



Airtech, Crawley

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AIRTECH, JENNER RD, MANOR ROYAL, CRAWLEY, W. SUSSEX, RH10 9GA

BRIEF

This document has been prepared by Barton Willmore on behalf of Citicourt Investment Partners Limited in response to the Project Briefing Meeting held on Wednesday, 23 March 2005. A subsequent site visit was made by Nigel Normington on 18 April 2005 to identify key site constraints and opportunities with the site boundary confirmed by the client on 24 May 2005.

The initial brief requests an analysis of Airtech, Crawley (and adjacent vacant land areas), its context, constraints, future opportunities and identify the potential design principles for the site.

The primary objectives of this redevelopment feasibility report were initially established as:

- Analysis and appraisal of the site and adjacent land and properties.
- Surrounding land context and constraints impacting on the site.
- Examine and appraise the planning history for the site and current planning guidelines and legislation at national, regional and local levels with regard to redevelopment of the site.
- Identify potential general design principles and concepts for the site for future discussion with letting agents and client.
- Identify specific future redevelopment options for both the existing building and general site, including possible expansion and alternative use for the existing building.
- Examine options for current and future tenants and alternative letting opportunities.

Specific objectives identified for site.

- Examine options for replacement of existing B1 office use with new B2 or B8 units.
- Establish acceptable access, turning heads and servicing requirements for B2/B8 units.
- Examine parking and office provision for B2, B8 units and possible elevational treatment.
- Examine phasing options for construction works and possible partial retention of existing offices with new B2/B8 units.

Initial planning guidance was provided by Tim Burden (Barton Willmore – Planning), tel: 0118 943 0105.

This report has been prepared incorporating all information available at the present time and should be considered an initial appraisal of the site and its future potential leading to future detailed design analysis and investigations by other consultants where identified and appropriate.

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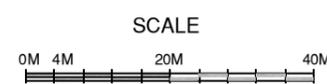
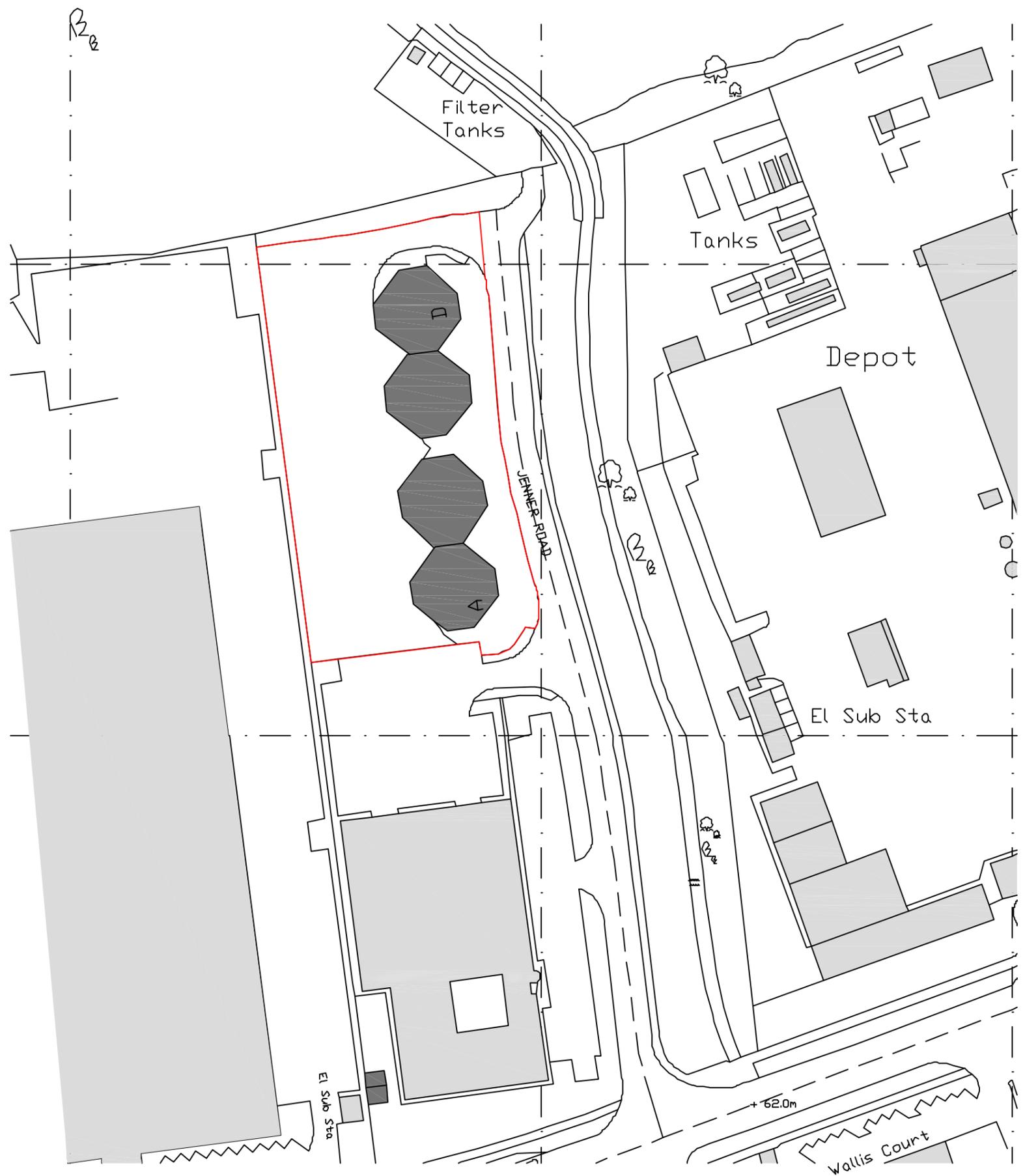
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DRAWING BASED ON O.S. BAASE RECEIVED 19.05.05

Project
**AIRTECH
 CRAWLEY**
 Drawing Title
Site Plan

Date May 2005	Scale 1:1000 @ A3	Drawn by AB
Project No 13817	Drawing No SK001	Revision

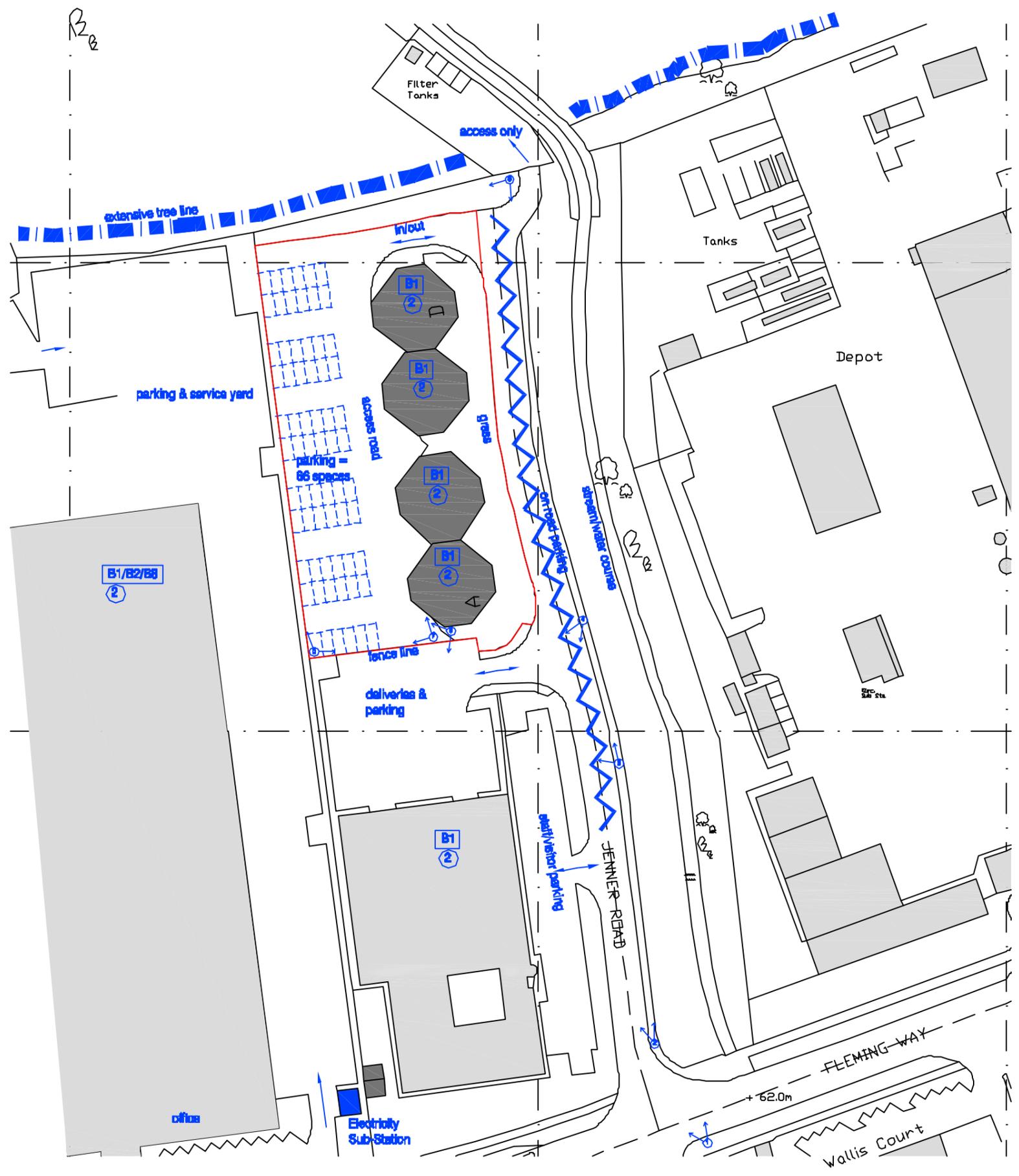


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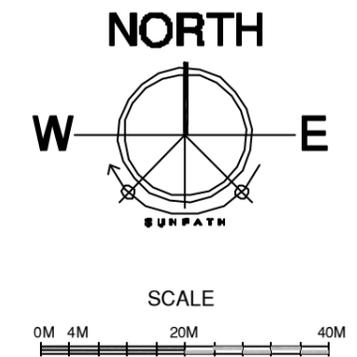


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- Key ;**
- A? Use class
 - ③ Storey height
 - ⓪ Photo reference point
 - ★ Air conditioning/services plant location - TBC
 - Legal Boundary
 - ⚡ Possible noise/traffic source

- Notes;**
- * Parking - numbers indicated taken from site photographs only
 - * Approx. building area = 189.1sq.m (based on O.S. information only)
 - * Site Area 0.43 ha



DRAWING BASED ON O.S. BASE RECEIVED 19.05.05
LEGAL DRAWINGS RECEIVED FROM CLIENT DATED 24.05.05
AND SITE VISIT BY N. NORMINGTON 18TH APRIL 2005

Project
AIRTECH CRAWLEY

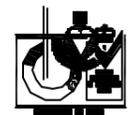
Drawing Title
Site Analysis and Appraisal

Date May 2005	Scale 1:1000 @ A3	Drawn by AB
Project No 13817	Drawing No SK002	Revision

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April 2005	-	MS
Project No	Drawing No	Revision
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Project No	Drawing No	Revision
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PLANNING GUIDANCE

Introduction

The site lies within the Manor Royal Industrial Estate which is identified on the Local Plan Proposals Map of the adopted Local Plan as a main employment area forming the largest of the commercial areas in Crawley. The site has good access to the A23 London Road and Gatwick Road, providing direct access to junctions 9 and 10 of the M23 and the M25 beyond. Manor Royal is characterised by B1/B2 and B8 uses as well as car showrooms. Proposals to extend the range of commercial/industrial uses within this location would be entirely appropriate.

Relevant Planning History

A copy of the planning history for the site has been supplied by Crawley Borough Council following a written request. This is enclosed as an appendix to this report for your information. It is noted that the history largely relates to a number of advertisement consents, as well as an application in 1994 for the change of use of an existing mezzanine to office space. No decision appears to have been made in relation to this application. We have been advised that should we wish to ascertain earlier planning history of the site a manual search of the Council's records would need to be undertaken at their offices. This has not however been undertaken for the purposes of this appraisal.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

PPG 1 – General Policy and Principles

The guidance indicates at paragraph 21 that it is one of the Government's key aims is to encourage continued economic development in a way which is compatible with its stated environmental objectives.

PPG 4 - Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms (Nov, 1992)

The guidance notes that the introduction of the business use class (Class B1) allows greater flexibility to change between light industrial, office and research and development uses and introduces a clear distinction between business uses and general industry, based on environmental factors. The guidance goes on to indicate that the 1997 change in the Use Class Order (UCO) presents an opportunity for development plans to provide positively for enterprise and investment, whilst affording effective environmental protection and confirms that development plans should not generally contain restrictions on the freedom of the UCO and the General Development Order provide.

Paragraph 19 of the guidance confirms that it is preferable for buildings to be used appropriately than to stand wholly or partially empty and indicates that a flexible attitude with respect to use may be required to enable a suitable re-use or new uses to be instituted in under-used space. Paragraph 21 goes onto indicate that optimum use should be made of potential sites and existing premises. It is noted that the site is

located within an industrial site where B1, B2 and B8 uses should be regarded as appropriate and would not cause any detrimental impact on amenity or the environment in this location.

PPG4 stipulates that because a development is speculative in nature, it should not in itself result in a presumption against development. Paragraph 24 states:

“Planning applications for speculative development should be considered on their land-use planning merits: authorities should not normally seek to investigate whether the developer already has particular prospective purchasers or tenants; this will seldom be a material consideration.”

Paragraph 30 states that conditions should not be imposed which restrict either permitted development rights or future changes of use which the UCO would otherwise allow, save in exceptional circumstances, as the Secretary of State would regard this as unreasonable unless there were clear evidence that the uses excluded would have serious adverse effects on amenity or the environment.

PPG 13 - Transport (March, 2001)

The revised PPG 13, published in March 2001, confirms that the Government’s objectives relate to the promotion of more sustainable transport choices and a reduction in the need to travel, especially by car. This is intended to ensure that the planning system plays its part in the Government’s strategy on sustainable development.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The development plan comprises the West Sussex Structure Plan (adopted 1993) and the Crawley Borough Local Plan adopted in 2000. The West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 Deposit Draft was placed on deposit January/February 2002 followed by an Examination In Public in November/December 2002. The Panel Report was published in March 2003, following which the Council published the Deposit Draft incorporating the Proposed Modifications and other Changes in December 2003, in anticipation of adopting the Structure Plan in August/September 2004. An earlier revision of the Structure Plan had been considered at an EiP in 1997, but was not formally adopted, following a Direction by the Secretary of State.

A review of the Crawley Local Plan to 2016 is underway, however the Borough Council intends to produce the new Plan in the Local Development Framework style as set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill.

WEST SUSSEX STRUCTURE PLAN (ADOPTED 1993)

The West Sussex Structure Plan was adopted in 1993. The General Strategy of the Plan is set out in **Policy G1** and **Policy G2** seeks to ensure the provision of business development to supply sufficient jobs for the residential workforce and sufficient floorspace for the local economy to grow and adapt to new products and processes.

The West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 Deposit Draft including Proposed Modifications and other changes (December 2003) sets out its Policy relating to Employment Provision at **Policy NE4** which seeks to ensure, inter alia, that development for business, industry or

warehousing should be permitted provided that the accommodation is suited to the varied needs of local businesses and the release of existing employment land.

Policy NE7 relates more specifically to the North West of East Sussex and seeks to ensure, inter alia, that the best use is made of employment land.

Policy EA1 seeks to ensure that development in West Sussex makes the best use of land (including the reuse of existing buildings) taking into account the principles of DEV1, and provided that it does not prevent the future development of other areas of land. **Policy DEV1** seeks to ensure high quality development.

CRAWLEY BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN (ADOPTED 2000)

General development policies

Policy STRAT2 seeks to provide for sufficient development to meet the social and economic needs of the borough's existing and future inhabitants and to meet the needs of the local economy. **Policy STRAT3** indicates that in considering the location of new development, the Council will seek to minimise the need for the consumption of resources and energy usage and in particular the Council will take into account the need to, inter alia, make use of unused or underused land within the built up area.

Policies GD1, GD2, GD3 and GD5 seek to ensure, inter alia, that proposals will have a satisfactory standard of design and layout; relate sympathetically to its surroundings; and meet requirements for the safe and proper use of a site or building; and provide appropriate landscaping.

Policy GD4 seeks to ensure development proposals will not unduly restrict the development potential of adjoining land or prejudice the proper planning and phasing of development over a wider area.

Policy GD33 relates to Storage on Site stating:

"The Borough Council will permit the storage on site of vehicles, caravans, temporary buildings and other bulky materials unconnected with the main function of the site, only if such storage does not in any respect affect or limit the operational use of the site or give rise to any amenity problems such as intrusion into landscape areas."

The supporting text to the Policy notes at paragraph 3.50 that the use of surplus areas on some sites for various forms of storage can be a source of extra income and represent an efficient use of land assets. The text goes on to indicate that the encroachment of storage into car parking and service yards can give rise to problems for the main operation and use of the premises by, for instance, displacing cars onto nearby roads or by intruding into landscape areas affecting the amenity and appearance of sites. As such, in some cases the Council will seek agreements to control storage activities.

Policy E1 seeks to ensure employment generating development and the enhancement of the local economy is compatible with the environmental capacity and economic needs of the area.

Policy E2 states that provision is made for the development of approximately 340,000 sq. m. of floorspace for business, industrial and warehousing use between 1990 and 2006.

Policy E4 states that in order to ensure that the provision of employment floorspace accords with the Strategy policies of the Plan, the Borough Council will monitor the availability of land for employment development and the granting of planning permission for such purposes. Planning decisions and any future review or alteration of the Local Plan will be made in the light of this monitoring. Planning permission may be refused for employment development on unidentified sites if such provision is likely to result in pressure for housing greater than that acceptable under the housing policies of this Local Plan.

Policy E5 in relation to small firms states that proposals for new employment development will normally be permitted within the built up area additional to that in Policy E2 provided that:

- “(i) the proposal is for the erection or use of two or more small units normally less than 300 square metres in size to meet the needs of small firms;**
- (ii) there is evidence to show an insufficient supply of such units which is unlikely to be made good as a result of allocations in policy E3 or other proposals already approved;**
- (iii) the location is appropriate for employment use.”**

Policy E7 of the Plan seeks to ensure the protection of existing employment floorspace and indicates that any development, including changes of use that would result in a significant loss of existing office, industrial and warehousing floorspace within the main employment areas will not normally be permitted.

Policy E9 indicates that proposals for warehousing development will normally be permitted on sites allocated for B2 and B8 uses provided the level of traffic generation particularly that of very large vehicles will not cause serious problems for the surrounding area and its roads. The supporting text raises concerns relating to traffic generation and environmental effects arising from major warehouse uses distributed on a regional or national scale.

Policy E10 relates to the protection of industrial areas, indicating that proposals for office developments within the main employment areas which would result in a loss of industrial and warehousing floorspace will not normally be permitted unless: i) the existing use causes significant environmental/amenity and/or safety problems, ii) the number of jobs arising is not significantly in excess of those that existing or could have existed previously on the site using average ratios for worker to industrial and warehousing floorspace, iii) where proposals are likely to result in a significant increase in the number of jobs on the site, it can be demonstrated that this would not give rise to pressure for housing greater than that accepted under Plan policies.

Policy E16 relates to development or redevelopment proposals at the Manor Royal Estate. It states that in order to provide for the needs of high technology and other firms on the Manor Royal Estate, the Borough Council will:

- “(i) require all sites to be developed or redeveloped to a high standard of design and environmental quality;**
- (ii) implement measures to improve and maintain the quality of the environment;**
- (iii) encourage the provision and implementation of support facilities for businesses on Manor Royal.”**

PROSPECTS OF ACHIEVING B1/B2 OR B8 DEVELOPMENT ON THE SITE

The prospects of achieving consent for the redevelopment of the site for either a B8 use or a mixed B1/B2 use are considered to be extremely good. The site is in a highly sustainable location, with good public transport links, and in a popular location close to Gatwick Airport. It is considered that there are a number of issues that would need to be further examined in order to achieve a commercial consent at the site. It is noted that under policy E17 of the Local Plan that the Council is likely to resist the loss of the B1 office space at the site. This is reinforced by policy E4 which refers to monitoring of the availability of employment land as set out above.

It is however noted that recent government guidance places the emphasis on the Council to demonstrate the need for the B1 office space through the commissioning of up to date employment land surveys to justify why a commercial use should not be developed for housing or an alternative use. Nonetheless, it appears that the Council may still strongly resist the loss of this office space, and it is suggested that an appropriate marketing / office availability report is commissioned from an appropriate consultant to examine office supply in the Borough in order to justify that the loss of this site would not undermine the Council's overall employment land strategy. It is clear that as the buildings have not been fully let that there is not the level of demand that may be suggested by the Council and that the site could be put to more productive use in terms of employment generating activities.

We are also aware however that the Council have been trying to 'raise the profile' of the Manor Royal estate by encouraging high quality buildings and materials, and especially trying to promote it as an office location rather than for B2 or B8 uses. This should be bared in mind in taking any proposals forward at the site.

CONCLUSIONS

It is considered that the redevelopment of this underused site would facilitate an enhancement of the local economy and help to meet the economic needs of the area. The existing development, in our opinion, does not make the best use of the site and its redevelopment would yield a greater level of floorspace than the existing development. B1, B2 and B8 uses are all considered to be appropriate uses within this industrial estate. However the fundamental issue of the loss of B1 employment space will need to be overcome in order to allay any concerns that the Council may have in this regard if it is to be replaced with either B2 or B8 uses.

We are also aware that there may be issues with regard to traffic generation from the redeveloped site and that this is an area which the Council has expressed concern in relation to similar redevelopment proposals in the vicinity. As such, it is recommended that a Transport Assessment is undertaken to ascertain existing traffic flows and those likely to be generated from the proposed development.

The site is also located on the edge of the industrial estate, and a landscape buffer zone is likely to be required by the Council for the area to the north of the site, in order to minimise views into the site and reinforce the existing landscaping, particularly as the proposed buildings are likely to be somewhat larger than the existing development.

Recommendations

- 1) As it is considered that the principle of the redevelopment of this site is acceptable, it is considered advisable to enter into detailed pre-application discussions with Council Officers to ensure that all matters are satisfactorily addressed in any future planning application on the site;
- 2) In particular it is considered that the matter of s106 contributions should be discussed, particularly with regard to the level of contributions, if any, that the Council will seek for the proposal;
- 3) We would advise that a consultant is commissioned to provide a marketing / employment land supply report to accompany any application. It may also be necessary to provide further transport advice, although it is likely that the proposed residential use would have a lower trip generation than the existing office use;
- 4) We would advise that a transport consultant is commissioned to undertake a Transport Assessment of the existing and proposed uses to accompany any application;
- 5) We would advise that a detailed landscaping scheme is submitted with any application given the site's sensitive location on the edge of the industrial estate. It may also be necessary to provide a landscape and visual assessment, although this should be investigated firstly with the Council and may not be required;
- 6) We would advise that a full planning application should be submitted as soon as possible following pre-application discussions with Council Officers. The submission should be supported by a Planning Statement setting out how the proposal complies with relevant national and local plan policies and should address the matters raised previously in this letter.

AIRTECH, JENNER RD, MANOR ROYAL, CRAWLEY, W. SUSSEX, RH10 9GA

APPENDIX

CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING DECISIONS FOR THE WEEK ENDING FRIDAY 27 MAY 2005

Crawley Borough Council

Planning Decisions for the Week Ending Friday, 27 May 2005

Application Number	Location	Proposal	Decision Date	Decision	Type (*)
CR/2000/0619/ADV	MODULE A, AIRTECH II, JENNER ROAD, NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY.	DISPLAY OF ONE PVC BANNER	6 October 2000	CONSENT	D
CR/1997/0292/ADV	AIRTECH 1, JENNER ROAD, FLEMING WAY, NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY	ERECTION OF 2 INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGNS, 2 TOP LIT FASCIA SIGNS AND 2 FREE STANDING SIGNS	11 July 1997	APPROVE	D
CR/1996/0655/ADV	AIRTECH 1 (PLANT 5), JENNER ROAD NORTHGATE RH102GA	DISPLAY OF TWO ESTATE AGENT SIGN BOARDS	29 January 1997	APPROVE	D
CR/1995/0246/ADV	PLANT 5A, AIRTECH TWO, JENNER ROAD, NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY	ERECTION OF ONE NON-ILLUMINATED FREESTANDING LETTING BOARD	23 June 1995	APPROVE	D
CR/1994/0599/COU	PLANT 5 (AIRTECH 1), JENNER ROAD, NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY	CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING STORAGE MEZZANINE TO OFFICE SPACE AND PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL PARKING SPACES			
CR/1993/0507/ADV	HUGHES REDIFFUSION SIMULATION LIMITED, PLANT 5, AIRTECH ONE, JENNER ROAD, CRAWLEY, WEST	TWO NO. FREESTANDING AGENTS MARKETING BOARDS.	18 October 1993	APPROVE	D

(*) 'C' in this column indicates where the decision was made by members of the Development Control Committee. 'D' indicates the decision was delegated to the Head of Planning Services in accordance with the Council's constitution.

Crawley Borough Council

Planning Decisions for the Week Ending Friday, 27 May 2005

Application Number	Location	Proposal	Decision Date	Decision	Type (*)
CR/1993/0506/ADV	SUSSEX. HUGHES REDIFFUSION SIMULATION LIMITED, PLANT 5A, AIRTECH TWO, JENNER ROAD, CRAWLEY, WEST SUSSEX.	TWO NO. FREESTANDING AGENTS MARKETING BOARDS.	18 October 1993	APPROVE	D

(*) 'C' in this column indicates where the decision was made by members of the Development Control Committee. 'D' indicates the decision was delegated to the Head of Planning Services in accordance with the Council's constitution.

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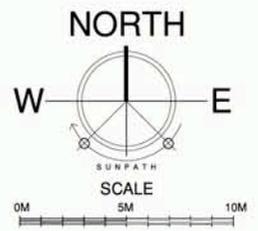
Redevelopment Options

Conclusion



Notes / Schedule Of Areas (Approx)

- CREATION OF 4no. B1/B2 UNITS AT 488 sq m / 5250 sq ft EACH (Excluding 1st Floor Office Areas)
- Total Floor Area 1952 sq m / 21,000 sq ft
- Approx 30-36 Parking Spaces - TBC
- Restricted Service Yard Arrangement Viable By Introduction Of Central Turning Area - Maximising Unit Plot Size Within Site Area
- Visitor/Disabled Parking Provided Adjacent To Entrance Areas To Units
- Possible 2 Storey Office Accommodation If Required
- 2no. Existing Office Buildings Could Be Retained If Only 2no. B1/B2 Units Were Constructed (Phased Development)



Project
**AIRTECH
 CRAWLEY**
 Drawing Title
**Sketch Proposals
 Option 1**

Date June 2005	Scale 1:250 @ A3 1:500 @ A4	Drawn by NC / GC
Project No 13817	Drawing No SK003	Revision

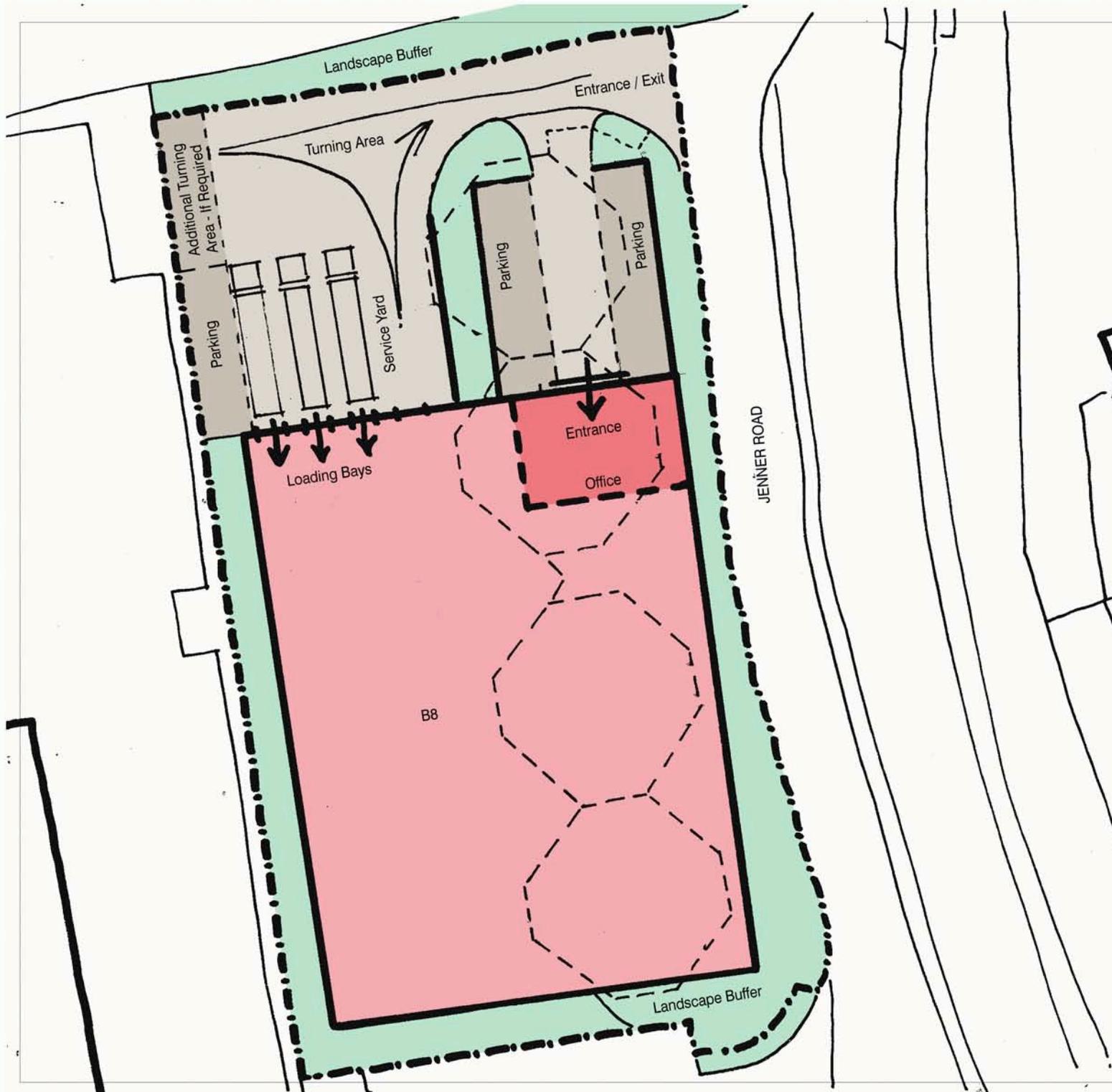


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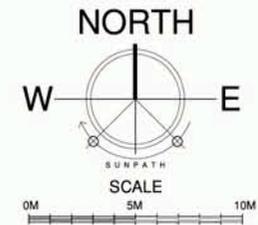


Associated offices at: Bristol Cambridge Edinburgh Leeds London West Malling (Kent)



Notes / Schedule Of Areas (Approx)

- 1 no. B8 Unit 2200 sq m / 23,680 sq ft (Excluding 1st Floor Office Areas)
- Approx 15-26 Parking Spaces - TBC
- Indicative Service Yard Layout Illustrated - TBC



Project
**AIRTECH
 CRAWLEY**

Drawing Title
**Sketch Proposals
 Option 2**

Date
 June 2005

Scale
 1:250 @ A3
 1:500 @ A4

Drawn by
 NC / GC

Project No
 13817

Drawing No
 SK004

Revision



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CONCLUSION

Planning Context:

- The site is located within an existing industrial area therefore it is considered in planning policy terms that the redevelopment of the site for B1, B2 and B8 uses should be acceptable by the council.
- Detailed consideration should however be given to matters relating to employment land supply, transport and landscaping in any future redevelopment proposals.

Development Potential

- The existing site and access arrangement has allowed us to provide two new redevelopment options.
- Option 1 - 4 No B1/B2/B8 units with a total area of 1952 sq m (21,000 sq ft) providing the flexibility of phased construction to allow retention of two of the existing office units if required.
- Option 2 - 1 No B8 unit with a total areas of 2200 sq m (23,680 sq ft) with associated parking, service yard and office accommodation to the north

We believe this site in terms of both planning policies and physical attributes lends itself to redevelopment for uses more suited to its location.

Clearly with each of the above options it will be important that your decisions are informed by both local agent market advice and the legal constraints of existing leases.

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