

Harrogate Borough

Employment Land Review - Executive Summary

January 2006



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Harrogate Borough

Employment Land Review - Executive Summary

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Drivers Jonas was commissioned by Harrogate Borough Council in June 2005 to prepare an Employment Land Review of the District to consider the period up to 2021.
- 1.2 The review has been prepared in accordance with Good Practice Guidance and relevant planning policy. It was commissioned to inform the Council's Local Development Framework ("LDF") Core Strategy Development Plan Document ("DPD") and subsequent Major Land Use Allocations .DPD
- 1.3 The main stages of the study provide:
 - n A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the Borough's employment portfolio;
 - n A picture of future requirements derived from employment forecasts, a survey of local businesses and review of market trends and demand; and
 - n Based on stages 1 and 2, conclusions and recommendations are identified to ensure a balanced, realistic and sustainable portfolio of employment land.
- 1.4 This executive summary provides an overview of key findings arising from our assessment of:
 - n Labour market forecasts within the Borough;
 - n Policies and strategies;
 - n Market demand;
 - n Business Survey results; and
 - n The existing supply of land and premises.
- 1.5 This summary also reiterates the main conclusions reached and resulting recommendations made.
- 1.6 Further details can be found in the main employment land review report document and associated appendices document.

2. Summary Findings and Recommendations

Labour Market Forecasts

- 2.1 The population of Harrogate Borough is forecast to continue to rise, reaching 165,400 by 2021. The population of normal working age (16-59 for women and 16-64 for men) is expected to rise to 94,100 by 2010 but then to fall to 93,900 by 2016.
- 2.2 The resident workforce of Harrogate Borough is predicted to grow by 3.9% between 2004 and 2021, reaching just under 82,100 by 2021. The increase will be the result of demographic change, higher female participation rates and an increasing number of people remaining economically active beyond normal retirement age.
- 2.3 Net out commuting is significant in the Harrogate Borough economy. It is a significant exporter of labour, primarily to other parts of Yorkshire and the Humber. A considerable number of people, albeit fewer than those living in the area and working elsewhere, commute into the District for their jobs. This general trend will likely continue.
- 2.4 The Harrogate Borough economy is much more service sector dependent, than either the rest of Yorkshire and the Humber or the rest of the UK. It is anticipated that the service sector will reinforce its dominant position.
- 2.5 Based on labour market forecasts, Table 1 has been prepared which sets out minimum floorspace requirements to accommodate economic activity in certain sectors within Harrogate Borough, both current and at 2021. The 2005 figure is based on forecasts for the Harrogate Borough Economy.

Table 1: Floorspace Requirements to 2021

	2005	2021
	Floorspace ('000m ²)	Floorspace ('000m ²)
Manufacturing	454.9	408.9
Warehouse & Distribution	602.7	636.9
Office	<u>209.2</u>	<u>269.9</u>
Total	<u>1,266.8</u>	<u>1,315.7</u>

- 2.6 The above indicates an increased net floorspace requirement of 48,900 sqm, with the requirement embracing a 46,000 sqm reduction in manufacturing floorspace and increases in floorspace requirements in the other activities, notably offices.
- 2.7 Table 2 translates floorspace requirements into employment land requirements by adopting appropriate site development density assumptions.

Table 2: Land Area Requirements to 2021

	2005	2021	Change 2005 - 2021
	Land (ha)	Land (ha)	Land (ha)
Manufacturing	102.0	91.7	-10.3
Warehouse & Distribution	131.4	139.8	8.4
Office	<u>29.6</u>	<u>38.2</u>	<u>8.6</u>
Total	<u>263.0</u>	<u>269.7</u>	<u>6.7</u>

- 2.8 Overall, the employment land requirement for the sectors covered by this study is predicted to increase by just under 7 hectares in total, although the mix will change. The increased requirement refers only to the minimum additional land needed to accommodate the sectors' activities. It does not mean that the supply of such land needs to be increased by 7 hectares. This is because the figures do not allow for churn (the cycle of properties being vacated and re-occupied) and for the associated need for there to be a selection of vacant sites and premises. Equally, the figures are stated with no reference to the level and nature of existing employment land supply.
- 2.9 On this basis, it is important that future provision exceeds the total requirements in the above tables to robustly meet labour forecasts in addition to any identified demand considerations.

Policy and Strategies

- 2.10 A review of planning and economic strategies, particularly at the regional and sub-regional / County level reveals the following main issues of relevance to Harrogate Borough:
- n Employment land should be provided within urban areas and on previously developed land, followed by land on the urban periphery accessible by good public transport.
 - n Provision should be made for a good (but not excessive) range of sizes and qualities of land for sub-regional and local development, well integrated with urban areas, their workforces and supply chains. A portfolio of small – medium, high quality sites should be provided, with at least 5 years supply of market-ready best sites available.
 - n Promotion of the development of clusters, including the priority clusters of food and drink, advanced engineering and metals, digital industries, chemicals and Bioscience, Healthcare and environmental technologies
 - n Harrogate town is identified as an area of opportunity and should be the focus for new housing and economic development in the North Yorkshire sub-region. Additionally, the following spatial investment themes are identified for the key towns considered as part of this employment land study:

Location	Spatial Investment Theme
Harrogate and Knaresborough	C. Develop the Sub-Regional role in the Bradford and Leeds city regions
Ripon, Boroughbridge and Melmerby	D. Build on the economic opportunities of the northern market towns on the A1/A19 corridor
Pateley Bridge and Masham	E. Utilise heritage and natural assets of upland areas and their market towns as economic drivers

- n There is an over-supply of employment land in the Region and there is a need to assess employment land requirements and site suitability to consider de-allocating sites or re-allocating them to other uses. The projected regional trend is for growth in demand for office floorspace and a decline in demand for land for extensive general industrial uses.
- n Within Harrogate Borough, based on past completion rates there is a need to identify between 20 and 37 hectares of new employment land in addition to existing allocations and commitments to 2021 (this Employment Land Review will examine whether this approach / conclusion is valid).
- n The draft RSS identifies forecast change in total employment land for Harrogate Borough for the period 2006 – 2016 as follows:

B1	B2/B8	Total
4 – 9 hectares	8 – 23 hectares	12 – 32 hectares

Overview of Market Demand

- 2.11 For the purposes of the assessment of market demand, and elsewhere in this study, where possible Harrogate Borough has been divided into the following six sub areas for the purposes of analysis:

Sub Area	Associated Electoral Wards
Boroughbridge	Boroughbridge
Harrogate Town	Bilton, Granby, Harlow Moor, High Harrogate, Hookstone, Low Harrogate, New Park, Pannal, Rossett, Saltergate, Starbeck, Stray, Woodfield
Knaresborough	Knaresborough East, Knaresborough King James, Knaresborough Scriven Park
Ripon	Ripon Minster, Ripon Moorside, Ripon Spa, Wathvale (1)
Rural East	Claro, Marston Moor, Newby, Ouseburn, Ribston, Wathvale (2)
Rural West	Bishop Monkton, Killinghall, Kirkby Malzeard, Lower Nidderdale, Mashamshire (3), Nidd Valley, Pateley Bridge (4), Spofforth with Lower Wharfedale, Washburn

Note: (1) includes Melmerby Business Park only
(2) Excludes Melmerby Business Park
(3) includes the settlement of Masham
(4) includes the settlement of Pateley Bridge

Boroughbridge

- 2.12 Boroughbridge is a market town north east of Harrogate town and just east of the A1(M) at junction 48. This sub-area relates to the town and its immediate surrounds and does not include any of the peripheral villages, which fit into the Rural East sub-area.
- 2.13 The employment property market in Boroughbridge is much smaller than the other sub-areas – it is less than half the size of Knaresborough as the next smallest market - and it is heavily dominated by manufacturing premises. There is one very large property (the former APC unit) that skews the vacancy statistics when taken in conjunction with other properties and has been excluded to avoid misunderstanding the market.
- 2.14 Available units and development under construction is relatively limited, and focussed towards small light industrial type premises in the Bar Lane industrial areas. Only one enquiry was received by the Council's Economic Development Unit for premises over 4,645 sq m in the last three years, and that could have been Borough-wide rather than specific to Boroughbridge. Four enquiries were recorded in that time period for premises over 1,860 sq m but again were possibly wider than just Boroughbridge.
- 2.15 This lack of demand for larger premises is reflected in agents comments and reflective of findings in the other sub-areas. Despite its better proximity to the A1(M) there is still not a strong market for warehouse/distribution premises here, with more favourable locations in the country.

Harrogate Town

- 2.16 The employment property market in the Harrogate town sub-area is predominantly made up of small office suites in converted premises, office

suites in refurbished large purpose-built office blocks, and mixed industrial space comprising some very small poorer quality individual premises in the town centre and some small industrial estates. New office development is fairly limited. Much of the stock is in the town centre although Cardale Park and Hornbeam Park are both recognised out of centre business (office) locations and well-established. New construction is being under-taken at Cardale Park (Green Gate) which will add a considerable amount of vacant space to the market if all built.

- 2.17 Demand emanates predominantly from the local market and for smaller units with suites within the larger buildings such as Exchange House or Windsor House in flux so that occupancy remains at a reasonably constant level.
- 2.18 Size of property in the Harrogate town sub-area is 1,000 sq m and below on the vast majority of properties. There are a number of single office buildings that are larger than this but they tend to be multi-let, and there are only a small number of office buildings that are larger than this.
- 2.19 With regard to industrial premises, the estates are typically out of Harrogate town centre spread around the edges with no real single focus. Properties in the centre are much smaller and long-standing individual employment businesses.
- 2.20 As with the office market in this sub-area, industrial demand does not emanate from a particular type of occupier with a mix of enquiries and transactions taking place. Harrogate town has not traditionally been a highly industrialised location. Many of the town's former larger employers (eg ICI, Octavius, Atkinson and RAF Logistics) moved from the area in the early 1990's and were 'replaced' by smaller indigenous firms. As such, there are few large employers in the town of the magnitude of some of the more industrial areas of the country where complementary businesses tend to congregate. Smaller premises have been updated or refurbished over time, attracting tenants who do not want to carry out estate or property maintenance.

Knaresborough

- 2.21 Knaresborough is smaller than Harrogate town and as a consequence the property market is more limited and tends to comprise small properties. There are few existing employment opportunities (i.e. vacant premises) in this area, mostly clustered in the town itself.
- 2.22 Property that is available tends to be small-scale and sporadic, with a turnover of small suites in office buildings that are multi-occupied. Evidence of transactions is low as there are only a small number of properties.
- 2.23 Demand for office space is limited, typified by small local companies or start-up businesses, with small suites sometimes offered at an all inclusive rental for ease. The dearth of evidence and space to let does not permit real trends or conclusions to be drawn other than the market is very local and appears reasonably static at this low level of activity.
- 2.24 With regard to potential space, there are no office buildings under construction and no extant planning permissions in Knaresborough for office space. Knaresborough is close to Harrogate town, which has good office provision to suit a wide range of size requirements, and if an occupier were looking in this geographical area then Harrogate will have a significant pull on business location by comparison.

- 2.25 The main focus for future development in Knaresborough is St James' Park. Developers are often reluctant to build speculatively however given the potential length the completed unit could sit on the market for generating no return. Estimated floorspace capacity at St James' including warehouse and distribution totals 39,550 sq m, a large quantity in relation to the existing stock of 73,000 sq m across this entire sub-area.
- 2.26 Development at this scale would increase the size of the existing industrial employment base by over 50%. There are two available existing industrial premises to let in Knaresborough totalling 534 sq m (5,750 sq ft). Both are smaller than 372 sq m (4,000 sq ft) again indicative of the lack of large property in the Knaresborough wards and reflecting a market for local occupiers.

Ripon

- 2.27 Ripon is located north of Harrogate town and is slightly larger than Knaresborough with a correspondingly larger property market.
- 2.28 Whilst Harrogate town is more dominated by the office market, Ripon is more dominated by industrial property although still on a relatively small-scale.
- 2.29 In general there seems to be a lower turnover of occupiers than in Harrogate town with few properties available to let and only limited amount of new-build. There are several large-scale occupiers such as Wolsely (at Melmerby Business Park) and Econ in Ripon itself.
- 2.30 Turnover is low in Ripon and there are few enquiries for offices here from companies based outside the region. The Canalside building (at Ripon Business Park, Boroughbridge Road) is being offered as sub-divisible as the agents consider it unlikely that a single occupier will be found. As with Harrogate town, there are no particular occupier sectors that target Ripon as it is a more local market, and formal enquiries are rather sporadic.
- 2.31 In terms of industrial, the market appears to be relatively stable with some local churn but not huge numbers of enquiries or movement. Freehold premises are in demand and in terms of size, less than 1,000 sqm is the norm.

Rural East Sub Area

- 2.32 The Rural East sub-area mainly comprises more sparsely populated wards with a number of villages spread throughout the area. Commercial property here is dominated by the industrial sector and there is no real office market to speak of.
- 2.33 The A1(M) road cuts directly through the middle of this sub-area on a north-south axis but despite this there is practically no ribbon or associated development nodes around any of the junctions (Melmerby Business Park has been included with Ripon and Boroughbridge has been dealt with separately as a sub-area on its own). The other roads that pass through the area include the A59 between York and Harrogate and the A61/A168 leading north from Ripon, but neither of these has a town of any size along it within the boundary of the Wards that make up this study sub-area.
- 2.34 Industrial property is clustered around the Tockwith/Marston area in the south-east of the sub-area, with several large estates accommodating a number of occupiers making up the second largest industrial sector of the seven study sub-areas. We have not specifically assessed these employment areas as part of the study.

- 2.35 There is very little information formally recorded as to vacant stock, demand or take-up and supply across this sub-area.
- 2.36 None of the agents we spoke to reported that the Rural East area was one often quoted by formal searches, and we suggest that demand here is much more localised, and patchy or infrequent for offices. In terms of industrial, this area is likely to be limited to local firms requiring expansion space or small start-up businesses. Large-scale manufacturing or warehouse and distribution is not in demand in this Rural East area.

Rural West Sub Area

- 2.37 Employment opportunities are also few and far between in the Rural West sub-area. It comprises much more open countryside and small villages mainly interconnected by local roads.
- 2.38 There are two concentrated areas of activity in this sub-area, one at Pateley Bridge and the other at Masham. There is limited information about both as neither is a particularly strong market with multiple properties or lettings. Statistics about activity levels are not kept by either the Council or local agents.
- 2.39 Generally, the property that is available is small-scale, rather sporadic, and in some cases related to local agricultural activity. Demand for commercial property is limited. This area is not suggested as a key focus for future employment development.

Business Survey

Overall Findings

- 2.40 242 companies responded to the survey, with a total of 7,300 employees and equivalent of 10.6% of all employees in employment in Harrogate Borough. Not all sectors were, however, covered by the survey. This is because the study was solely concerned with the provision of employment land for manufacturing, warehouse and distribution and office uses. Taking this into account lifts the percentage coverage of the workforce within eligible sectors to just over 25%.
- 2.41 37% of the employees of the surveyed businesses lived both within the Borough and within the locality of the business for which they worked. A further 39% lived in the Borough but not close to the business for which they worked. The remaining 24% of the employees covered by the survey lived outside of the Borough. The difference reflects that many of the sectors not covered by the survey, such as retailing and hotels and catering, are characterised by high levels of part-time employment, which do not justify long commuter journeys and which therefore attract employees from a narrower geographical area.
- 2.42 The major concerns of businesses in the District are the affordability of housing, the availability of new sites, the level of business rates, and access by public transport. When compared with the findings from a recent study conducted in the South East (for Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council in Kent), the Harrogate Borough study shows a very similar balance in terms of the need for more affordable housing and for greater levels of availability of sites, with the need in Harrogate being slightly more pronounced. The need for more available employment sites was especially pronounced amongst engineering businesses and amongst small/micro businesses.

- 2.43 The need for more sites and premises for small/micro businesses is, in part, evidenced by the high proportion of the businesses surveyed that were operating from residential premises.
- 2.44 A reduction in business rates was a key element that businesses wanted. Despite this, business rates were not seen as a major determinant of business location particularly as, according to a large company in a neighbouring district, the difference between business rates in Harrogate and York is so marginal that this would not enter into their minds if they were looking to relocate. This is not surprising, following the introduction of the uniform business rate regime.
- 2.45 The main problems directly affecting the performance of the surveyed businesses were market pressures (14%), a shortage of appropriately skilled staff, (9%), and existing site constraints, (9%).
- 2.46 Market pressure was particularly acute for 30% of manufacturers. A lack of appropriately skilled staff was mentioned most frequently by construction businesses. Site constraints were highest for warehouses and, by location, in Boroughbridge, the A1(M) corridor and in Ripon. Those most affected were typically small companies employing between 11 and 49 staff.
- 2.47 68% of the survey respondents rated Harrogate Borough as a good or a very good place in which to do business. 24% felt it was only average but only 7% thought that it was either poor or very poor. Levels of satisfaction were particularly high in Knaresborough, (79% of respondents rating it either very good or good), Boroughbridge, (73%), and the Rural West, (72%). The lowest level of satisfaction was in Ripon, (57% rating it either very good or good).
- 2.48 In terms of a more specific sectoral analysis of the business survey findings, the following conclusions can be reached.

Offices

- n Generally the district is seen as a good location for the office sector. Some constraints are identified, relating mainly to Harrogate town, but also to the Rural West sub-area and, to a lesser extent, to Boroughbridge. In Harrogate town, constraints mainly relate to the shortage of space within existing buildings, compounded by site constraints that prevent the expansion of the buildings and a perceived shortage of affordable alternative land or premises. In addition, a shortage of car parking is seen as a major problem, as is traffic congestion. The main problem in the Rural West and to a lesser extent Boroughbridge is a shortage of affordable land.
- n A number of intra-district relocations have taken place, including arising from businesses started from home and moving into 'formal' office premises. Some respondents identified a shortage of start-up office accommodation .
- n Fairly good level of growth anticipated, with 66% believing that growth could be accommodated on site or by moving into nearby premises within the District. 33% of the businesses surveyed would consider moving out of Harrogate Borough to meet growth requirements however.

Manufacturing

- n Around 25% of surveyed businesses expected to expand in the short-term. Half of these anticipate a requirement for increased premises, with growth generally thought able to be accommodated on existing sites.
- n The majority of manufacturing growth is expected in Harrogate town (and also Knaresborough and the rural sub-areas). Conversely, site-related constraints, including lack of space and suitable sites and premises, were most pronounced in the Harrogate town and the rural sub-areas.

Warehousing and Distribution

- n For wholesale operators, Harrogate Borough is seen as a generally good place to do businesses. Of those firms which have relocated from elsewhere in the Borough, they have tended to move to around the A1(M) corridor. Of those wholesale operators which identify constraints, these are mainly in Ripon, Boroughbridge and the rural sub-areas.
- n Issues mainly focus on space constraints within existing sites and a shortage of alternative premises or land in the Rural West and Ripon. Traffic congestion is a problem in Harrogate town, Ripon and the Rural West, with parking a particular problem in Ripon and Harrogate town.
- n Transport and distribution operators identify site constraints in similar locations to wholesalers but in contrast this sector is the least positive about premises and availability of new sites.
- n For those distribution businesses looking to expand, these are principally located in the Rural West sub-area.

Overview of Supply

- 2.49 Table 3 provides an overview of vacant land across the Borough available for development, arising from unimplemented planning permissions, local plan allocations and other areas of vacant land (but excluding vacant premises) assessed as part of this study. Separate tables and associated commentary has also been prepared for each sub-area and include details of
- n Vacant land;
 - n Commitments (unimplemented planning permissions, developments under construction and pending losses to alternative uses); and
 - n Vacant premises
- 2.50 A more detailed explanation of components of the sub area supply tables and where this information has been derived is set out in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Sub Area Supply Tables – Explanation of Components

Supply Component	Description	Source
Employment Allocations	Sites without planning permission which are allocated for B1, B2 and B8 uses in the Adopted Harrogate District Local Plan (February 2001)	Chapter 4 of the main report (Table 4.2)
Commitments (Gains)	Sites with extant planning permission or under construction at the time of the study for B1, B2 and B8 uses	Chapter 4 of the main report (Tables 4.3-4.5)
Pending Losses	Existing employment sites with planning permission / under construction for alternative forms of development	Chapter 4 of the main report (Table 4.6)
Commitments (Net)	Commitment (Gains) minus Pending Losses	-
Other QA Sites	Vacant land which has been subject to a qualitative assessment as part of this study but which is neither allocated for employment use in the adopted Local Plan nor with extant planning permission / under construction	Chapter 5 of the main report (Table 5.5b)
Vacant Premises	Details of premises extracted from Harrogate Borough Council's vacant property register and also details of available premises identified through discussions with local agents.	Chapter 4 of the main report (Tables 4.10 & 4.11)



Table 3: Overview of Vacant Land Availability Across Harrogate Borough

Site	Availability (years)	Area Available for Dev (Ha).	Office	Manu. B1c/B2	W & D B8	Appropriate Alternative Uses	Years Supply (1-3, 3-5, 5+)	Comments
Bar Lane (Becklands Close), Boroughbridge	Immediate	0.2	-	630	-	No	1-3 year	Permission for B1c
Bar Lane (Brickyard Road), Boroughbridge	Immediate	0.59	-	1200	1450	No	1-3 years	Likely to come forward form B1c / B8 uses.
Land Rear of Poplars Trading Estate, Boroughbridge	Immediate	3.21	-	6840	7500	-	5+ years	Could consider as a longer-term opportunity and part of any redevelopment of adjoining Poplars Industrial Estate
Cardale Park, Harrogate	Immediate	1.56	8530	-	-	No	1-3, 3-5 years	Beckwith Head Road (Plot 1) and Plot 2. Office location
St James Park, Knaresborough	Plot 8 immediate Phase II land 1- 3 years	11.95 (Plot 8 = 1.95, Phase II land = 10)	13000	15800	23750	No	5+ years	Seek to prevent inappropriate non-employment uses. Promote range of employment types / sizes. Need for infrastructure provision for Phase II land.
Former Timber Yard, Stockwell Lane, Knaresborough	Immediate	0.30	-	600	750	-	1-3 years	Could consider as part of a wider redevelopment opportunity with adjoining land.
Melmerby Business Park	Plot 11 immediate Plot 13 1- 3 years	6.53	3040	7280	19750	No	1-3, 3-5 years	Plot 11 (1 ha) and Plot 13 (5.53 ha). Extension of site road will be needed to access Plot 13.
Boroughbridge Road, Ripon	Immediate	3	3600	4800	4500	No	3-5 years	Seek to prevent inappropriate non-employment uses.
Harrogate Road, Ripon	1-3 years	3.4	500	3500	2500	No	3-5 years	Employment development requires prior provision of bulky goods retail warehouse on the site. Floorspace based on appeal decision.
Hutton Bank, Ripon	Immediate	1 (net)	1200	2800	-	Possible mixed use	1-3 years	Possible need to consider mixed use to bring forward site
Former Gas Holder Station, Stonebridgegate, Ripon	Immediate	0.58	-	1080	1350	-	1-3 years	Possible need to consider mixed use to bring forward site
Fearby Road, Masham	Immediate	1.36	-	-	2495	No	1-3 years	Floorspace based on extant planning permission on the site

Boroughbridge

- 2.51 Vacant committed land available for new employment development is limited in Boroughbridge, restricted to two plots within the Bar Lane Industrial Estates totalling less than one hectare. These sites are available and likely to be taken up within 1 – 3 years. Current activity is also relatively limited to small scale industrial units within the Bar Lane industrial areas.
- 2.52 Vacant premises are small in scale and number when excluding the former APC unit, which due to its scale and nature is unlikely to generate strong market interest for re-use. Land to the rear of the Poplars Trading Estate, which is a local plan employment commitment but where planning permission is expired, is identified as an ‘Other QA site’ assessed as part of this study. Inclusion of this site as part of identified supply would substantially increase quantitative provision in Boroughbridge over the longer term.
- 2.53 The current potential for longer-term employment opportunities would likely arise from the recycling of underused employment sites, notably the Poplars Trading Estate.
- 2.54 The business survey identifies half of those warehousing users requiring additional space as being within Boroughbridge. Also, intra-borough warehouse relocations tended to now be found around the A1(M).

Table 4a: Boroughbridge Area – Supply Overview [m² (Ha)]

Supply Component	Office	Manufacturing	Warehousing
Employment Allocations	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitments Gains	0 (0)	2110 (0.57)	1450 (0.29)
Sites Pending a Loss	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitments (Net)	0 (0)	2110 (0)	1450 (0.29)
Other QA Sites	0 (0)	6840 (1.6)	7500 (1.61)
Vacant Premises	89	173	174
Total	89	9123	8950
Total (excl vacant premises & other QA Sites)	0 (0)	2110 (0.57)	1450 (0.29)

Note: See Figure 1 for an explanation of Supply Components.

Harrogate Town

- 2.55 Approximately 70% of all existing office space and almost 90% of identified vacant office stock is within Harrogate town. Harrogate town also includes over half of the Borough’s vacant industrial / warehouse supply. This will help cater for identified and latent demand for these sectors although the business survey identifies a lack of manufacturing premises as a concern by certain respondents.
- 2.56 Overall, land supply within Harrogate town equates to just over 1/5 of the District’s total (gross) provision. When considering net supply, this

proportion decreases, a reflection of the fact that virtually all identified proposed losses fall within the Harrogate town sub-area.

- 2.57 The majority of Harrogate town's (gross) employment land supply is made up of development under construction and also from planning permissions outside of sites considered as part of this study. A substantial amount of this supply arises from the extension to Covance laboratories for new office and R&D accommodation at Cardale Park, under construction at the time of the survey.
- 2.58 Harrogate town has no employment allocations without planning permission. Identified opportunities for new development are restricted to land with extant planning permission at Cardale Park which provides 1.56 hectares of land most likely to come forward for new office development. Overall supply within Harrogate town is heavily focussed in the office sector. There are no vacant local plan allocations identified as available for manufacturing and warehouse development.
- 2.59 In terms of the number of planning permissions, Harrogate town is by far the most active sub-area. It is also apparent however that in simple terms of numbers of permissions, this is the only sub-area where employment losses exceed employment gains. This suggests that there is a degree of recycling of existing employment stock to new employment / other uses within this sub-area.

Table 4b: Harrogate Town Area – Supply Overview [m² (Ha)]

Supply Component	Office	Manufacturing	Warehousing
Employment Allocations	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitments Gains	25920 (6.77)	7645 (1.08)	8365 (2.65)
Sites Pending a Loss	-1700 (-2.94)	0 (-0.3)	-6800 (-2.9)
Commitments (Net)	24220 (3.83)	7645 (0.78)	1565 (0.25)
Other QA Sites	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Vacant Premises	23311	5086	5087
Total	47531	12731	6652
Total (excl vacant premises & other QA Sites)	24220 (3.83)	7645 (0.78)	1565 (0.25)

Note: See Figure 1 for an explanation of Supply Components.

Knaresborough

- 2.60 In direct contrast to Harrogate town, virtually all of Knaresborough's supply is made up of the local plan allocation at St James Business Park. Over half of the District's allocated undeveloped land is found at this site and this makes up around ¼ of all gross land supply within Harrogate Borough.
- 2.61 St James Park provides approximately 12 hectares of vacant land although the majority of this is not immediately available, first requiring the provision of site infrastructure works to enable comprehensive development. The site will be able to physically accommodate a range of type of employment user Although it will likely come forward for users with larger requirements, thereby not generally catering for SME's.

- 2.62 No employment developments were identified as being under construction at the time of the survey with current activity at St James Park concerning the erection of a new Audi car showroom.
- 2.63 Outside of St James Park, the number of employment-related planning permissions in Knaresborough appears low.
- 2.64 As with Boroughbridge, existing floorspace is focussed in the manufacturing sector, with comparatively little office accommodation. The business survey identifies Knaresborough (along with Harrogate and the District's rural areas) as the locations where demand for additional manufacturing space is highest. Vacant property supply is limited, particularly with regard to industrial / warehousing premises. All identified vacancies were less than 500 sqm.

Table 4c: Knaresborough Area – Supply Overview [m² (Ha)]

Supply Component	Office	Manufacturing	Warehousing
Employment Allocations	13000 (3.25)	15800 (3.95)	23750 (4.75)
Commitments Gains	0 (0)	590 (0.18)	585 (0.17)
Sites Pending a Loss	-465 (-0.35)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitments (Net)	-465 (-0.35)	590 (0.18)	585 (0.17)
Other QA Sites	0 (0)	600 (0.15)	750 (0.15)
Vacant Premises	750	399	399
Total	13285	17389	25484
Total (excl vacant premises & other QA Sites)	12535 (2.9)	16390 (4.13)	24335 (4.92)

Note: See Figure 1 for an explanation of Supply Components.

Ripon

- 2.65 Ripon is the most significant sub-area in overall quantitative employment land supply terms, providing around 1/3 of Harrogate Borough's total provision. This level of supply is significant in terms of the scale of Ripon and supply across the district as a whole.
- 2.66 The bulk of supply is made up of vacant employment allocations without planning permission (notably Melmerby Business Park which will likely be most suitable for warehousing and manufacturing uses) and also commitments / allocations within Ripon itself. A number of these sites are constrained to varying degrees which will impact on their availability. More particularly, vacant land supply equates about 15 hectares, about 9 of which is not considered to be immediately available.
- 2.67 Very little employment activity appears to take place outside of identified sites, with only one such commitment identified through the survey.
- 2.68 In addition to supply as defined above, a further 0.33 hectares is also identified as being potentially available at Ripon College although ground conditions will make the remaining land likely difficult to come forward for employment use.

2.69 Half of the existing floorspace in the Ripon sub-area is made up of warehousing. Vacant premises in Ripon are extremely limited in number, with only one office and one industrial / warehousing opportunity identified.

Table 4d: Ripon Area – Supply Overview [m² (Ha)]

Supply Component	Office	Manufacturing	Warehousing
Employment Allocations	4240 (1.06)	10080 (2.52)	19750 (3.95)
<i>Commitments Gains</i>	8790 (2.89)	9950 (3.3)	8765 (2.6)
<i>Sites Pending a Loss</i>	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (-1.02)
Commitments (Net)	8790 (2.89)	9950 (3.3)	8765 (1.58)
Other QA Sites	0 (0)	1080 (0.29)	1350 (0.29)
Vacant Premises	1468	125	126
Total	14498	21235	29991
Total (excluding vacant premises and other QA sites)	13030 (3.95)	20030 (5.82)	28515 (5.53)

Note: See Figure 1 for an explanation of Supply Components.

Rural Areas

- 2.70 With the exception of land at Fearby Road in Masham (which has extant planning permission for B8 development), activity in terms of planning permissions is found outside of identified local plan sites. This is a reflection of the limited supply of local plan allocations within the the District's rural areas.
- 2.71 Half of the number of 'major' planning permissions assessed outside of identified sites are located in the District's rural sub-areas, and are focussed on the manufacturing and warehousing sectors. Also, no employment losses arising from major permissions were identified in the rural sub areas. When considering all applications, losses were again comparatively low, with none identified in the Rural East area.
- 2.72 Cumulatively, these areas provide a significant amount of existing floorspace, accounting for almost 50% of Harrogate Borough's existing total provision. The contribution made in these sub-areas to the warehousing sector is particularly significant.
- 2.73 The Rural East sub-area is of particular significance, providing more existing floorspace than any other sub area. This picture is slightly skewed as for the purposes of assessing Valuation Office Agency figures, this sub area includes Melmerby Business Park. Elsewhere in this report, Melmerby Business Park is assessed as being within the Ripon sub-area.
- 2.74 Despite the significance of these sub-areas in terms of existing floorspace, this is not translated into vacant premises, with available space, especially in the Rural West sub-area, limited in number.

Table 4e Rural East – Supply Overview [m² (Ha)]

Supply Component	Office	Manufacturing	Warehousing
Employment Allocations	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitments Gains	0 (0)	5635 (2.05)	7555 (2.97)
Sites Pending a Loss	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitments (Net)	0 (0)	5635 (2.05)	7555 (2.97)
Other QA Sites	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Vacant Premises	267	3436	3437
Total	267	9071	10992
Total (excl vacant premises & other QA Sites)	0 (0)	5635 (2.05)	7555 (2.97)

(1)

Note: See Figure 1 for an explanation of Supply Components.

Table 4f Rural West – Supply Overview [m² (Ha)]

Supply Component	Office	Manufacturing	Warehousing
Employment Allocations	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitments Gains	0 (0)	1930 (0.35)	5880 (2.01)
Sites Pending a Loss	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitments (Net)	0 (0)	1930 (0.35)	5880 (2.01)
Other QA Sites	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Vacant Premises	67	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	67	1930	5880
Total (excl vacant premises & other QA Sites)	0 (0)	1930 (0.35)	5880 (2.01)

Note: See Figure 1 for an explanation of Supply Components.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- 2.75 Drawing together details in tables 4a – f enables a total table to be derived which demonstrates net supply for Harrogate Borough as a whole compared against the forecast requirements i.e.:

Table 5: Total Supply versus Forecast Requirement to 2021 [m^2 (Ha)]

	Office	Manufacturing	Warehousing
Employment Allocations	17240 (4.31)	25880 (6.47)	43500 (8.7)
Commitments Gains	34710 (9.66)	27860 (7.53)	32600 (10.79)
Sites Pending a Loss	-2165 (-3.29)	0 (-0.3)	-6800 (-3.92)
Commitments (Net)	32545 (6.37)	27860 (7.23)	25800 (6.87)
A. Net Land Supply (1)	49785 (10.68)	53740 (13.7)	69300 (15.47)
B. Other QA Sites	0 (0)	8520 (2.04)	9600 (2.05)
C. Vacant Premises	25952	9176	9176
D. Forecast Requirement 2005 – 2021 (2)	60700 (8.6)	-46000 (-10.3)	34200 (8.4)
Total Difference [(A:C-D)]	15037	117436	53876
Surplus or Deficit (excluding vacant premises and other QA sites)	-10915 (2.08)	99740 (24.0)	35100 (7.07)

(1) 'Net Land Supply' = Employment Allocations + Commitments (Net)

(2) Derived from information included in Tables 1 and 2.

- 2.76 The following very broad headline quantitative conclusion for the Borough can be identified when considering employment forecasts against existing supply,:

- n **Overall, there is a sufficient quantity of employment land to meet the minimum forecast requirement of 7 hectares for the District, but there is a mismatch in the distribution of supply and there are other qualitative issues which restrict availability. In particular, consideration needs to be given to enhancing future supply in the Harrogate town area and, to a lesser extent, in Boroughbridge.**

- 2.77 In terms of the different employment sectors assessed as part of this study, the main conclusions can be summarised as:

- n Forecast office requirements [use class B1(a)] are anticipated to increase by 8.6 hectares. Existing land supply in the Borough (exclusive of vacancies) exceeds this minimum land requirement by only about 2 hectares. Office land supply is mainly focussed in Harrogate and to a lesser extent, Knaresborough and Ripon.
- n Forecast Industrial requirements [use classes B1(b), B1(c) and B2] are set to decline over the period to 2021 by approximately 10 hectares. Allied to the quantum of existing employment land supply, in basic quantitative terms there will be a large surplus of land for this sector across the Borough. It is important to note however that this level of decline is less than that forecast for the Region. Decline will also likely vary across the District, with large

amounts of existing industrial floorspace located within less sustainable rural areas.

- n As with offices, forecast warehousing requirements (use class B8) are predicted to grow by 8.4 hectares. Potential supply currently exceeds this requirement, focussed mainly in Knaresborough and Ripon.

2.78 Our conclusions are also considered in the context of the distribution, availability / likely release and quality of land supply, as well as market and latent demand.

Recommendations

2.79 Our recommendations relate in particular to:

- A : Key allocated sites where there will likely be pressure for other forms of development or where specific issues should be addressed to enhance their attractiveness;
- B : Other sites with potential for mixed use and / or wider redevelopment;
- C : The level of protection to be given to the sites assessed as part of this study in terms of their role within the employment hierarchy;
- D : Future monitoring; and
- E : The need for additional sites to meet (longer term) employment requirements.

A : Key Allocated Sites

Office

Cardale Park, Harrogate

- n Vacant land at Cardale Park offer's Harrogate towns' key identified office opportunity in terms of vacant land. Harrogate town offers the Borough's main office market location, with 70% of all office space and 90% of identified office vacancies. It will therefore be important that available land at Cardale Park is safeguarded for future development.
- n Given the scale, nature and edge of urban area location of Cardale Park, it is a high traffic generator. Opportunities for the promotion of Green Travel Plans in association with larger scale new office development and existing major occupiers as opportunities arise should be considered. This would assist in enhancing the site's current moderate environmental sustainability qualitative assessment score.

Manufacturing and Warehousing

St James Park, Knaresborough

- n This site provides the Borough's most significant current employment opportunity, with potential to contribute towards meeting the future employment needs of Knaresborough and also Harrogate town. We are aware that there is demand in this location for non (B Use Class) employment uses including further car showrooms, hotel and leisure uses. Given the strategic importance of this employment opportunity to the Borough and the absence of similar opportunities in the Harrogate town / Knaresborough area,

it should be protected from inappropriate non-employment users which could dilute the employment offer.

- n In general terms, demand across the district in all sectors is for small scale development. This site will be able to cater for larger scale opportunities although it will be important to seek to promote a range of employment uses and unit sizes (including smaller opportunities). In general terms, demand in Knaresborough is focused towards smaller scale requirements.
- n Comprehensive redevelopment of the Phase II land is dependent on the provision of site infrastructure. So that the site makes an effective contribution to supply, the early provision of Phase II land infrastructure should be promoted and we would recommend that the Council undertake further discussions with the land owner in this regard.

Boroughbridge Road, Ripon

- n Land at Boroughbridge Road is the least constrained employment opportunity in the Ripon area where activity is taking place. It is immediately available and has seen recent development. We also understand that the owners are keen to promote further industrial (leasehold) development but that interest has also been expressed by non-B Class employment uses, notably car showrooms. As with St James' Park, land at Boroughbridge Road should be protected from inappropriate non-employment users which could dilute the employment offer.

Melmerby Business Park, Melmerby

- n Land to the rear of the Wolsley depot provides a significant employment opportunity within the A1 corridor. The business park already houses a number of food and drink type users and existing available opportunities could further consolidate this location for this growth cluster. Access to land to the rear of the Wolsley unit first requires the provision of an extension to the site access road. We would recommend that that the Council examine this further with the land owner with a view to promoting the early provision of road infrastructure to enhance the attractiveness of this development plot

B : Potential Mixed Use and Wider Development Opportunity Sites

2.80 Under the qualitative assessment review, the following have been specifically identified as sites for potential mixed use development, sometimes in conjunction with adjoining land, to help overcome constraints and stimulate development.

- n Poplars Industrial Estate, Boroughbridge
- n Riverside Sawmills, Boroughbridge
- n Dunlopillo Site, Pannal
- n Former Cattle Market, Commercial Yard, Knaresborough
- n Hutton Bank, Ripon
- n Gas Holder Site, Stonebridgegate, Ripon
- n (Land at) Auction Mart, Masham

2.81 For any of the identified mixed use / wider development opportunities, it will be important for proposals to demonstrate that any non-employment elements are (the minimum) necessary in viability terms. This also applies to mixed use / non-employment proposals which may come forward on other employment sites.

2.82 We would recommend that investigation be given to viability issues further with regard to the identified potential mixed-use sites. The preparation of

site development briefs for these sites would help to ensure that the most appropriate form and mix of development is brought forward. Working up briefs in consultation with the landowners would also likely assist in this process.

- 2.83 A number of the potential mixed-use sites also refer to adjoining land which could be considered in order to create more comprehensive and attractive redevelopment opportunities.

Poplars Industrial Estate, Boroughbridge

- n This estate is dominated by the former APC unit. This is a substantial vacant building which is unlikely to generate strong market interest due to its scale and the nature of demand in the area which is for smaller premises. In order to enhance the appearance and potential contribution of this site and adjoining land to meeting the development needs of Boroughbridge, a proactive approach to the redevelopment of this site would be appropriate.
- n Inclusion of the former local plan employment commitment to the rear of the estate would create a more comprehensive development opportunity and enhance future supply of vacant employment land provision in Boroughbridge (also see recommendations in relation to the need for additional employment land).

Riverside Sawmills, Boroughbridge

- n Part of this site is underused at present and it is understood that the existing occupier is to consolidate further which will potentially result in part of the site becoming available for development. Redevelopment of parts of the site for higher value uses may be necessary to overcome existing access and other site constraints.

Dunlopillo Site, Pannal

- n The site is in current use for rubber manufacture although parts of the site are underused. The site has been promoted by the owners for mixed use development through the Council's LDF process. If the site becomes vacant, it is unlikely that the re-use or redevelopment of existing buildings for employment will generate significant market interest. Redevelopment of the site to include an element of non-employment use will assist in addressing site constraints such as demolition of buildings and site remediation.

Former Cattle Market, Commercial Yard, Knaresborough

- n This site is significantly constrained by access and lack of visibility. It is highly unlikely that this site will come forward for employment development in isolation. The inclusion of buildings to the south of the site would provide a development opportunity potentially capable of addressing access and other site constraints. If adopting such an approach, displaced occupiers should be relocated.

Hutton Bank, Ripon

- n Redevelopment of this site would enhance its contribution to townscape / local environmental quality. It is currently vacant and includes a number of brick-built and other buildings which are in a poor condition. Allied with other site constraints such as site shape and topography, it scores poorly against market attractiveness considerations. An element of non-employment uses will likely be required to actively bring forward the site.

Gas Holder Site, Stonebridgegate, Ripon

- n This site is vacant and former buildings / gas holders have been removed. Given the past use of the site, It is likely however that high levels of contamination exist which will limit market attractiveness for employment. An

element of non-employment higher value uses will likely be required to bring forward the development of the site.

Land Rear of Auction Mart, Masham

- n Land to the rear of the auction mart building would generally be moderately attractive in commercial terms, with interest likely to be limited to locally based employment sectors given the rural location and relative isolation from the strategic road network. Identification of this site would enhance current employment land supply in the Rural West area.
- n Consideration of this land together with redevelopment of the adjoining auction mart would create a more comprehensive opportunity able to deliver enhanced townscape improvements to this fairly prominent site within Masham. If considering such an approach, discussions should be progressed with the land owner to examine need for replacement auction mart facilities as part of any redevelopment opportunity.

C : Maintaining a Portfolio of Sites

2.84 The sites considered as part of this review have been classified according to their importance and function in the employment land hierarchy. Site classifications and associated recommendations for each type of classification are summarised in the following table:

Table 6: Site Classification and Recommendations

Classification	Recommendation
Best Urban (BU)	Protect for employment use
Good Urban (GU)	Protect for employment use
Other Urban (OU)	Normally protect for employment use subject to revised Policy E2
Other Local (OL)	May have potential for release subject to revised Policy E2

Note – not all employment land throughout the District has been the subject of this review.

2.85 It is recommended that those sites classified as Best Urban and Good Urban be retained as they are considered valuable employment sites/areas which should be protected against loss and the gradual erosion through the encroachment of alternative uses.

2.86 Table 7 outlines the sites recommended for inclusion within these classifications:

Table :7 Best Urban and Good Urban Sites

Site	Classification
Cardale Park, Harrogate	BU
St James Park, Knaresborough	BU
Melmerby Business Park	BU
Bar Lane (Becklands Close), Boroughbridge	GU
Bar Lane (Brickyard Road), Boroughbridge	GU
Boroughbridge Road, Ripon	GU
Harrogate Road, Ripon	GU
Fearby Road, Masham	GU

2.87 Those sites identified as ‘Other Urban’ are of reasonable quality but which are likely to be of interest to local occupiers only. Their loss should generally be resisted except in exceptional circumstances. For instance, where the only way forward to stimulate employment development is likely to be through the mixed use of a site, then the loss of part of this type of ‘Other Urban’ site for alternative uses may be acceptable.

- 2.88 It is recommended that the following 'Other Urban' sites be considered in the Council's Local Development Framework for mixed use development including employment use:-
- n Poplars Trading Estate, Boroughbridge
 - n Riverside Sawmills, Boroughbridge
 - n Dunlopillo, Pannal
 - n Hutton Bank, Ripon
- 2.89 The following 'Other Urban' sites are recommended for protection under a revised employment land policy:-
- n Rossett Drive Industrial Estate, Harrogate
 - n Former Timber Yard, Stockwell Road, Knaresborough
- 2.90 Land to the rear of Poplars Trading Estate in Boroughbridge is specifically recommended for allocation as a future longer-term employment opportunity [see E : Need for Additional Employment Land (up to 2021)].
- 2.91 Sites classed as 'Other Local' generally perform poorly under the qualitative assessment, but can provide an important supply of lower grade employment land for the cheaper end of the market. The users on these sites are often difficult to relocate – rentals are frequently prohibitive elsewhere and/or amenity considerations make this difficult. Therefore, apart from those sites recommended below for potential alternative or mixed uses, these sites should normally be protected from non-employment uses in the Local Development Framework.
- 2.92 'Other Local' sites recommended for consideration in the Local Development Framework for alternative/mixed uses are:
- n Former Cattle Market (and adjoining uses), Knaresborough
 - n Former Gas Holder Station, Stonebridgegate, Ripon
 - n Rear of Auction Mart, Masham
- 2.93 'Other Local' sites are recommended for protection under a revised employment land protection policy (see below). These are:
- n Land at Milby, Boroughbridge
 - n Grove Park Centre, Harrogate
 - n Harrogate Glass, Back Valley Drive, Harrogate
 - n Starbeck Highways Depot, Harrogate
 - n Castleforge and Cheapside, Knaresborough
 - n Ash Grove Industrial Estate, Ripon
 - n City Motors, Bondgate Green, Ripon
 - n Tower Garage, Palace Road, Ripon
 - n Jamesons Warehouse and office, Masham
 - n Highways Depot, Pateley Bridge
 - n Coal Yard, Pateley Bridge
- 10.95 As part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework, the Borough Council may wish to assess those existing employment sites not included in this review and consider which classification they should belong to and what level of protection is appropriate.

- 2.94 Proposals for non-employment uses on 'Other Urban' and 'Other Local' sites should be considered against all of the relevant criteria listed below:
- n **Impact on the quality and quantity of employment land supply** when assessed against forecast requirements and the scale and nature of demand within the area. In assessing quantitative and qualitative issues, regard should be had to available land and premises in the local area and it will therefore be important to monitor take up and losses using this study as a base position.
 - n **Ability to accommodate smaller scale requirements** – as identified by the business survey and through our analysis of market demand, employment requirements are often for small – medium scale development. Thus, in assessing qualitative impacts on employment supply, it will be important to assess the realistic potential of premises / sites to accommodate such development when assessing proposals for their release to other uses.
 - n **Details of Active Marketing** - to allow the full consideration of specific demand, details should be sought on marketing including duration, method and price, particularly in relation to premises. As part of this assessment, consideration could be given to the appropriateness for subdivision of premises.
 - n **Viability of Employment Development** – details of redevelopment costs to justify that employment development is not viable in the first instance, and secondly, whether mixed use development (including employment) is feasible.
 - n **Amenity Considerations** – most relevant for 'non-conforming' uses close to residential areas where recycling to an alternative use would offer amenity benefits.
- 2.95 The Council's adopted Local Plan includes Policy E2 which seeks to restrict the loss of industrial / business land and premises to other uses unless one or more of certain defined criteria are satisfied. We recommend that this policy be retained and expanded in the appropriate Local Development Document to take into account the above considerations and also the different levels of protection given to different sites in the employment hierarchy.
- D : Monitoring**
- 2.96 In order to maintain a robust basis for assessing proposals and keeping employment policies up to date, it is important that the Council monitor and keep under regular review the following:
- n Employment land supply, including commitments outside of identified local plan sites. Monitoring of site area and floorspace information should be carried out. Where possible B1 classes should be split into offices (B1a), and, research and development and light industrial sites (B1b&c) to allow for detailed monitoring of land take up and trend analysis. This allows for a more robust approach in terms of the assessment of land supply in the context of planning use class and importantly market sectors.
 - n Where possible business relocations and expansions into and out of the Borough (through planning applications).
 - n The Council undertakes relatively frequent agents forum meetings. To keep up to date of market issues, we would recommend that these forum meetings continue to help assess key issues facing the Borough.
- 2.97 Implementation of monitoring recommendations will be important in order to properly apply criteria. Consideration could also be given to developing a

Supplementary Planning Document to elaborate on the policy criteria and their implementation.

E : Need for Additional Employment Land (up to 2021)

- 2.98 As illustrated in Table 10.5, in broad quantitative terms, overall current land supply exceeds minimum forecast requirements. There is a particular surplus for manufacturing.
- 2.99 This being said, as noted previously there is a mismatch between supply in terms of its distribution across the district. More particularly, we recommend that consideration be given to increasing currently available land supply in Harrogate town and future longer-term supply in Boroughbridge through the LDF process to provide a more geographically balanced employment land portfolio relative to the scale of local populations and sub-markets. Given the nature of the Borough, it will also be important to ensure an appropriate supply of employment opportunities in the rural area.

Harrogate

- n Although the St James' Park allocation in Knaresborough will also contribute towards the future employment needs of Harrogate town, supply in Harrogate town itself in terms of available land is limited for a town of this size and the role it plays in the Borough's economy. Also, existing supply in the Harrogate town and Knaresborough sub areas are generally focused towards larger scale requirements.
- n Although Harrogate town's economy is focused towards the office sector, there will also be a need to make future provision for the other employment sectors to robustly meet future requirements and (latent) demand.
- n In considering future provision it should be ensured that sites are suitable to accommodate a range of user requirements. This would include ensuring that sites are able to deliver opportunities for SMEs given the lack of currently available employment allocations which cater for smaller requirements.

Boroughbridge

- n Although there is not an immediate need for further employment allocations, available opportunities for new employment development in Boroughbridge are limited. There will be a need to enhance medium and longer term supply to capitalize on the location of Boroughbridge in relation to the area's strategic road network.
- n Consideration could be given to identifying land to the rear of Poplars Industrial Estate as a longer term employment / mixed use opportunity together with land and buildings in the trading estate itself (also see specific recommendations relating to mixed use and wider redevelopment opportunities). This would consolidate future supply in Boroughbridge and promote its employment location within the A1(M) corridor.

Rural Areas

- n The decline in agricultural employment means that more residents in the rural parts of the District will require employment other than in agriculture.
- n The drive towards sustainable communities supports appropriate employment development within the rural area. This can be achieved from working from home although for others, more formal business premises will be needed. The conversion of rural buildings will likely be an important and sustainable source of such premises and it is recommended that the LDF provides appropriate policy protection and support for such development.