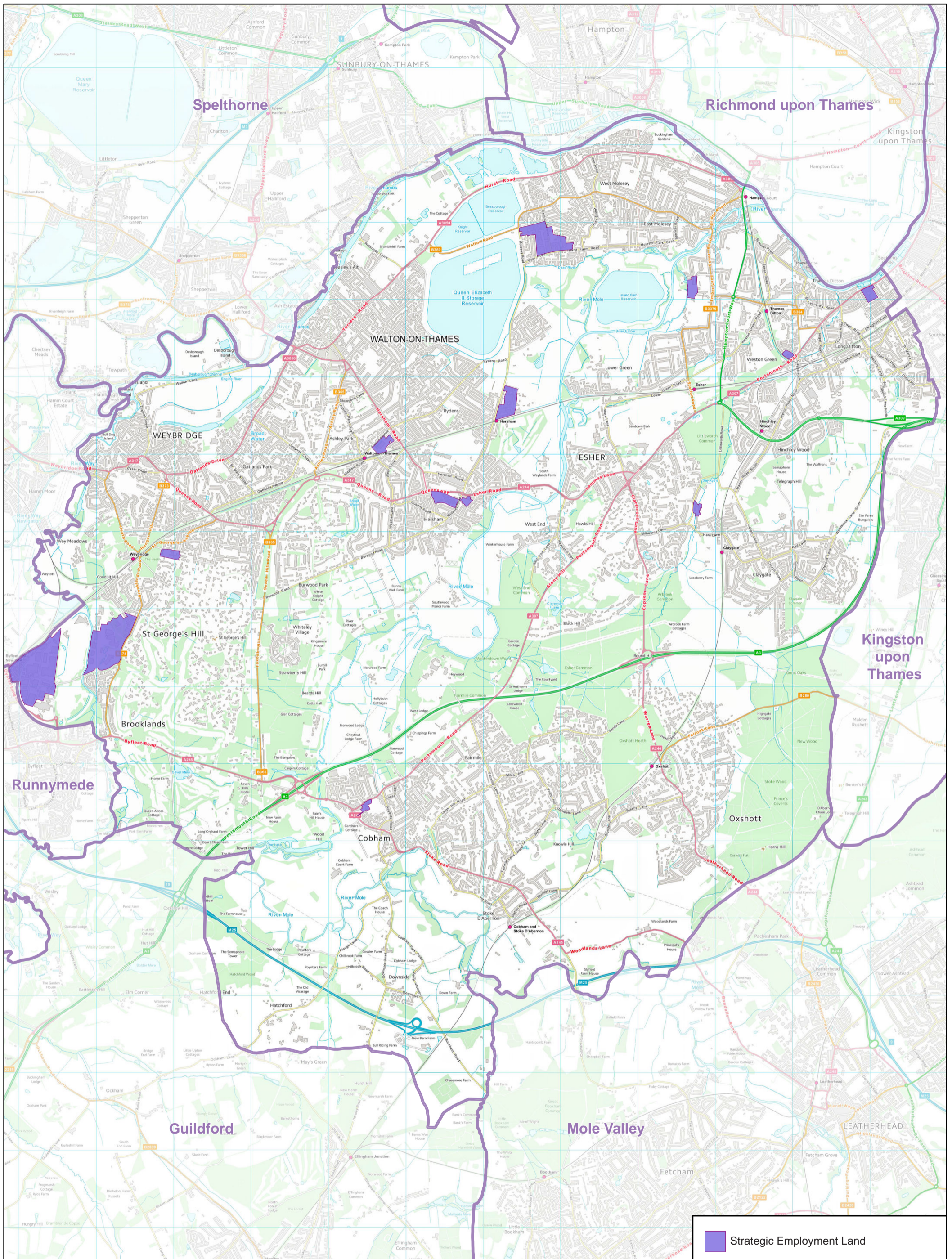
- 1.80 There were numerous sites that were assessed and found unsuitable to be retained, designed as or included within an existing SEL. However this does not mean that the Council wishes to see these areas, uses or employers lost. Smaller sites across the Borough play have an important role in the employment and business markets in Elmbridge. However future investment and employment uses should be focused towards SEL to ensure the long-term use of these areas for employment with modern fit for purpose units within them. (Appendix 4 contains examples of modern industrial units). The Council will continue to support appropriate investment and development in employment sites and locations both within and outside of SELs.

Next Steps

- 1.81 Further work is needed to ensure the employment evidence base is up-to-date and robust in line with the requirements of national planning policy and national Planning Practice Guidance. Issues relating to understanding the Borough's employment demand, reducing the number of employment designations as recommended by this "Review" and reviewing the Council's approach towards non-designated employment sites all require further consideration. An important part of this will be assessing the implications of future employment growth on the transport network and this will be incorporated into the transport assessment. The outcomes of the transport assessment will inform the strategy and site selection for economic growth in the Borough.
- 1.82 The employment, commercial and retail evidence base studies, together with other evidence base studies, future consultation responses to the Options Consultation 2019 and the Sustainability Appraisal will inform the Council's preferred approach for economic development in the Local Plan and site selection. Together they will all inform a vision for the Borough's economic development by ensuring there is enough land supply to deliver the Borough's Economic Strategy and provide the future employment floorspace required to meet the development needs identified.

Appendix 1: Strategic Employment Land Borough Map

Strategic Employment Land Map



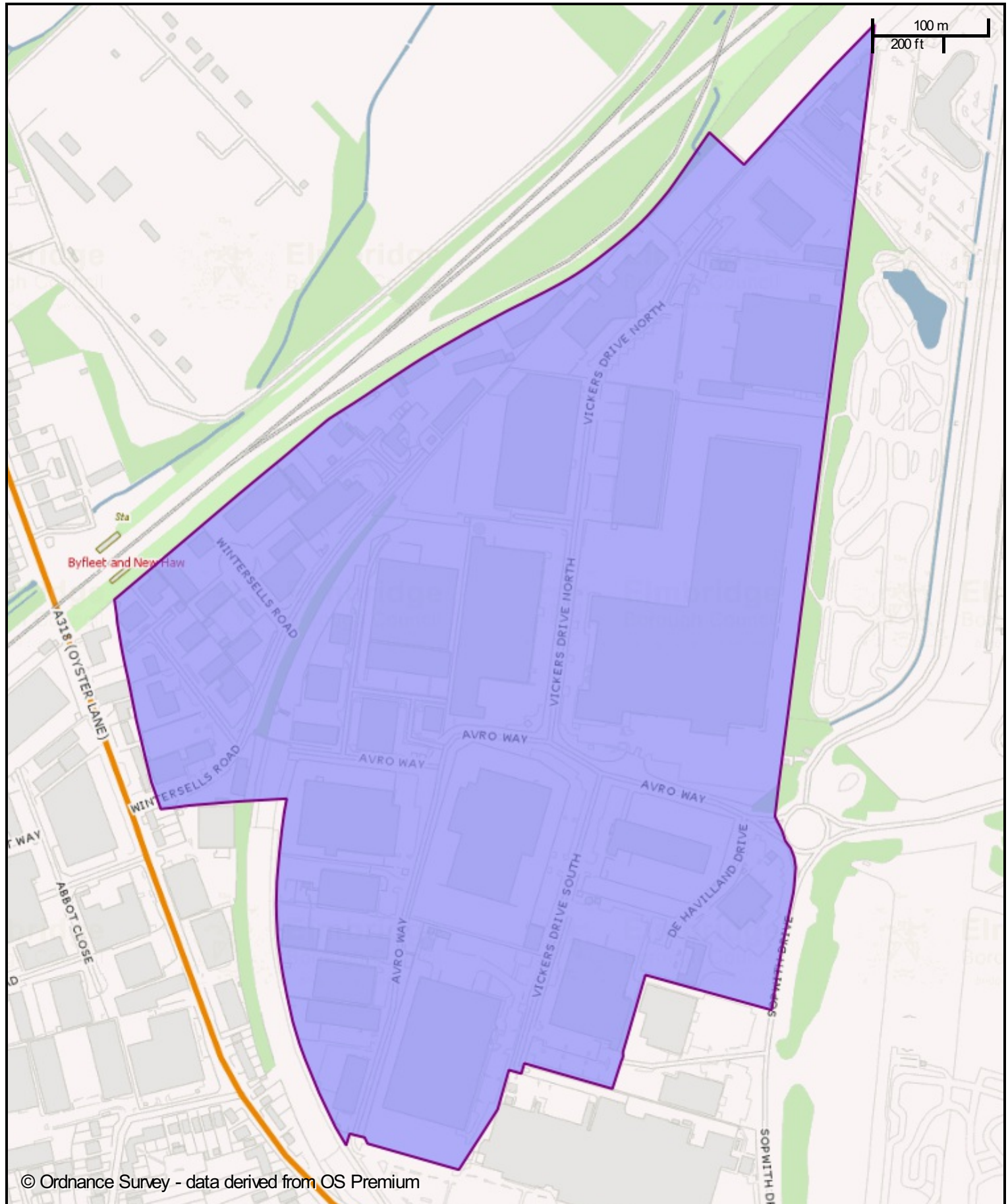
Appendix 2 All Sites Scores

Table 9 below sets out a breakdown of the scores against the criteria set out in Table 2: Site Assessment Criteria in the main report for each site assessed.

Table 9: All Site Scores	MARKET SIGNALS				Market Signals Total	ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNALS				Environmental Signals Total	SUSTAINABILITY SIGNALS				Sustainability Signals Total	Total:
	Development opportunities (5)	Nature of Existing Tenants (3)	Clustering effect (4)	Vacancy Levels (5)		Prominence (5)	Building Age (4)	Condition of Premises (4)	External Environment (5)		Strategic Access (5)	Local Access (4)	Public Transport (3)	Proximity to urban areas & access to labour and services (5)		
The Heights SEL, Weybridge	5	3	4	5	17	4	3	4	5	16	2	2	3	2	9	42
Aissela Building, Esher	1	2	2	5	10	4	4	4	5	17	2	1	3	5	11	38
Hersham Place Technology Park SEL, Hersham	4	3	4	5	16	4	2	3	4	13	2	2	2	4	10	39
A C Court, Thames Ditton	1	2	2	5	10	2	3	4	3	12	3	2	3	5	13	35
1 Princes Road, Weybridge	2	3	1	5	11	3	4	4	4	15	1	1	3	5	10	36
Brooklands Industrial Estate SEL, Weybridge	3	3	3	5	14	4	3	4	4	15	2	2	2	2	8	37
58 Church Street, Weybridge	1	2	1	5	9	3	4	4	4	15	2	1	3	5	11	35
St Andrew's House, Esher	1	2	1	5	9	4	2	4	3	13	2	2	3	5	12	34
Horizon Business Village, Weybridge	3	2	2	3	10	4	4	4	5	17	3	2	1	2	8	35
Abbey House, Weybridge	2	2	1	5	10	4	4	4	4	16	2	2	2	2	8	34
Hersham Trading Estate SEL, Walton-on-Thames	3	2	3	5	13	4	1	3	3	11	1	2	3	4	10	34
Ferry Works, Thames Ditton	1	2	2	5	10	2	1	4	5	12	1	2	3	5	11	33
Kingston House Estate SEL, Long Ditton	1	3	2	5	11	2	2	3	3	10	2	2	3	5	12	33
Molesey Industrial	4	2	3	4	13	4	2	2	3	11	1	2	3	3	9	33

Estate SEL, Molesey																	
Walton Lodge, Walton on Thames	2	2	2	5	11	4	3	4	3	14	1	1	3	5	10	35	
Hardy House, Esher	1	2	1	5	9	4	2	3	3	12	2	1	3	5	11	32	
Idis House, Weybridge	1	3	1	5	10	1	4	4	3	12	1	1	3	5	10	32	
Weir House, East Molesey	1	2	1	5	9	2	3	4	4	13	1	2	3	4	10	32	
The Pavilion SEL, Thames Ditton	1	2	2	5	10	2	4	4	4	14	3	2	1	2	8	32	
KBC House, Walton-on-Thames	1	2	1	5	9	4	3	3	3	13	1	1	3	5	10	32	
Telephone Exchange, Claygate	1	2	1	5	9	2	1	3	3	9	2	3	3	5	13	31	
Clive House, Weybridge	2	2	1	5	10	4	1	2	3	10	1	1	3	5	10	30	
Thames Mews, Esher	1	2	2	3	8	4	2	3	3	8	2	3	3	3	11	27	
Sandown Industrial Park, Esher	3	1	2	5	11	1	3	4	3	11	1	1	3	2	7	29	
Glaxo Smith Kline SEL, Weybridge	1	3	1	5	10	1	2	3	3	9	1	2	3	3	9	28	
Windsor House, Esher	1	2	1	1	5	4	2	3	3	12	1	1	3	5	10	27	
Nicholson House, Weybridge	1	1	1	5	8	2	1	4	3	10	1	1	3	4	9	27	
River Mole Business Park, Esher	2	1	2	5	10	1	3	4	3	11	1	1	2	2	6	27	
BT Telephone Exchange, Thames Ditton	1	2	1	5	9	2	1	3	2	8	3	2	1	2	8	25	
58 - 68 High Street, Weybridge	1	1	1	1	4	3	2	2	2	9	2	1	3	5	11	24	
Hampton Court Estate, Thames Ditton	2	1	2	5	10	1	1	2	1	5	1	1	3	4	9	24	
Leylands House, Walton-on-Thames	1	1	2	5	9	2	2	2	1	7	1	2	2	2	7	23	

Appendix 3 Proposed Retained SEL Sites Maps



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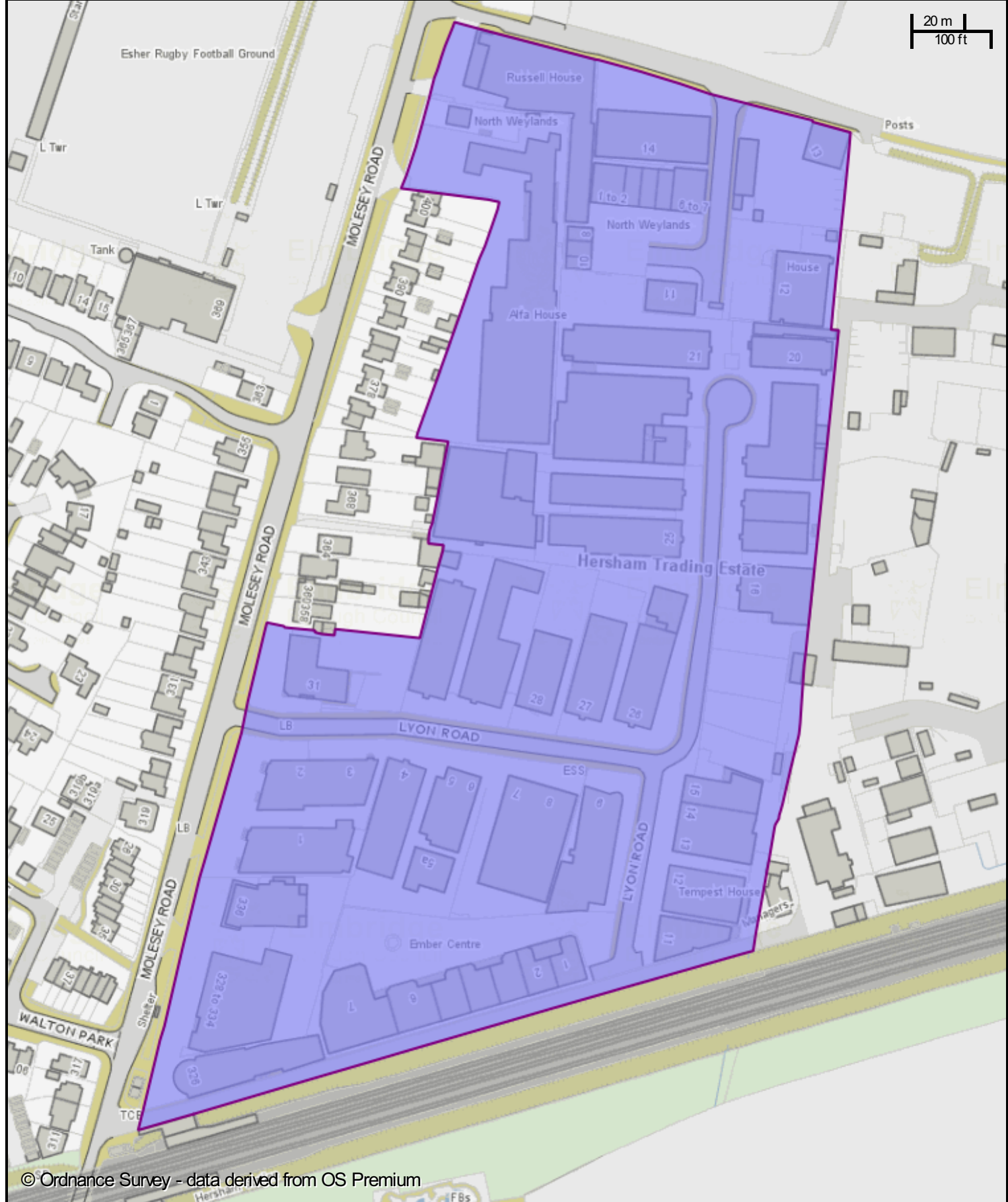
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Brooklands Industrial

Scale: 1:4400

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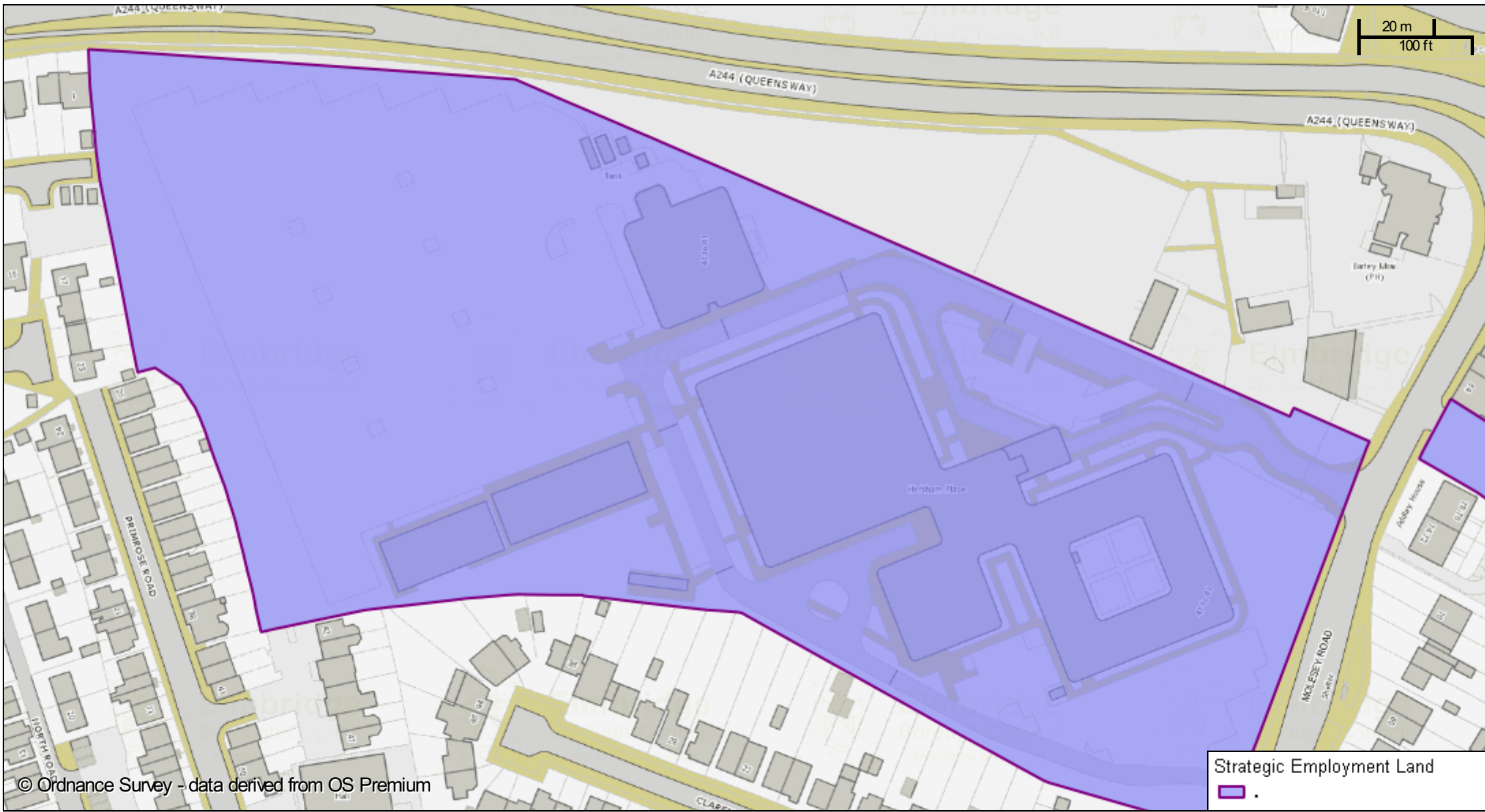
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Hershams Trading Est.

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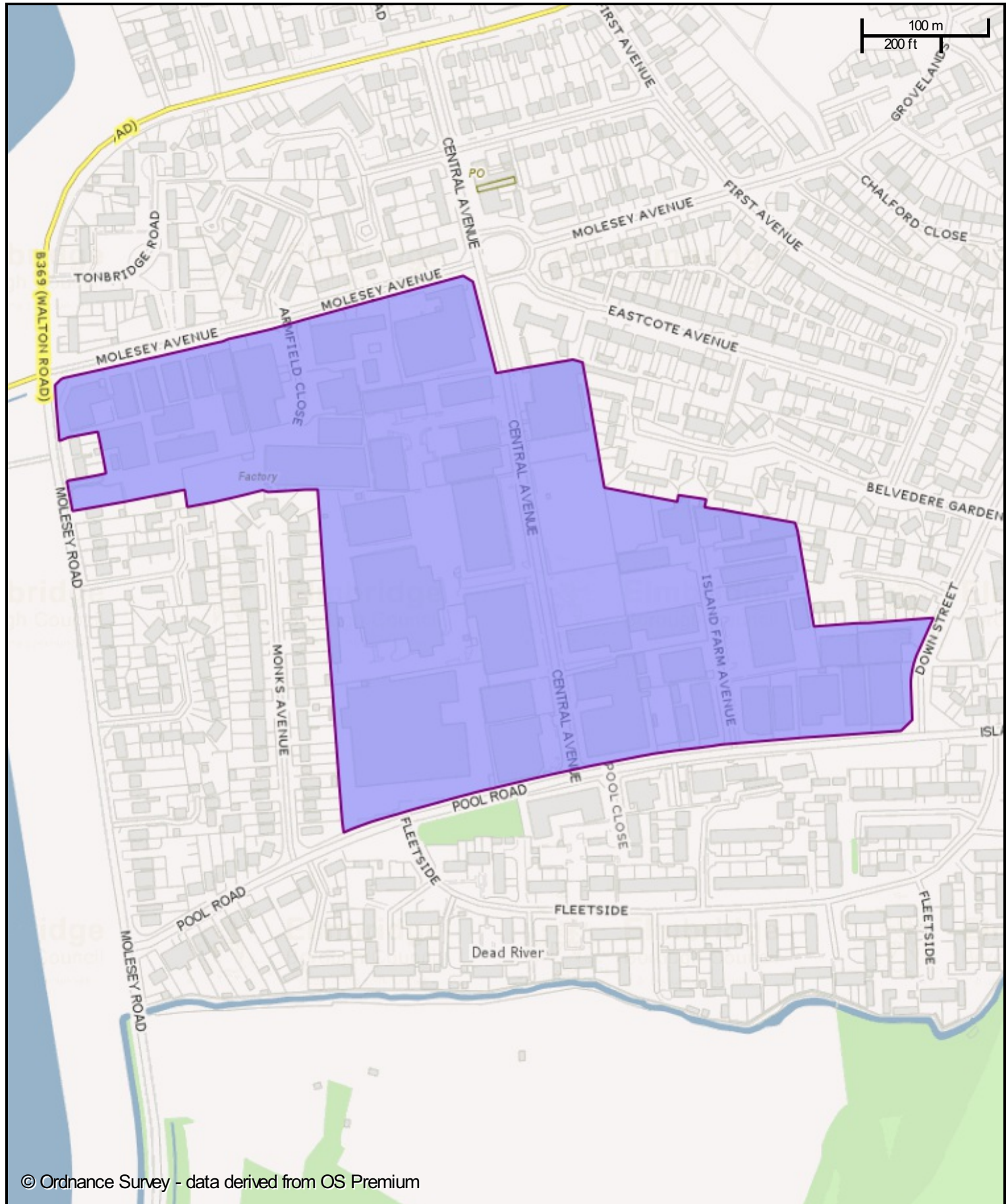
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Hershams Place Tech.

Scale: 1:1417

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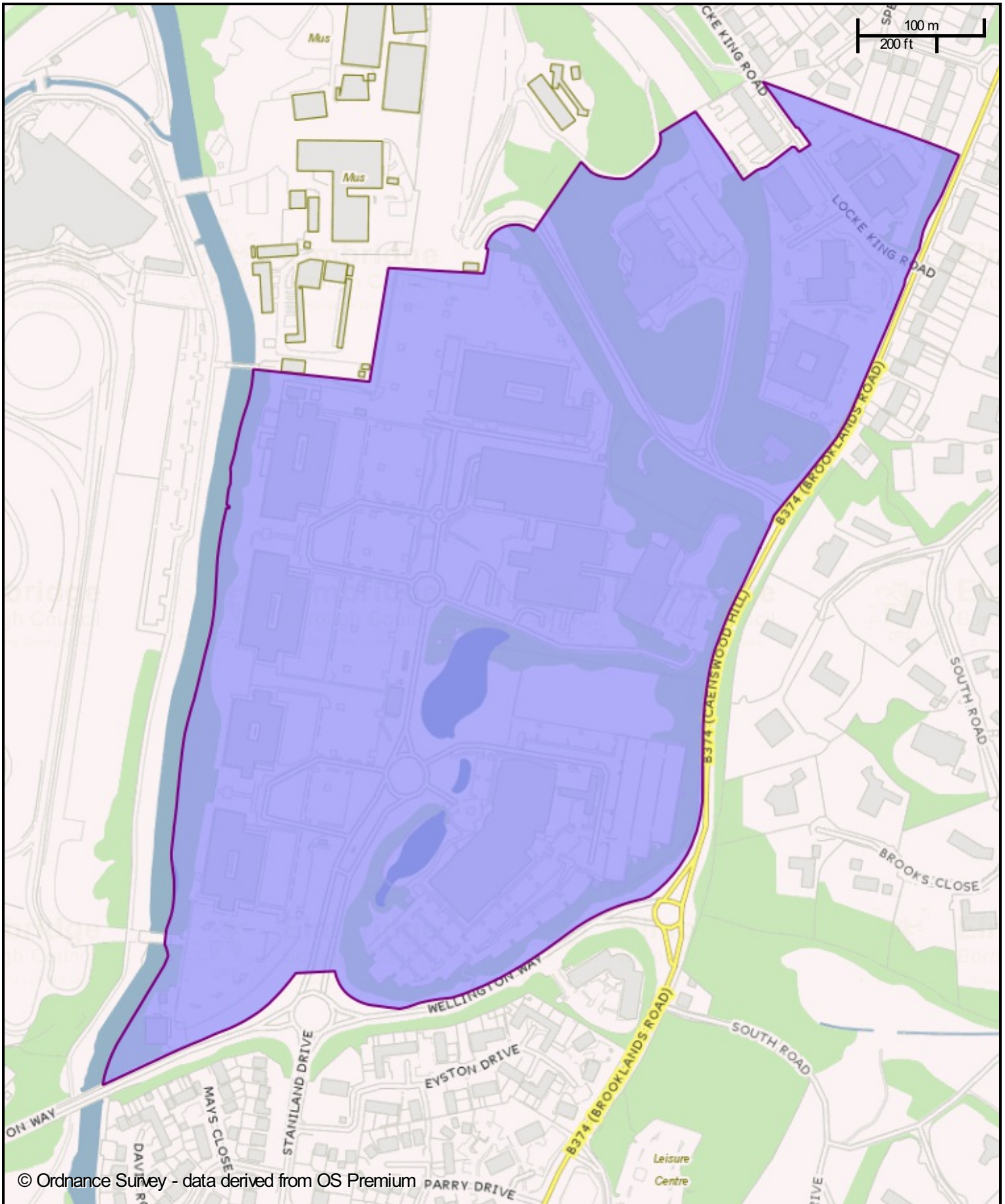
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Molesey Industrial

Scale: 1:4000

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The Heights

Scale: 1:4000

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Appendix 4 Employment Development Examples

Below are examples of units / developments that could improve the proposed retained SEL locations:

- SME / modern low-rise industrial units



- SME / modern low-rise office units



- Modern A Grade office space at Velocity, Weybridge:



- Modern A Grade office space at Brooklands Industrial Estate, Weybridge:



- Modern, recently redeveloped industrial units at Molesey Industrial Estate:



- Modern, recently redeveloped office units on the ground floor, with residential flats above at Molesey Industrial Estate:



- Modern, recently re-developed industrial / warehouse unit at Lyon Road Industrial Estate:

