

Shinfield Park Economic Benefits Statement

Shinfield Economic Analysis and Economic Benefits



Revision Schedule

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Executive Summary

This Economic Benefits Statement has been prepared by Stantec's Development Economics Team on behalf of Wrenbridge (FRELD Reading) LLP ("the Applicant") in relation to Shinfield Park, Reading ("the Site") to accompany the full planning application for redevelopment, comprising:

'Redevelopment of site for flexible employment use (Use Class E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8) together with associated servicing areas, parking, landscaping and other associated works'

This Statement sets out how the Proposed Development will contribute to sustainable economic growth through the redevelopment of a vacant and redundant site (the Application Site). In order to understand how the Proposed Development will align with Wokingham Council's economic growth aspirations, this Statement has reviewed existing and upcoming policy, along with evidence documents relating to need and future supply. These findings have been backed up with current market analysis, utilising CoStar, providing a contemporary picture of the office and industrial market within proximity to the Site.

Together this indicates that Wokingham Council will encourage redevelopment and upgrading of existing sites to make more efficient use of land and support meeting future economic needs, and acknowledge a change in current and future office market needs. This has resulted in the necessity to adjust how and what employment space is delivered to support sustainable growth. Local policy needs analysis and market research indicate a need to increase the delivery of industrial floorspace.

A review of the existing employment context and business profile within a 10 km radius of the Site has demonstrated a developing cluster of professional, technical and scientific, and information and communication businesses. A detailed review of the activities that make up these industries highlights how the provision of industrial floorspace, such as the Proposed Development, can directly and indirectly support a diverse spectrum of operations. Focusing on the developing film studio industry within the area for example, particularly the neighbouring Shinfield Studios, it is evident there is a need to support these developing industries directly, and also accommodate the local facilitating supply chain network.

Socio-economic research indicates that the labour force local to the Site is diverse and can support the employment needs of the Proposed Development. Currently the Site makes no contribution to the local labour market. The Proposed Development will provide a range of occupation and skill type opportunities, benefiting a diverse labour force.

The flexible nature of the Development enables it to best meet market needs. Based on a flexible use class assumption (Use Class E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8) the Site could support between 224 and 558 Gross Direct jobs, and a further 291 to 726 gross indirect jobs. A proportion of these jobs will be additional to the area and benefit Wokingham residents directly and throughout the supply chain. It is estimated that between 166 and 414 Wokingham residents could benefit directly and indirectly from the Proposed Development.



Shinfield Park Economic Benefits Statement

Executive Summary

Redevelopment of the Site will more efficiently deliver direct employment opportunities but also unlock the Site to contribute to sustainable economic growth within the area, providing the floorspace to facilitate supply chains and support growth industries.



1 Introduction

This Economic Benefits Statement has been prepared by Stantec's Development Economics Team on behalf of Wrenbridge (FRELD Reading) LLP ("the Applicant") in relation to Shinfield Park, Reading ("the Site") to accompany the full planning application for redevelopment, comprising:

'Redevelopment of site for flexible employment use (Use Class E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8) together with associated servicing areas, parking, landscaping and other associated works'

This Statement will establish the economic benefits of the Proposed Development, reviewing how the Development will align with sustainable national and local economic initiatives. The Report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 will review the site context and include the details of the proposed development.
- Section 3 will review the local policy need and market context in relation to redeveloping the Site and delivering the proposed flexible Use Class E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8 floorspace.
- Section 4 will review the supporting socio-economic context and employment growth, assessing how the Development will integrate and support the existing local labour force, as well as the current and developing business network surrounding area.
- Section 6 will define the potential economic benefits resulting from the Proposed Development. It will set out gross and net economic benefits of the Development in respect of employment generation and economic output (GVA) over both the construction and operational phases of development. This will review the potential local effect to Wokingham.
- Section 7 will provide a concise conclusion.



2 Current Context and Proposed Development

2.1 Current Context

The Site extends to 5.5 hectares and comprises an existing geometric shaped office building, referred to as Shire Hall. This includes 4-storeys of office floorspace plus basement parking. The Site also includes additional surface-level parking alongside a detached 3-storey modular office building (which was subject to a long-term temporary planning permission but has recently been removed).

The Site also contains internal access roads, two vacant bungalows and there are a number of existing, established trees. The area to the north-west and south-west of the main office building comprises mature woodland and ponds.

The Site is currently unoccupied, as of 2024. The previous occupants relocated to Green Park business park near J11 of the M4, seeking more modern adequate floorspace.

2.2 Proposed Development

The Proposed Development will deliver approximately 20,102 sqm of flexible Class E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8 floorspace. Redevelopment of the Site aims to provide modern and efficient space that will support the surrounding industry network and contribute local economic growth aspirations.

The Development will supply between five and six units, ranging from 1,106 sqm (GIA) to 8,030 sqm (GIA), as set out in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Proposed Development Floorspace

Unit	GIA (sqm)
1	8,030
2	3,799
3A	1,109
3B	1,106
4	2,593
5	3,468
Total	20,102



3 Policy Need Review and Market Context

The Proposed Development seeks to redevelop the Site into an effective and economical use. The Applicant seeks to align the Site with local growth plans and more efficiently meet market needs. This section will review the relevant economic policy shaping Wokingham's development trajectory and how the Development can contribute to economic growth aspirations and affiliate with the Council's vision for employment and industry growth.

This section will also review local market indicators, utilising CoStar analysis, to provide insight into current office and industrial market performance within the local area.

3.1 National Economic Growth Guidance

3.1.1 National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Paragraph 8 discusses the three overarching objectives that guide the delivery of sustainable development, two of which being economic and social development:

a) an economic objective: to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective: to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being;

Paragraph 85 refers to planning policies and decisions needing to create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It states that²:

¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 86, page 24



Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.

The NPPF notes that Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It emphasises a need place weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity and consider local business needs and the wider opportunities for development. The NPPF acknowledges a need to develop an area's strengths, which is highlighted as particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity. Based on this, polices should³:

Pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics;

Importantly, it is recognised (Paragraph 87) that planning decisions should acknowledge and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. The NPPF concludes that decision making should make provision for:

a) clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries (including data centres and grid connections);

b) storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation; and

c) the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.⁴

³ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 86, page 24

⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 87, page 24



3.1.2 Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy

Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy, due to be published in spring 2025, will set out the Government's vision for a modern industrial strategy centred on growth. Its primary objective is to drive growth, by taking advantage of the UK's unique strengths and untapped potential, enabling the UK's world-leading sectors to adapt and grow, and seizing opportunities to lead in new sectors.

Job creation is at the heart of the Strategy, supporting growth sectors to create high-quality, well-paid jobs across the country. The strategy will focus on tackling barriers to growth across the potentially growth-driving sectors and places, creating the right conditions for increased investment, and ensuring tangible impact in communities right across the UK.

The Proposed Development will act as a facilitating component to the proposed growth Strategy, redeveloping a currently redundant floorspace into a fully operation employment use. This will support and facilitate growth across the targeted growth areas.

3.2 Local Economic Growth Guidance

3.2.1 Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework (2010) – Adopted Core Strategy

The Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted January 2010) outlines the vision and policies for the development in Wokingham Borough up to 2026.

Policy CP15 Employment Development refers to redevelopment, refurbishment, or minor extensions of existing employment buildings in employment use being acceptable in principle. .

Policy CP15 also notes that any proposed changes of use from B1, B2 & B8 should not lead to an overall net loss of floorspace in B Use within the borough. Whilst the proposed redevelopment will reduce the floorspace on-site, it should be noted that the current vacant floorspace is redundant and inefficient. It is currently vacant and makes no contribution to the labour market or economy. aThe proposed redevelopment will generate a range of employment opportunities, making it more effective to the local labour force and economy. The redevelopment will bring the site back into economic use and remove surplus space. This should outweigh the loss of floorspace on-site.

3.3 Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (2017)

The Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan outlines the vision, policies and infrastructure plans for Shinfield Parish up to 2026. Business and commercial development encourages local businesses and commercial development to maintain local employment, similar to the Wokingham Local Plan. The parish seeks to achieve the highest standards of sustainability, ensuring Proposals for employment uses will contribute to the development of local employment. In particular, Policy 11: Commercial Development refers to 'proposals for (or that incorporate) employment uses may be supported where they do not conflict with other policies, and it can be demonstrated that:

- The scale of the development would complement the local area



- The scheme will contribute to the development of local employment and innovation (e.g. through the creation of live-work units)

3.4 Wokingham Local Plan Update 2023–2040 - Proposed Submission Plan

Work is underway on a new local plan – the Local Plan Update – which will put in place a new planning strategy for the period to 2040. The Local Plan Update: Proposed Submission Plan (Regulation 19) was published in September 2024.

The Plan emphasises that the Borough is an attractive location for a range of business sectors and services. Its proximity to London and Reading, location on the M4 corridor and rail connections have helped its commercial success.

The Plan notes that the key opportunities and challenges include:

- Continue to support and protect a range of employment opportunities across the borough.
- Supporting employment destinations to evolve to meet the changing need of business.

The vision set out within the Plan seeks to:

sustain successful economic growth, it is not enough just to sit back. New and evolving businesses will be supported with an environment that allows businesses to adapt to changes in practice and technology. The emphasis will be on sustainable economic development, of the right type and in the right place to meet employment needs.⁵

The objectives set out within the draft Plan include the enabling of conditions to allow the economy to creatively grow by being adaptable to structural and technological change, ensuring the economic benefits are felt by all.

Paragraph 4.16 notes that major new economic development has also come forward at the Thames Valley Science and Innovation Park, including Shinfield Studios, the British Museum and Natural History Museum. These significant new developments highlight the recent changes to the economy, and how the Borough is well placed to take advantage of these new opportunities.

The draft Plan emphasises the need to understand the impacts of changes to the economy, and new and flexible working practices, increased demand for warehousing and logistics space, and the rise of new creative industries locally⁶.

⁵ Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update: Proposed Submission Plan 2023-2040, paragraph 3.18

⁶ Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update: Proposed Submission Plan 2023-2040, paragraph 4.18



With regards to employment, the draft Plan discusses Wokingham's favourable positioning nearby London and Reading and its location on the M4 corridor. The draft Plan highlights the proportion of economically active residents alongside the high education level of the population. It highlights the protection and support of employment opportunities across the Borough as a key opportunity, alongside the need for employment destinations to meet the changing needs of business.

Draft Policy SS1: Sustainable Development Principles, refers to ways in which development proposals might contribute towards sustainable development. It includes the ability to contribute towards meeting the local needs of business and residents. This includes proposal that add to the diversity of jobs and businesses, and help form clusters of complementary businesses.

Draft Policy SS8: Meeting Employment Needs states:

The sustainable growth of office and industrial space will be supported to meet the diverse needs of the local economy. The appropriate intensification, redevelopment and upgrading of existing sites and premises will be encouraged and supported to ensure the efficient use of land, help meet future demands and respond to modern business needs.¹

It discusses the delivery of employment floorspace within Thames Valley Science and Innovation Park, Shinfield, and also encourages appropriate intensification, redevelopment and upgrading of existing sites to make more efficient use of land and support meeting future economic needs. The Proposed Development will redevelop a redundant space, delivering employment uses that will support growth across key industries in the locality.

Paragraph 5.6 goes on to comment⁷:

Wokingham Borough is in the heart of the Thames Valley and plays an important role in the continued economic success of the region and is home to many multinational corporations with expertise across the key sectors of digital technology, life sciences and healthcare, and energy and environment, alongside a highly skilled workforce. Thousands of smaller businesses together ensure the Wokingham economy remains buoyant and attractive to investors.

Based on this it is evident that the Proposed Development could play an important role in facilitating demand and growth across a growing industry profile. The Proposed Development will deliver modern business premises, attractive to occupiers and investors, helping to grow and sustain the area's economic success.

⁷ Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update: Proposed Submission Plan 2023-2040, paragraph 5.61

3.5 Wokingham Borough Council Employment Land Needs Review (2023)

In 2023 the Employment Land Needs Review (ELR) was published. This supersedes the 2020 study and provides an updated assessment of the future employment land needs in Wokingham Borough. The ELR takes into account recent changes to the economy and working practices, including increases in remote working, the growth of demand for warehousing and logistics space, alongside local changes such as the increased demand for film studio space. The term 'Industrial' refers to both warehousing and industrial (E(g)(iii)), B2 and B8). Key office and industrial market findings are set out below.

3.5.1 The Office Market

The ELR identifies the current office market trends and diversifying needs that will guide development across Wokingham. It is evident that the market has observed a shift that will influence how existing office development is utilised and new office development is delivered. The ELR comments that before the pandemic, speculative office development was only occurring in strong and established office markets such as in London, Thames Valley (e.g. around Reading) and key regional centres such as Birmingham and Manchester. In other markets new development required a pre-let in place to a blue-chip covenant. At that time there was a shift in requirements from out of town locations to town and city centres driven by staff wanting to be closer to public transport links and amenities⁸.

During the pandemic, the government encouraged working from home measures resulting in many offices being unoccupied or at greatly reduced occupancy. Companies were forced to embrace home working, technology and other measures to ensure business continuity. The ELR recognises that these changes in working practices brought forward during the pandemic are likely to have a lasting impact with most companies now allowing some form of working from home to continue, either fully remote or hybrid (i.e. a certain number of days per week). The change in working practices has led to many companies reassessing their real estate footprint⁹.

This is driven by a desire to create a vibrant and attractive work environment to encourage employees back to the office and assist with recruitment, retention and productivity strategies, as well as staff health and wellbeing issues. In addition, there is a greater focus on buildings that are sustainable and energy-efficient, as occupiers try to meet increasingly ambitious Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) aspirations. The current building on-site was constructed in the 1980s and would not perform well with regards to its energy performance. We would therefore consider the building functionally obsolete.

The ELR notes there are examples of office allocations in Reading that have been released for industrial use, and in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead developers are now looking to

⁸ Wokingham Borough Council, Employment Lands Needs Review, Paragraph .1

⁹ Wokingham Borough Council, Employment Lands Needs Review, Paragraph 4.12



redevelop non-prime office parks for logistics use. Land for all employment uses across the Thames Valley is in short supply, both the Royal Borough and Bracknell Forest have struggled to find sites, and repeated 'call for sites' have failed to generate suitable new options¹⁰.

Wokingham's office market is found to offer a mix of local, affordable spaces and modern facilities that cater to diverse business needs. Out-of-town business parks like Green Park, Thames Valley Park, and Winnersh Triangle host Grade A office floorspace with distinct features and amenities, attracting corporate occupiers in sectors like TMT, professional services, and pharmaceuticals.

Areas such as Molly Millars and Ruscombe Business Park predominantly appeal to small and medium-sized businesses due to more dated and cost-effective stock. While the University of Reading's Whiteknights Campus supports micro-businesses and specialises in research and innovation. Thames Valley Park has faced challenges like high vacancy rates and fragmented corporate ownership. Stakeholder discussions have revealed a desire to consolidate their focus on smaller units of better quality¹¹.

The shift in demand is also highlighted by growth in other industries. One such example is Shinfield Studios which will offer 18 purpose-built sound stages, offices, and post-production facilities. The first phase, with 14,000 sqm across four stages, is already operational, while the second phase will add 70,000 sqm of facilities. To reach its full potential, Shinfield Studios will require support from additional employment spaces, such as logistics and warehouses, to maintain an efficient supply chain, increasing the demand for space locally.

Additionally, Shinfield will house a 15,500 sqm British Museum Archaeological Research Facility and a global research hub for the Natural History Museum by 2026, enhancing Shinfield's role as a significant centre for creativity and research.

3.5.1.1 Demand for Office Space

The demand for office space in Wokingham mirrors trends in the Thames Valley, focusing on technology, media, telecommunications (TMT), professional services, and pharmaceuticals. The Borough attracts diverse businesses, from micro-enterprises to large multinational corporations. However, a shift toward smaller, higher-quality spaces is noted, with total floorspace take-up declining since the pandemic, though transaction numbers remain steady. Prominent business areas like Winnersh Triangle and Green Park show active leasing, driven by amenities and diversified usage, while Molly Millars and Ruscombe Business Park experience lower activity due to their dated facilities.

Smaller hubs like Hogwood Industrial Estate and Shinfield Studios see limited office take-up, reflecting their niche functions and local business appeal. Meanwhile, town-centre transactions are modest, with small-scale units dominating demand. Notable activity includes Thames Valley Park showing recovery signs, and University of Reading's Whiteknights Campus attracting specialised

¹⁰ Wokingham Borough Council, Employment Lands Needs Review, Paragraph 1.7

¹¹ Wokingham Borough Council, Employment Lands Needs Review, Paragraph 4.37



occupiers in science and engineering. The overall trend suggests a demand for flexible, modern spaces tailored to evolving corporate needs. This highlights that larger businesses are seeking high quality space whilst more dated facilities are experiencing lower demand.

Wokingham Borough has approximately 102,514 sqm of available office space, representing 26% of the total stock of 398,000 sqm—a high availability rate compared to demand. Thames Valley Park and Winnersh Triangle account for half of this availability, offering a mix of large and small units, with Thames Valley Park rebranding to target smaller occupiers and enhance flexibility. Green Park's vacancy is low, offering high-quality office spaces across two buildings. Other areas like Molly Millars, Whiteknights Campus, Ruscombe Business Park, and Hogwood Industrial Estate have limited availability, mostly smaller units, reflecting local market demands.

Larger developments like Shinfield Studios do not currently offer office space, but ongoing refurbishments and strategic repurposing across the Borough are expected to align office stock better with current and emerging requirements. Market rents for offices in Wokingham have plateaued as of Q2 2022, aligning with inflation over the past decade. There is increasing rent polarisation with higher rents for new or refurbished spaces, whilst secondary spaces are experiencing low rents indicating a lack of demand.

3.5.1.2 Office Demand - Conclusion

Demand for office space in Wokingham Borough focuses on high-quality, amenity-rich locations such as Green Park, Winnersh Triangle, and Thames Valley Park, with safeguarding recommended for Green Park's expansion to meet future demand. There is potential, in line with the Wokingham Employment Land Needs Review (2023), for selectively released land that meets modern office needs in prominent locations.

3.5.2 Industrial Market

Before the pandemic, industrial demand focused on strategic warehousing for online retailers and 3PLs, alongside flexible small-to-mid-sized units in well-landscaped environments. During the pandemic, demand for strategic warehousing surged due to increased online sales, while small and mid-sized units were re-purposed for critical needs.

Post-pandemic, strategic warehousing demand has cooled as online sales plateau and occupiers grow into existing space, but vacancy for small and mid-sized units remains low due to limited new builds. In the Thames Valley/West London, industrial supply has tightened significantly, constrained by greenbelt restrictions and developer focus on higher-value residential projects, prompting redevelopment of existing employment areas for industrial use.

Wokingham Borough's industrial market includes a range of established locations catering to diverse occupiers. Key areas like Winnersh Triangle and Sutton Industrial Estate attract sectors such as science, manufacturing, and logistics due to their high-quality units and excellent transport links, while Molly Millars and Headley Road East offer modern, flexible spaces suitable for trade counters, manufacturers, and storage. Smaller estates like Toutley and Ruscombe focus on servicing local businesses with dated but functional units, while Hogwood Industrial Estate provides lower-cost



options for micro to medium-sized firms. Ongoing regeneration across the Borough is modernising facilities to align with contemporary occupier needs.

3.5.2.1 Demand for Industrial Space

The analysis highlights a constrained industrial property market in Wokingham Borough, with only 15,172 sqm of available industrial space (3.31% of total stock) as of May 2022, falling significantly below the 5–8% availability typically required for a functional market. Vacancy levels, described as "uncomfortably low" by stakeholders, equate to just six months' supply when compared to the annual take-up rate of 30,832 sqm. Availability is uneven across industrial areas, with no units in some locations and limited options for micro, small, or large-scale businesses in others. Rents have risen steadily, with market rent reaching £145 psm in Q2 2022, outpacing inflation by a significant margin. While these rents support maintenance and refurbishment, higher rates seen in specific deals indicate potential for speculative development, reflecting the tight market dynamics.

Wokingham Borough has several opportunities for industrial development. At Arborfield Garrison, the extension of Hogwood Industrial Estate could add 12,000 sqm of space, suitable for small to medium-sized businesses, despite its limited motorway access. The Grazeley site, previously proposed for a mixed-use development, now faces constraints due to the expanded Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) around AWE Burghfield. However, its proximity to M4 Junction 11 and other positive attributes make it a potential site for strategic industrial uses, with capacity for up to 372,000 sqm of space and large-scale units, though DEPZ constraints remain a challenge. Additionally, land south of Bridge Farm Business Park in Arborfield could support industrial growth, focusing on micro to medium-sized units catering to local demand.

3.5.3 Industrial Market - Conclusion

Wokingham Borough faces strong demand for industrial space across all unit sizes, but limited supply and suitable sites, there is the suggested need for continued intensification, sub-regional collaboration, and proactive consideration of viable new sites.

3.5.4 Future Floorspace

3.5.4.1 Office

The analysis shows a surplus of office floorspace in Wokingham Borough, with current supply exceeding demand by approximately 47,000 sqm due to declining demand and high vacancy rates exacerbated by the post-COVID economic transition. While office job growth is expected to return gradually, there is no market appetite for new developments, and surplus stock provides flexibility for future needs, particularly for foreign direct investment. However, cautious and selective release of surplus sites should be considered, prioritising those with low market interest, both pre- and post-COVID, to align with sustainable development goals. Low-cost office space remains in high demand for smaller firms, so it should not be automatically released. Proactively managing surplus stock could help the Council defend against speculative loss applications and shape its supply to meet wider strategic objectives.



3.5.4.2 Industrial

The assessment of past trends and economic forecasts indicates varying industrial land requirements for Wokingham Borough. Past trends show positive job growth (259 per annum over the past decade) and floorspace changes suggesting a need for 12 ha. Economic forecasts indicate a need for approximately 6 ha, adjusted for vacancies and boosted by an additional 6 ha for jobs related to Shinfield Studios. The minimum industrial land requirement is thus set at 18 ha, considering current trends and immediate sector needs. However, to ensure continued growth, the ELR concludes that the plan should project a total land requirement of 53 ha, accounting for long-term job growth. While intensified redevelopment of existing spaces is part of the strategy, the Council should also provide land for expansion, ensuring that land is made available proactively and in sufficient quantity to meet future demand.

3.6 Wokingham Borough Council Topic Paper: Employment (2024)

The Wokingham Borough Council Topic Paper provides background to the economic strategy and policies in the local plan update (LPU) for Wokingham Borough.

The paper updates the ER, to cover the period 2023 – 2040. It provides a net need figure of 24,741 sqm of new industrial space and an oversupply of over 15,531 sqm of office space. The Proposed Development therefore provides an opportunity to redevelop current excess office space into industrial space. The paper further explains that there is no need to allocate new employment land because the existing employment land is sufficient, although it may require a change in use.

3.7 Market Indicators

Using updated property market analysis indicators from CoStar, Stantec have assessed the current market position in relation to the conclusions underlined in the Wokingham Employment Land Needs Assessment (2023).

3.7.1 Office Market

The Co-Star submarkets of Reading Central, Reading Fringe, and Wokingham have been selected to assess the current demand for office floorspace within an area local to the Site.

Since 2022, the office vacancy rate as a percentage of total stock has broadly plateaued around 16%. This is over the 7% equilibrium highlighting excess supply in the market. Similarly, the availability rate peaked in 2022 at just over 19%, falling to just over 16% in 2025. This further demonstrating over supply in the market despite some stock, likely new or refurbished stock, being absorbed.

The net deliveries of office space from 2022 onwards indicate that a small amount of space has been lost in this time, whilst office vacancy rates have broadly stayed the same. This means that despite space in the market being lost there remains an oversupply. There has not been any significant deliveries of floorspace since 2020.



Between 2020 and 2025 (Q1) the vacancy rate for larger office floorspace, over 4,645 sqm, has increased from 14.3% to 20.4%.

The availability rate shows a similar picture in that it is currently 21.1% up from 18.1% in 2020. No new large office space has been delivered since Q4 2020 implying a lack of demand in the market for larger office floorspace and therefore no need for the development of new office space, particularly large campus style office spaces.

3.7.2 Industrial Market

The Co-Star market of Berkshire and North Hampshire have been analysed to understand the relevant logistics and warehouse markets tend. The market area for this sector is slightly larger than the office market area given the focus on transport and accessibility.

The industrial vacancy rate in this market is currently 5.8%, under the 7% equilibrium indicating that there is a shortage of supply in the market. The vacancy rate has been under the 7% equilibrium for over 10 years indicating a historic shortage of demand.

There remains an undersupply despite the number of buildings under construction reaching a new high of 38,000 sqm in Q1 2024, since the previous peak 2020. This coupled with the continuing low vacancy rates indicates the supply and demand imbalance in the market. Even when supply is increased, there is still suppressed demand.

Analysis was undertaken to assess the availability of stock comparable in size to the that of the Proposed Development (i.e. between 1,000 sqm – 8,000 sqm). It was found that most of the available stock was construction around 1992 meaning most of the buildings are at the end of their economic life. Economic life for logistics and warehouse buildings is around 25 years anything older than this is deemed to be no longer fit for purpose given it doesn't meet occupiers current, modern requirements. The age of available stock highlights the need for modern industrial stock within the Berkshire and North Hampshire market area to meet occupiers needs.

3.8 Summary

The Wokingham Borough planning framework emphasises the protection and support of employment development across various policy documents. The Core Strategy (2010) and Managing Development Delivery Document (2014) aim to prevent the net loss of employment floorspace. The Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (2017) aligns with these objectives by encouraging local business growth. The Wokingham Local Plan Update (2023–2040) further reinforces this by recognising the Borough's need to adapt employment spaces to evolving business demands while safeguarding job opportunities.

Wokingham Borough's office market is shifting towards modern, sustainable spaces driven by hybrid working trends, while surplus outdated offices are better suited for redevelopment. Industrial demand remains strong, with constrained supply necessitates new developments and site intensification.

The ELR has identified need for 53 hectares of land to accommodate industrial long-term growth, particularly to support growing sectors such as TV and film. Shinfield Studios is a major economic



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driver within the area, requiring additional logistics and warehousing to support its operations. Shinfield Studios will necessitate additional employment land to support the supply chain, given its significance as a major employer and industry in the region.

Updated indicators provided by CoStar analysis suggest that there is still excess supply in the office market and limited supply in the industrial market. Redundant office space, such as the existing floorspace on-site, presents an opportunity to rebalance the market to ensure sufficient supply in the industrial market.

The Wokingham Borough Council Topic Paper concludes no additional office land is needed due to surplus stock and lower grade offices may need redevelopment.

The current building on the Site would be considered functionally obsolete and does not comply with modern market requirements and environmental standards. Current trends dictate that large occupiers, such as the previous tenants, are looking for smaller flexible floorspace in office park locations such as Green Park. This location provides modern high-quality accommodation and supporting amenities, with a business cluster environment.

The Proposed Development could deliver essential logistics and warehousing facilities in Wokingham, relieving supply constraints and supporting key industries, including Shinfield Studios.



4 Supporting Socio Economic Context and Employment Growth

Local policy and market indicators confirm that the Site in its current state would not be attractive in the current market and presents the opportunity to redevelop and make more efficient use of the land. The Council's assessment of need (Section 3) has identified that existing commercial uses could be better utilised to support industrial growth, which in turn would support developing industry needs.

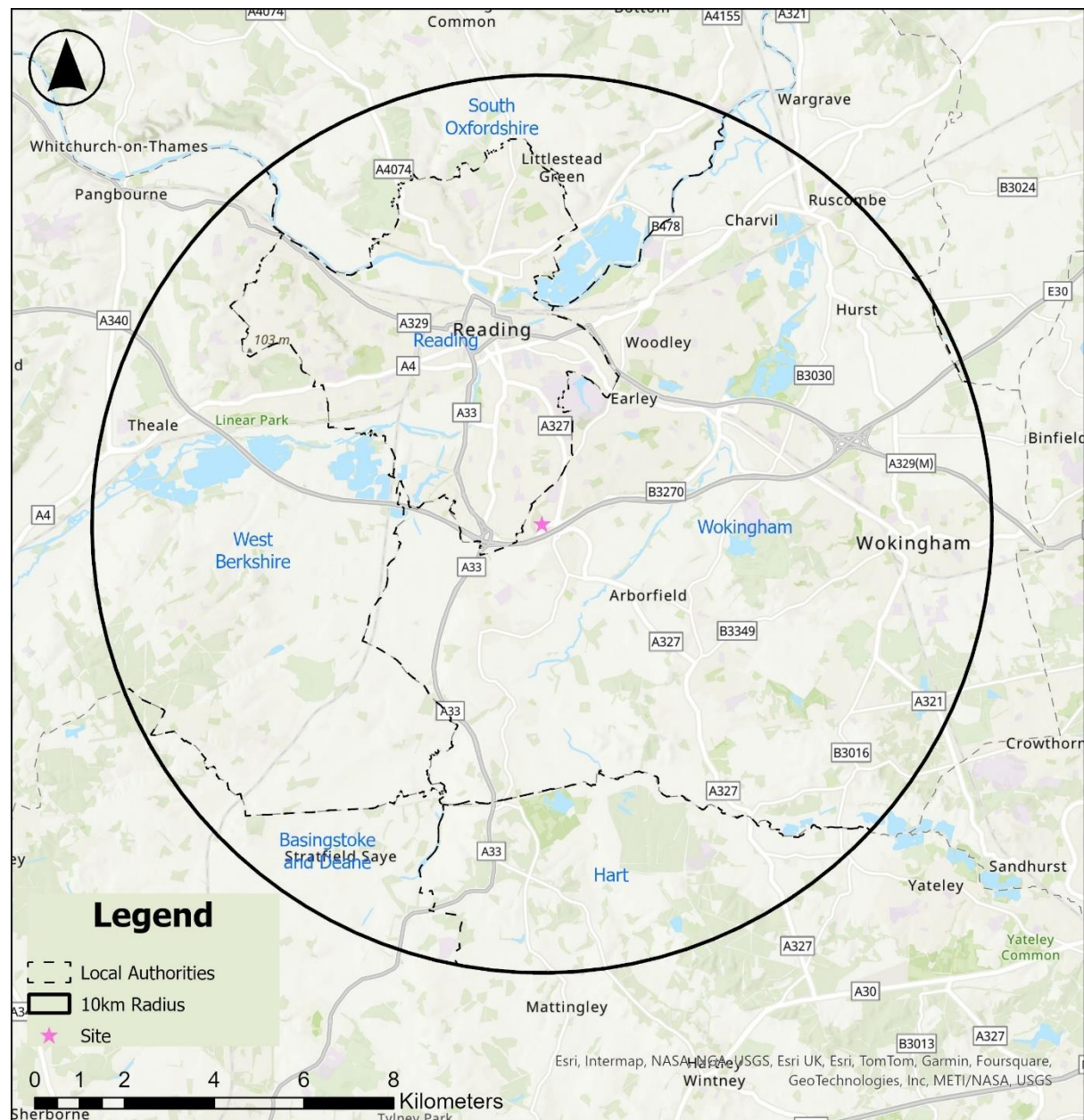
Currently the Site does not support the existing labour force or contribute to growth within the local economy. Section 4 will review how redevelopment of the Site would support the existing local labour force and local business network. It will assess how redevelopment of the Site would create a local asset, supporting sustainable economic growth.

4.1 Study Area

A 10km Study Area defined below (Figure 4.1) has been created around the Site to best assess the likely interface area with local businesses and an accessible labour force. The 10km Study Area incorporates Reading, a large proportion of Wokingham and other neighbouring local authorities such as West Berkshire, South Oxfordshire, and Hart.

Where possible, we have made reference to the proportion of the Wokingham population within the 10km Radius in order to understand the effects on the Wokingham local authority. We have utilised the South East region as a comparative benchmark.

Figure 4.1: Study Area Radius



4.2 Supporting Growth

Analysis of existing business and industry profile of the area, and the identification of the local sectoral and economic strengths, provides the 'supporting growth' context for the Proposed Development.

4.2.1 Industry of Employment

Data generated by the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) provides a picture of the industry of employment (workplace-based) across the 10km Study Area radius.

The most common workplace-based industry in the 10km Radius is within the information and communication industry (15%) followed by the professional, scientific and technical (14%) industry and the education industry (11%). The area of Wokingham that contributes to the wider 10 km also reflects these prominent workplace-based characteristics.

The proportion of employment within the information and communication, and the professional, scientific and technical industries is particularly high when compared to the regional and national portfolio, identifying this as a developing industry cluster.

Table 4.1: BRES Industry (2024)

BRES Industry	10km Radius	Wokingham within the 10km Radius	South East	England
1 : Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	0%	0%	1%	1%
2 : Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	2%	2%	1%	1%
3 : Manufacturing (C)	5%	5%	6%	7%
4 : Construction (F)	3%	3%	5%	5%
5 : Motor trades (Part G)	1%	1%	2%	2%
6 : Wholesale (Part G)	8%	8%	4%	4%
7 : Retail (Part G)	7%	7%	9%	8%
8 : Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	1%	1%	5%	5%
9 : Accommodation & food services (I)	7%	7%	9%	8%
10 : Information & communication (J)	15%	15%	6%	5%
11 : Financial & insurance (K)	1%	1%	3%	3%
12 : Property (L)	1%	1%	2%	2%
13 : Professional, scientific & technical (M)	14%	14%	9%	10%
14 : Business administration & support services (N)	9%	10%	8%	9%
15 : Public administration & defence (O)	2%	1%	3%	4%
16 : Education (P)	11%	11%	10%	9%
17 : Health (Q)	9%	9%	14%	14%
18 : Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	5%	5%	5%	5%

Source: NOMIS (2024)

Table 4.2 sets out the activities that fall within the professional, scientific and technical activities and the Information and communication industries. Reviewing the activities within each industry, it is important to consider the type of floorspace required for direct operations but also the necessary supporting activities and supply chain floorspace need to facilities these activities. For example, motion picture production activities, engineering design activities for industrial process and production, and technical testing activities could all directly require supporting warehouse floorspace.



Research and experimental development on social sciences and humanities for example will require a lot of input material in order to operate, requiring a reliable supply chain.

Table 4.2: Prominent Industry Activities within the 10km Study Area

Professional, scientific and technical activities	Information and communication
Barristers at law Solicitors Activities of patent and copyright agents; other legal activities n.e.c. Accounting and auditing activities Bookkeeping activities Tax consultancy Activities of head offices Public relations and communications activities Financial management Management consultancy activities other than financial management Architectural activities Urban planning and landscape architectural activities Engineering design activities for industrial process and production Engineering related scientific and technical consulting activities Other engineering activities Technical testing and analysis Research and experimental development on biotechnology Other research and experimental development on natural sciences and engineering Research and experimental development on social sciences and humanities Advertising agencies Media representation services Market research and public opinion polling specialised design activities Portrait photographic activities Other specialist photography Film processing Photographic activities not elsewhere classified Translation and interpretation activities Environmental consulting activities Quantity surveying activities Other professional, scientific and technical activities n.e.c. Non-trading company Veterinary activities	Publishing of directories and mailing lists Publishing of newspapers Publishing of learned journals Publishing of consumer and business journals and periodicals Other publishing activities Publishing of computer games/Other software publishing Motion picture production activities Video production activities Book publishing Television programme distribution activities Motion picture projection activities Sound recording and music publishing activities Radio broadcasting Television programming and broadcasting activities Wired telecommunications activities Wireless telecommunications activities Satellite telecommunications activities Other telecommunications activities Ready-made interactive leisure and entertainment software development Business and domestic software development Information technology consultancy activities Computer facilities management activities Other information technology service activities Data processing, hosting and related activities Web portals News agency activities Other information service activities n.e.c

4.2.2 Business Counts

This data provides an insight into the number of enterprises within the 10km study area, it details the number of enterprises

As reflected in the BRES workplace data, professional, scientific and technical industry business counts represent the highest proportion of business counts across the 10km Study Area (19%), this is even more prominent when focusing on the Wokingham area within the radius (21%). Information



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Supporting Socio Economic Context and Employment Growth

and communication represent the second highest proportion of business counts across the 10 km Study Area (16%), again this industry is strongly represented within Wokingham.

Across the 10km radius there are a total 3,345 business enterprises within the professional, scientific and technical industry and a further 2,865 across the information communication industry. There is clearly an active business enterprise network across these industry groups, highlighting the need to support this cluster with the most appropriate modern floorspace going forward, whether this be for direct operations or supply chain activity.

Construction (12%, accounting for 2,160 enterprises), Retail (6%, 1,020 enterprises), and Business Administration & Support (9%, 1,655) also have a notable presence. Transport and storage activities operate a further 605 enterprises.

Table 4.3: Business Counts all Businesses (2024)

Industry	10km Radius		Wokingham within the 10km Radius		South East	England
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(%)	(%)
1 : Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	215	1%	30	1%	3%	4%
2 : Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	80	0%	15	0%	0%	1%
3 : Manufacturing (C)	625	4%	170	3%	4%	5%
4 : Construction (F)	2,160	12%	665	12%	15%	14%
5 : Motor trades (Part G)	505	3%	130	2%	3%	3%
6 : Wholesale (Part G)	655	4%	185	3%	3%	4%
7 : Retail (Part G)	1,020	6%	270	5%	7%	8%
8 : Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	605	3%	155	3%	4%	4%
9 : Accommodation & food services (I)	700	4%	185	3%	5%	6%
10 : Information & communication (J)	2,865	16%	1,155	21%	9%	7%
11 : Financial & insurance (K)	325	2%	90	2%	2%	2%
12 : Property (L)	615	3%	200	4%	4%	4%
13 : Professional, scientific & technical (M)	3,345	19%	1,145	21%	18%	16%
14 : Business administration & support services (N)	1,655	9%	505	9%	9%	9%
15 : Public administration & defence (O)	25	0%	0	0%	0%	0%
16 : Education (P)	335	2%	115	2%	2%	2%
17 : Health (Q)	650	4%	205	4%	4%	4%
18 : Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	1,300	7%	305	6%	7%	7%
Total	17,680		5,540			

Source: NOMIS (2024)

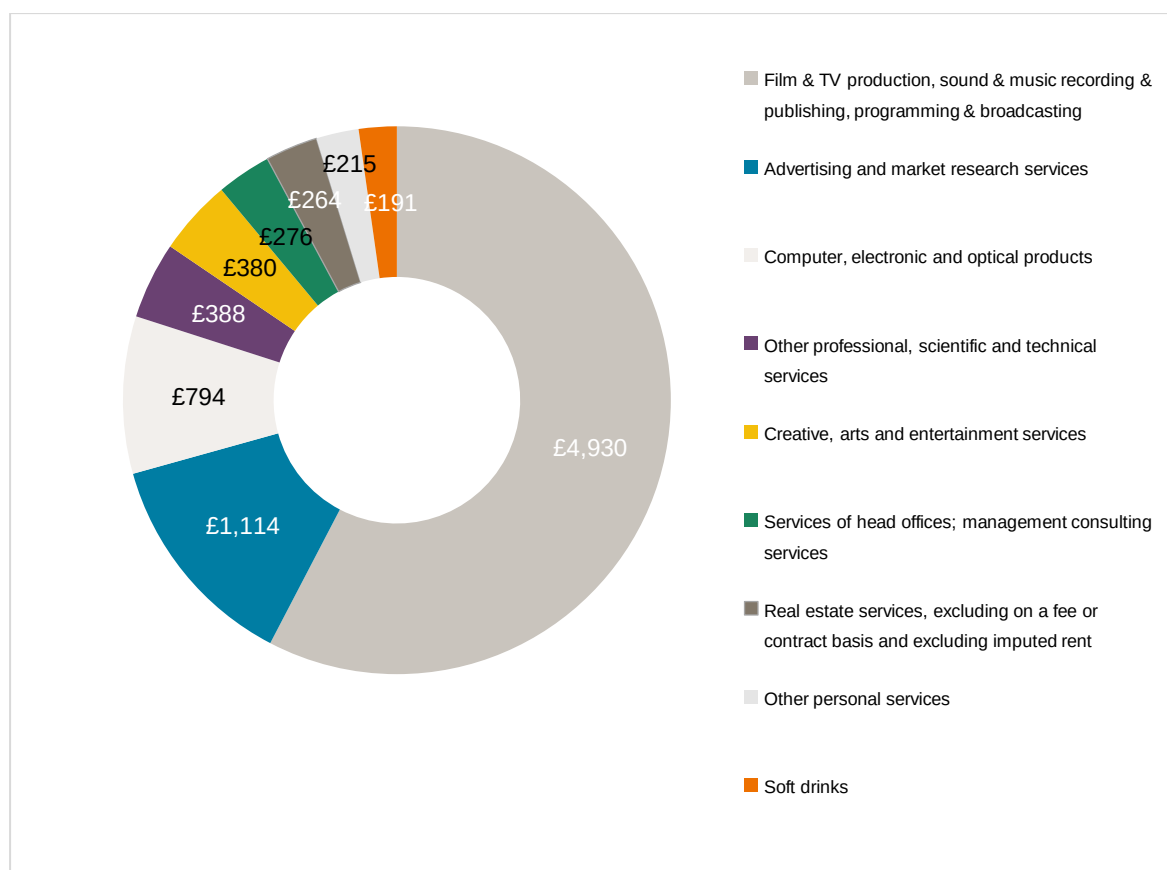


4.2.3 Contribution to Key Growth Industries - Shinfield Studios

Shinfield Studios, located within the 10km Radius, is a state-of-the-art film and TV production facility. Once complete, it will feature 18 fully soundproofed and air-conditioned stages, ranging from 17,000 to 41,000 sq ft, making it one of the largest studio complexes in the UK. The studio also includes a 9-acre backlot for exterior sets, 38 workshops, and over 133,000 sq ft of luxury offices¹². Shinfield Studios draws on local businesses and labour to facilities on-site activities. This multiplier is only possible if there is the necessary supporting floorspace to facilitate supply chain activity.

Figure 4.2 demonstrates the spectrum of sectors that support the film industry across the UK. It identifies the spend profile across various sectors, demonstrating the extensive impact this industry will have on local businesses across the 10 km Study Area and Wokingham.

Figure 4.1: Screen Sector Supply Chain Spending 2021 £m



Source: Supply and Use Input Output Analysis Tables, Stantec Analysis

¹² <https://shinfieldstudios.com/>

Similarly, Figure 4.3 illustrates an example of the supply chain effects based on the production of a single film. The main supply chain effects of the film industry are on film and tv production, advertising and market research services, and computer, electronics and optical products. All of these uses need to be enabled by appropriate employment facilities such as associated logistics, studio space, workshops, storage etc and supply chain operations.

Figure 4.2: Supply Chain Spending Case Study (2015 – 2022)

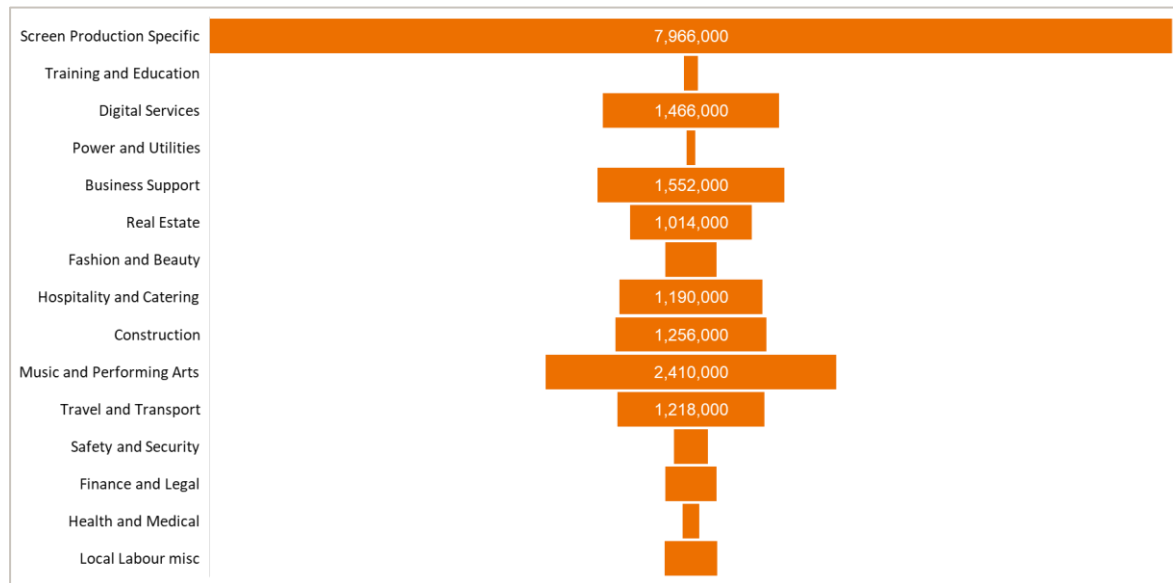
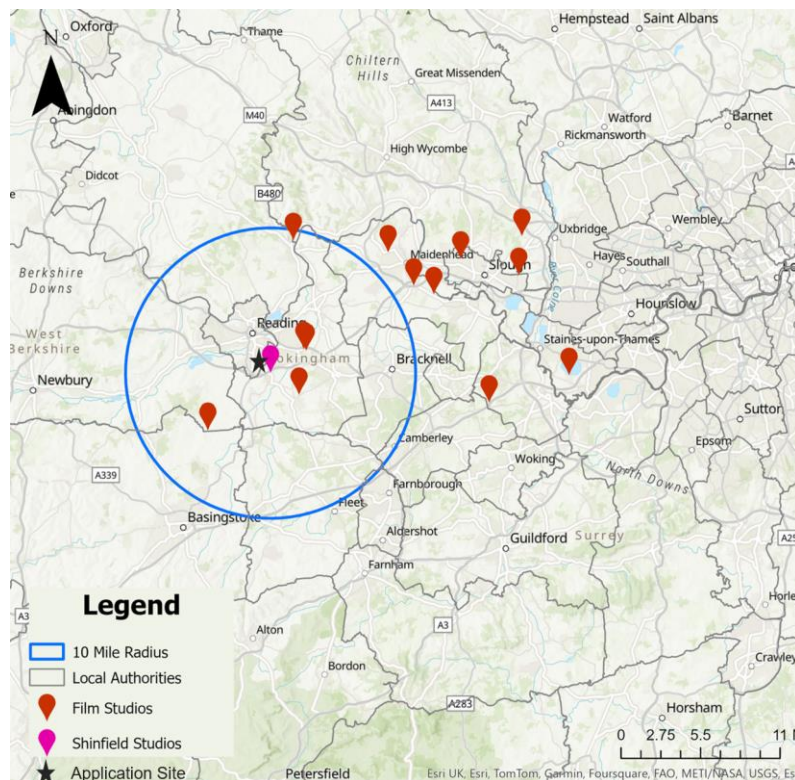


Figure 4.4 demonstrates the proximity of the Site to the local film study cluster. It emphasises the Site's potential role in supporting this developing growth industry. The Site is local to a number of studio sites and therefore centrally located to support with directly needed floorspace or expansion of the supply chain operations.

Figure 4.4: Film Studio Locations



Source: Stantec

4.2.4 Key Findings

The area within a 10km radius showcases distinct business and industry characteristics that would benefit from supporting industrial employment spaces. Key industries such as information and communication, and professional, scientific, and technical sectors exceed regional and national averages in workplace-based employment. The information and communication industry employs 15% of the workforce compared to 6% in the South East and 5% in England.

Professional, scientific, and technical activities are also prominent, accounting for 14% of employment in the 10km radius, demonstrating the area's strong knowledge-based economy. The business composition mirrors this trend, with 19% of businesses in professional, scientific, and technical industries and 16% in information and communication, surpassing both regional and national benchmarks. Growth in these industries must be facilitated by appropriate employment space to serve direct and indirect operations.

A major developing contributor to the area's economic vitality is Shinfield Studios, a leading film and TV production facility with significant capacity for stage production, workshops, and flexible spaces. As one of the largest studio complexes in the UK, Shinfield Studios is poised to drive a multiplier effect on the local economy by boosting industries linked to the film production supply chain, including advertising, market research, and electronics. To fully harness these opportunities, the development of tailored employment spaces, such as logistics hubs, studio facilities, workshops, and storage, will

be critical to accommodating the growing needs of this dynamic sector while fostering new business creation and broader regional benefits.

4.3 Supporting the Local Labour Force

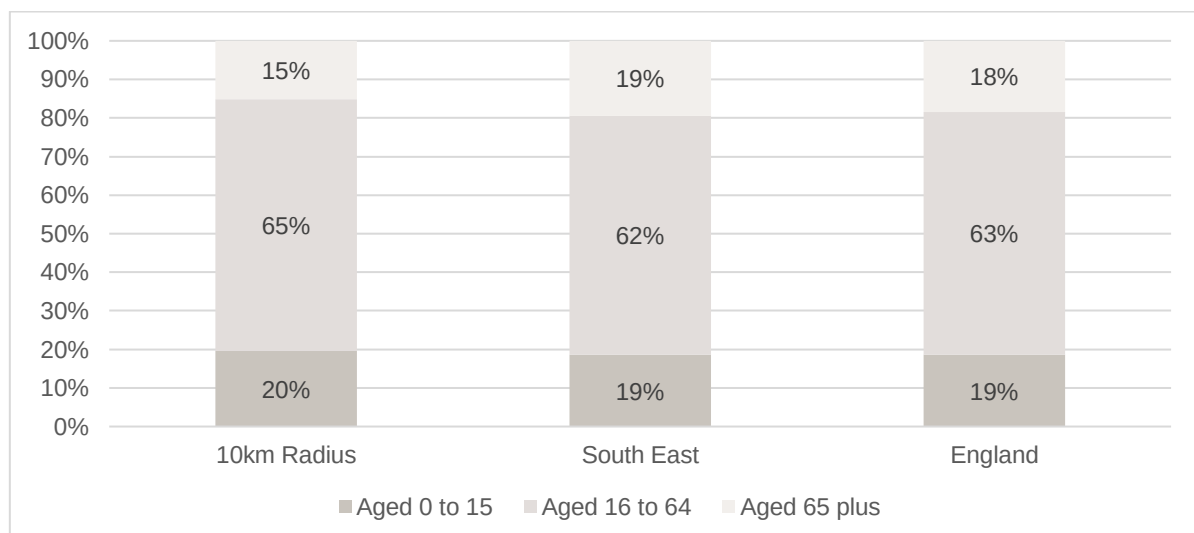
Currently the Site does not support any form of employment. The previous occupiers have relocated to the more modern Green Park Business Park. The remaining floorspace is unsuitable for modern office needs. It currently stands unoccupied and obsolete. Local policy, needs analysis and market indicators suggest the Site is unlikely to perform a significant employment function in its current state. It is therefore not effectively contributing to employment generation.

The Proposed Development offers a flexible use option that can be responsive to market needs. It has been established that the area has a recognised and developing cluster of professional, scientific and technical, as well as information and communication businesses. The Proposed Development therefore has good potential to facilitate this business network and generate employment opportunities for the local labour force.

4.3.1 Age Profile and Economically Active

The labour force within the 10km Study Area contains a higher proportion of working age residents (65%) than the regional (62%) and national (63%) average profile, see Figure 4.5. As is evident from Table 4.4, the proportion of this age group who are economically active and in employment is particularly high (61%) compared to the regional comparison (58%). The Wokingham area appears to be a particular hotspot within the 10km Study Area for employed economically active residents.

Figure 4.5: Age Profile (2021)



Source: Census (2021)

This highlights an active labour force within the area local to Site and across the wider 10km Study Area. The area is evidently attractive to a population that are capable of supporting the employment needs of the Proposed Development and developing industries.

Across the 10km radius there are around 8,129 economically active residents who are unemployed, just over 2,500 of those are Wokingham residents. Based on this the Proposed Development could provide opportunities for those currently unemployed.

Table 4.2: Economic Activity (2021)

Economic Activity	10km Radius	Wokingham within 10km Radius	South East
Economically active (excluding full-time students): In employment	61%	62%	58%
Economically active (excluding full-time students): Unemployed	3%	2%	3%
Economically active and a full-time student: In employment	2%	1%	2%
Economically active and a full-time student: Unemployed	1%	0%	1%
Economically inactive	33%	34%	38%

Source: Census (2021)

Source: Nomis (2024)

4.3.2 Occupation

Table 4.5 sets out the resident occupation profile across the 10km study area. It illustrates that the majority of residents (55%) are employed within managerial, professional and associate roles (accounting 45,000 residents). In addition, there are over 15,432 residents employed in skilled trades, 9,043 within process, plant and machine operative roles, and a further 16,721 residents working across elementary occupations. This demonstrates a diverse occupation mix amongst the resident workforce, able to support the flexible employment profile generated by the Development.

Table 4.5: Occupation of Residents (2021)

Occupation	10km Radius	Wokingham within 10km Radius	South East
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	14%	17%	15%
2. Professional occupations	26%	29%	21%
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	15%	16%	14%
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	9%	9%	9%
5. Skilled trades occupations	8%	7%	10%
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	8%	7%	9%
7. Sales and customer service occupations	6%	5%	7%
8. Process, plant and machine operatives	5%	4%	6%
9. Elementary occupations	9%	5%	9%

Source: Census (2021)



4.4 Qualifications

The resident population is relatively well educated compared to the regional average. 42% of residents in the 10km Radius and 46% of these residents from Wokingham have level 4 qualifications or above. This is higher than the regional average (36%).

The proportion of residents with no qualification, level 1 or 2 is not too dissimilar to the regional average. It highlights a need provide employment floorspace that support a range of skill types and generate upskilling opportunities.

The Proposed Development presents an opportunity deliver a diverse skill requirement on-site, providing employment opportunities to all skill levels.

Table 4.6: Qualifications held by residents (2021)

Qualification	10km Radius	Wokingham within 10km Radius	South East
No qualifications	13%	11%	15%
Level 1 and entry level qualifications	9%	8%	10%
Level 2 qualifications	12%	13%	14%
Apprenticeship	4%	4%	5%
Level 3 qualifications	17%	16%	17%
Level 4 qualifications or above	42%	46%	36%
Other qualifications	3%	2%	3%

Source: Census (2021)

4.5 Industry of Employment

The prevalent resident industries within the 10km Study Area are wholesale and retail, information and communication, and human health and social work activities. This is similar for the South East regional profile.

The industry of employment profile amongst the resident signals a high proportion working within information and communication roles, suggesting they support the local growth observed in workplace based jobs observed within in this industry.

In comparison to the workplace jobs profile, the resident workforce appears to be employed across a more diverse industry spectrum. This indicates the local labour force are equipped to support the flexible nature of employment generated by Development, not only supporting the local growth industries such as film production but also the range of industries that make up the supporting supply chain networks. The flexible nature of the Development means it can support an industry occupier based on respond to the market need.

Table 4.7: Industry of Employment

	10km Radius	South East	England
A: Agriculture, Forestry and fishing	0%	1%	1%



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	10km Radius	South East	England
B: Mining and quarrying	0%	0%	0%
C: Manufacturing	5%	6%	7%
D: Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	1%	1%	1%
E: Water supply; Sewerage, Waste management and Remediation activities	1%	1%	1%
F: Construction	7%	9%	9%
G: Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	13%	14%	15%
H: Transport and storage	4%	5%	5%
I: Accommodation and food service activities	4%	4%	5%
J: Information and communication	13%	6%	5%
K: Financial and insurance activities	4%	4%	4%
L: Real estate activities	1%	2%	2%
M: Professional, scientific and technical activities	8%	7%	7%
N: Administrative and support service activities	6%	6%	5%
O: Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	5%	6%	6%
P: Education	11%	10%	10%
Q: Human health and social work activities	12%	14%	15%
R, S, T, U Other	4%	5%	5%

Source: Census (2021)

4.5.1 Claimant Count

Claimant Count data shows the number of people out of work and seeking unemployment related benefits. Across the 10km radius, there were 8,155 claimant counts as of December 2024, accounting for 3.2% of the population aged 16 to 64. Of these 2,055 are from Wokingham residents. The Proposed Development has the opportunity to support local homeless people.

Table 4.8: Claimant Count (2024)

	10km Radius	Wokingham within 10km Radius	South East
Claimant Count	8,155	2,055	183,045
As a proportion of residents aged 16 to 64	3.27%	-	3.20%

4.5.2 Key Socio-Economic Findings

The socio-economic profile of the local labour force within a 10km radius of the site reveals a robust and well-educated working-age population, with 65% of residents being of working age, higher than regional and national averages. Economic activity is strong, with 61% of the population actively employed, surpassing regional averages. However, there is a small but notable unemployed population (3%), representing an opportunity for employment generation through proposed development on the site.



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Supporting Socio Economic Context and Employment Growth

The occupational and qualification profiles highlight a highly skilled workforce, with 42% of residents holding Level 4 qualifications or above, exceeding the regional average.

Key industries amongst the existing labour force include wholesale and retail, information and communication, and human health and social work activities. Where's over 28% of jobs across the 10km radius area with professional services and information communication roles.

Wokingham residents within the radius also exhibit strong representation in professional, managerial, and technical roles. Opportunities to enhance apprenticeship uptake and increase employment diversity in industries like manufacturing and construction, where local engagement is below regional levels, could further strengthen the labour force and be present on the proposed development.

Employment-related benefits are claimed by 3.27% of working-age residents, slightly above regional levels, indicating a demand for more job opportunities. Protecting current employment and creating new jobs across a range of industries, particularly wholesale, retail, and underrepresented sectors, would not only address current unemployment but also leverage the area's strong educational and occupational profile. The proposed development has the potential to support economic growth and sustain a balanced, healthy labour market in the area.

4.6 Summary

A review of the existing employment context and business profile within a 10 km radius of the Site has demonstrated a developing cluster of professional, technical and scientific, and information and communication businesses. A detailed review of the activities that make up these industries highlights how the provision of industrial floorspace, such the Proposed Development, can directly and indirectly support a diverse spectrum of operations.

Focusing on the developing film studio industry within the area or example, particularly the neighbouring Shinfield Studios, it is evident there is a need to support these developing industries directly, and also accommodate the local facilitating supply chain network. The flexible nature of the Development means it can support an industry occupier based on response to the market need, creating sustainable employment opportunities. In its current condition the Site is not able to effectively do this, restricting its ability to support the economy and local labour force.

Socio-economic research indicates that the labour force local to the Site is diverse and can support the employment needs of the Proposed Development. Currently the Site makes no contribution to the local labour market. The Proposed Development will provide a range of occupation and skill type opportunities, benefiting a diverse labour force.



5 Economic Benefits

A review of the surrounding industry network and labour market area within a 10km radius of the Site has revealed that the Proposed Development would be an important contribution to facilitating local growth. The flexible nature of the Development means it can adjust to the needs of the local market, supporting growth industries in the most efficient way. The use class range proposed on-site will also provide a spectrum of occupation types and skill requirements, diversifying the labour market who will benefit from the employment opportunities created.

The potential economic benefits delivered by the Development have been measured in a number of ways:

- The potential job and Gross Value Added (GVA) generation throughout the construction phase.
- Gross jobs on-site once fully operational.
- Local employment effect - Of the gross jobs created on-site, we look at the proportion of jobs that will be new employment opportunities and number of FTE occupied by resident workforce.
- The associate GVA generated by the jobs created on-site and the local employment effect.
- Business rates generated by the development once operational.

5.1 Construction Phase

5.1.1 Direct Gross Employment and Associated GVA

The number of direct jobs generated during the construction period is calculated using the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) Labour Forecasting Tool (LFT). A construction period of 12 months has been adopted. Based on this the LFT estimates that 270 direct construction jobs could be supported each month over this period.

Table 5.1 sets out the split across the three groups that make up the occupations assessed within the LFT. Together, these highlight the varied occupation profile and skill requirements across the sector.

Table 5.1: Construction Employment – Occupation Profile

Group	Occupation Category	Average Number
Design	Senior, executive and business process managers	4
	Civil engineers	5
	Other construction professionals and technical staff-Design	22



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Group	Occupation Category	Average Number
	Architects	5
	Surveyors	3
	Non-construction professional, technical, IT and other office-based staff (excl. managers)	7
	DESIGN TOTAL	46
Management	Senior, executive and business process managers	18
	Civil engineers	2
	Other construction professionals and technical staff-Design	7
	Architects	1
	Surveyors	9
	Non-construction professional, technical, IT and other office-based staff (excl. managers)	33
	Construction project managers	7
	Other construction process managers	24
	MANAGEMENT TOTAL	101
Operatives	Construction trades supervisors	4
	Wood trades and interior fit-out	23
	Bricklayers	6
	Building envelope specialists	10
	Painters and decorators	3
	Plasterers	2
	Roofers	3
	Floorers	2
	Glaziers	2
	Specialist building operatives nec	3
	Scaffolders	2
	Plant operatives	5
	Plant mechanics/fitters	6
	Steel erectors/structural fabrication	4
	Labourers nec	6



Group	Occupation Category	Average Number
	Electrical trades and installation	21
	Plumbing and HV&C trades	15
	Logistics	2
	Civil engineering operatives nec	0
	Non-construction operatives	3
	OPERATIVES TOTAL	123

Source: LFT (All figures are rounded and may not sum)

Direct employment activity throughout the construction phase will generate economic output, measured through the generation of GVA. Based on an average regional GVA per construction worker sourced from Oxford Economics¹³, the Development could generate a direct GVA of approximately £15.0m¹⁴ over the construction period.

5.1.2 Gross Indirect Employment and Associated GVA

In addition to the direct jobs resulting from the construction and management of the Development, further indirect jobs will be sustained as a result of spin-off and multiplier effects.

To establish the number of indirect jobs that could be supported during the construction phase, we apply employment multipliers published in The Green Book (HM Treasury, 2022)¹⁵. Specifically, we apply the 'low' employment multipliers (x 0.4), recognising that new jobs are not created, just safeguarded.

Applied to the 270 gross direct construction jobs, this suggests that construction of the Development could support a further 108 indirect jobs across a local to wider area.

Based on a national GVA per worker per¹⁶ annum across all industries (because the indirect jobs could be nationwide across different industries) the 77 indirect construction jobs could generate GVA of approximately £5.9m over the construction period.

¹³ Oxford Economics, 2022 Global Forecasting and Quantitative Analysis (2017 - 2021 average). GVA per construction worker in London as per Oxford Economics equals £109,863 per annum.

¹⁴ Number subject to rounding

¹⁵ HM Treasury (2022) The Green Book: Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation

¹⁶ Oxford Economics, 2022 Global Forecasting and Quantitative Analysis (2017 - 2021 average).



5.1.3 Construction Employment Effect across Wokingham

A proportion of the employment generated throughout the construction phase will benefit the Wokingham resident workforce. This local added value of economic benefits arising from construction of the Development is referred to as the employment effect.

The employment effect is measured in relation to additionality factors following guidance published in the 'Additionality Guide' (HCA, 2014) and The Green Book.

Assessment of additionality involves consideration of the following factors:

- Deadweight - the extent to which the economic activity associated with the proposed development will happen anyway, whether or not the proposed development takes place.
- Substitution - where firms substitute one type of labour for another to benefit from the proposed development but do not increase employment or output.
- Displacement - the economic activity likely to be lost, moved, or adversely affected by construction and proposed use.
- Leakage - referring to the number of jobs likely to be taken up by people outside the local (target) area.
- Multiplier effects - the additional economic benefit that will be derived as a direct result of the income earned by the new employment as an indirect result of the supply chain linkages.

The extent to which each factor is relevant and applicable depends on the nature of the uses envisaged, professional judgement and having regard to published data and or guidance in the Additionality Guide and Green Book.

In this instance, no deadweight, substitution or displacement is applied during the construction phase because construction workers are transient and will move from one construction job to another.

The leakage factor is estimated by reference to Census 2011 commuting data, rather than Census 2021 commuting data which is heavily influenced by 'lockdown' during the coronavirus pandemic. Due to the site's proximity to Reading the leakage ratio has been established based on the commuting profile for Reading and Wokingham. 2011 Census data therefore identified that 43% (45% Reading and 41% Wokingham) of people who work in Wokingham, also live in Wokingham, identifying a leakage factor of 57%.

A proportion of the indirect job sustained throughout the demolition and construction phase will also support Wokingham residents. As stated earlier, the Green Book's low employment multiplier (x 0.4) is applied to calculate the proportion of indirect employment occupied by Wokingham residents.

The additionality factors applied to the gross direct demolition and construction employment is detailed in Table 5.2.



Based on this, as set out in Table 5.2, of the total 270 gross direct jobs supported over the 12-month construction phase, 116 of the roles could be occupied by Wokingham residents. These 108 FTE will generate £5.0m in GVA over the construction period.

Table 5.2: Construction Phase – Additionality Calculations

Construction Phase	
Gross Direct On-Site Job Creation	270
Total GVA Generated By On-Site Employment Over The Construction Period	£15.0m
Gross Indirect Jobs	108
Total GVA Generated By On-Site Employment Over The Construction Period	£5.6m
Net Direct Job Creation	
Leakage Factor	57%
Leakage	154
Net Direct Employment	116
GVA Generated By Additional Direct Employment	£5.4m
Multiplier Effect (Tradable Employment, X 0.4)	
Net Indirect Employment – estimated indirect jobs occupied by Wokingham	151
GVA Generated By Additional Indirect Employment	£8.2m
Total Net Employment Reading and Wokingham	267
Total Net Employment Effect – GVA Per Annum	£13.5m

Source: Stantec Development Economics. Numbers subject to rounding.

In addition to the direct job roles taken by Wokingham residents, the indirect employment sustained throughout the construction period will also benefit 151 FTE Wokingham residents across the supply chain.

The local employment effect to Wokingham residents supported across the local supply chain is estimated to be around 267.

2021 Census data confirms that within Wokingham 13,537 residents are employed within the construction industry, representing 7% of the resident workforce population. The Development will therefore continue to support residents working and seeking employment within this industry.

5.1.4 Total Employment Effect and Associated GVA

Construction of the Development would support direct jobs throughout the 12-month construction period. It is estimated based on existing commuting patterns that around 116 of these roles could be occupied by Wokingham residents. A further 151 Wokingham residents could also be employed supporting the supply chain. Based on this the local employment effect would be an additional 266 (direct and indirect) jobs sustained throughout the construction phase, generating £13.5m in GVA over the construction period.



Table 5.3: Summary of Economic Benefits of the Development (Construction Phase)

Phase	Benefit	Jobs ¹ (FTE)	GVA ¹
Construction	Gross Direct Jobs	270	£15.0m
	Net Direct Employment - Roles occupied by Wokingham residents	116	£5.4m
	Net Indirect employment ¹⁰ -	151	£8.2m
	Total net employment effect and indirect jobs & GVA	266	£13.5m

Source: Stantec Development Economics.

5.2 Operational Phase

5.2.1 Gross Direct and Indirect Employment and Associated GVA

The Development will deliver up to six units, supporting Use Classes E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8) with ancillary offices. Table 5.4 sets out the unit profile on-site. The assessment of gross operational employment will reflect the flexible approach to market response, assessing a range of E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8 Use Class operations.

Table 5.4: On-Site Floorspace Profile

Unit	GIA (sqm)
1	8,030
2	3,799
3A	1,109
3B	1,106
4	2,593
5	3,468
Total	20,102

Source: Applicant

Our estimate of the number of jobs generated on-site will be informed by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Employment Density Guide (2015) ("Density Guide"). Based on this, an employment density of 95 sqm (GEA) per FTE job will be utilised for the potential B8 Storage and Distribution



operation scenario. This has been sense checked against more recent publications. First, the Economic Impact of Operations in Prologis Warehouses, published by Oxford Economics¹⁷. Looking across 19 countries, including the United Kingdom where 32,500 people were directly employed in Prologis warehouses, employment densities were found to vary from 93 to 177 sqm per employee. Second, a more focused survey of Prologis UK customers in 33 distribution centres located in the Midlands, South East and London carried out in 2018¹⁸. This revealed that on average, one person was employed for every 95 sqm of floor space. A recent report (September 2022) by Icenl also utilises 95 sqm per FTE to assess employment outlook.

The HCA Density Guide of 36 sqm per FTE is representative of any potential B2 Use. The density estimate for use class E(g)(ii)(iii) (ranging between 40 – 60 sqm per FTE) falls within the range of B2 (36 sqm per FTE) and B8 Use Class (95 sqm per FTE) density assumptions.

5.2.1.1 Based on an B8 and B2 Use Class Range

Based on the assessment of potential B2 and B8 Use Class operations, the Development could support between 224 and 558 FTE, depending on the end use. Table 5.5 sets out the potential Gross direct FTE on-site could generate between £10.3m and £25.8m in GVA per annum.

It is estimated, as shown in Table 5.8, that across the local to wider area a further 291 to 726 gross indirect jobs could be supported throughout the supply chain network, generating between £15.8m and £39.4m in GVA per annum.

Table 5.5: Gross FTE Range

Unit	B8 Use	B2 Use
1	88	223
2	42	106
3A	12	31
3B	12	31
4	29	72
5	39	96
Total	224	558

¹⁷ Oxford Economics, Economic Impact of Operations in Prologis Warehouses, Q2 2020 Update

¹⁸ Prologis (September 2019) Delivering the Future: The Changing Nature of Employment in Distribution and Warehouses



5.2.1.2 Based on a mixed B8/B2 Use Class Scenario

Table 5.7 demonstrates the potential FTE on-site based on a mixed B8/B2 Use Class scenario, supporting 260 FTE and generating £12.0m in GVA per annum. It is estimated that across the local to wider area a further 338 gross indirect jobs could be supported throughout the supply chain network, generating between £18.3m in GVA per annum.

Table 5.7: FTE B2 and B8 Use Class Scenario

Unit	Use Class	FTE
1	B8	88
2	B8	42
3A	B2	31
3B	B2	31
4	B8	29
5	B8	39
Total	260	

5.2.2 Operational Employment Effect Across Wokingham

5.2.2.1 Based on a B8 and B2 Use Class Range

A proportion of the operational employment created will additionally benefit Wokingham residents, on-site and throughout the supply chain. This is referred to as the employment effect to Wokingham.

Based on guidance from the HCA, Additionality Guide¹⁹ (“Additionality Guide”) and more recently, HM Treasury Green Book²⁰ (“The Green Book”)²¹, a review of the additionality factors has been applied in order to understand the employment effect of the Development towards Wokingham residents. This assesses how many Wokingham residents will benefit from the operational employment created on-site.

In order to assess the potential employment effect, a low level of displacement has been assumed (25%). Given the importance of the storage, logistics and transport sector and the perceived future demand, it is assumed that displacement will be low (25%). It is assumed, based on 2011 Census commuting data, that 41% of the workforce will also live within Wokingham (referred to as the leakage factor).

¹⁹ HCA, Additionality Guide, 4th edition, 2014

²⁰ HM Treasury, The Green Book: Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation, 2022

²¹ HM Treasury The Green Book: Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation, 2022



Based on the potential use class range, is estimated that between 56 and 140 of the direct jobs created on-site by the Development will be displaced, reducing employment elsewhere. This will result in between 168 (B8 Use Class) and 419 (B2 Use Class) additional jobs generated on-site, creating new employment opportunity. Based on existing commuting patterns, between 72 and 180 of these direct jobs will benefit Wokingham residents.

Between 94 and 234 Wokingham residents will benefit from the indirect employment created across the supply chain as a result of the Development. This may be through material and service supplies, catering or any form of indirect business supporting daily operations.

The Development will therefore have a net employment effect of between 166 FTE (72 direct and 94 indirect) and 414 FTE (180 direct and 234 indirect) on Wokingham residents. This means between 166 and 414, depending on the end use, Wokingham residents will benefit from additional employment created by the Development.

Table 5.8 sets out a summary of the additional employment effect across Wokingham as result the Development. The potential impact will depend on the use class delivered on-site.

Table 5.8: Net Employment Effect

Operational Phase	B2 Use Class	B8 Use Class
Gross Direct On-Site Job Creation	224	558
Total Gross Direct GVA Generated By On-Site Employment Over The Construction Period	£10.3m	£25.8m
Gross Indirect Jobs (local to wider)	291	726
Total Gross Indirect GVA Generated By On-Site Employment Over The Construction Period	£15.8m	£39.4m
Displacement Factor	25%	25%
Displacement	56	140
Net Direct Job Creation	168	419
Leakage Factor	57%	57%
Leakage	96	239
Direct Net Employment	72	180
GVA Generated by Additional Direct Employment	£3.3m	£15.0m
Multiplier Effect (Tradable Employment, X 0.4) Multiplier Effect (Non-Tradable Employment, X 0.9)	94	234
Indirect Employment		
GVA Generated by Additional Indirect Employment	£5.1m	£12.7m
Total Net Employment Effect	166	414
Total Net Employment Effect – GVA Per Annum	£8.4m	£27.7m

5.2.2.2 Based on a mixed B8 and B2 Use Class Scenario

Based on this, it is estimated that 260 of the direct jobs created on-site by the Development will be displaced, reducing employment elsewhere. This will result in between 168 (B8 Use Class) and 419



(B2 Use Class) additional jobs created on-site, creating new employment opportunity. Based on existing commuting patterns, between 75 and 188 of these direct jobs will benefit Wokingham residents.

Between 98 and 245 Wokingham residents will benefit from the indirect employment created across the supply chain as a result of the Development. This may be through material and service supplies, catering or any form of indirect business supporting daily operations.

The Development will therefore have a net employment effect of between 174 FTE (75 direct and 98 indirect) and 433 FTE (188 direct and 245 indirect) on Wokingham residents. This means between 174 and 433, depending on the end use, Wokingham residents will benefit from additional employment created by the Development. Table 5.9 sets out a summary of the additional employment effect across Wokingham as result the Development. The potential impact will depend on the occupying use class.

Table 5.9: Employment Effect – B8 and B2 Use Class Scenario

Operational Phase	B8 + B2 Use Class Scenario
Gross Direct On-Site Job Creation	260
Total Gross Direct GVA Generated By On-Site Employment Over The Construction Period	£12.0m
Gross Indirect Jobs (local to wider)	338
Total Gross Indirect GVA Generated By On-Site Employment Over The Construction Period	£18.3m
Displacement Factor	25%
Displacement	65
Net Direct Job Creation	195
Leakage Factor	57%
Leakage	111
Direct Employment	84
GVA Generated by Additional Direct Employment	£3.9m
Multiplier Effect (Tradable Employment, X 0.4)	109
Multiplier Effect (Non-Tradable Employment, X 0.9)	
Indirect Employment	
GVA Generated by Additional Indirect Employment	£5.9m
Total Net Employment Effect	193
Total Net Employment Effect – GVA Per Annum	£9.8m

5.2.3 Business rates

The Development will generate annual business rates contributing to the funding of local public services. The quality of the existing building on-site means it is no longer suitable for modern use. In order to generate business rates, the proposed units must be suitable and attractive to occupiers. If not sufficiently attractive, the units could remain empty and not generate business rates. Therefore, the proposed development builds in flexibility to ensure the proposed units are able to meet current and future market needs and retain business rates income, supporting local infrastructure and services.



Rateable values are provided by the Valuation Office, taking into consideration rateable values for comparable facilities. It is estimated that the Proposed Development could generate £945,000 per annum in business rates.

5.3 Summary

The Proposed Development will generate economic benefits throughout the development lifecycle. Table 5.10 demonstrates the potential benefits generated based on the flexible nature of the scheme, assessing the range of benefits delivered based on a primary B2 use class to a B8 Use Class. Table 5.10 also demonstrates the benefits generated through the operation of a mixed use class scenario.

Table 5.10: Economic Benefits Summary

Construction Phase			
Economic Benefits generated throughout the Construction Phase.			
Gross Direct FTE	270		
Gross Direct GVA generated by Gross Direct FTE	£15.0m		
Gross Indirect FTE	116		
Gross Indirect GVA generated by Gross Indirect FTE	£5.4m		
Proportion of Direct jobs occupied by Wokingham residents	116		
Proportion of Indirect jobs occupied by Wokingham residents	151		
Total net employment effect to Wokingham - direct and indirect jobs	267		
Operational Phase - Economic Benefits generated once development is operational	B2 Use Class	B8 Use Class	B8 + B2 Use Class Scenario
Gross Direct jobs created on-site	224	558	260
GVA generated by Gross Direct on-site jobs	£10.3m	£25.8m	£12.0m
Gross Indirect jobs created on-site	291	726	338
GVA generated by Gross Indirect on-site jobs	£15.8m	£39.4m	£18.3m
Proportion of Direct jobs occupied by Wokingham residents	72	180	84
Proportion of Indirect jobs occupied by Wokingham residents	94	234	109
Total net employment effect to Wokingham - direct and indirect jobs	166 (£8.4m)	414 (£27.7m)	190 (£9.8m)



Shinfield Economic Benefits
Economic Benefits

Business Rates	£945,000	£945,000	£945,000
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6 Conclusion

This Statement has reviewed the economic benefits that could be generated if the proposed redevelopment of flexible employment use (Use Class E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8) were to take place at Shinfield Park.

A review of the relevant economic policy has identified that the Proposed Development is a sustainable example of redeveloping a site to support economic growth and productivity, considering local business needs and the wider opportunities for industry growth. The Site is currently vacant and does not contribute the local economy or employment opportunities within the area.

Local policy will encourage the appropriate intensification, redevelopment and upgrading of existing sites and premises will be encouraged and supported to ensure the efficient use of land. The Council's needs assessment clearly states there is demand for industrial floorspace and a need to utilise the oversupply of inadequate office floorspace. Up-to date market analysis (CoStar) confirms the limited demand for office development unless of a specific type and within business park locations. There is however a clear demand for industrial development within the area.

Analysis of the socio-economic context reveals that within a 10km radius of the Site there is a developing cluster of professional, technical and scientific, and information and communication businesses. This aligns with the neighbouring Shinfield Studies, and the demand generated by this growth industry. It is evident there is a need to support such developing industries directly, and also accommodate the local facilitating supply chain network. The flexible nature of the Development means it can support occupiers based on the market need, creating sustainable employment opportunities. In its current state the Site is not able to do this, restricting its ability to support the economy and local labour force.

Socio-economic research indicates that the labour force local to the Site is diverse and can support the employment needs of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development will provide a range of occupation and skill type opportunities, benefiting a diverse labour force.

The Proposed Development will generate sustainable economic benefits throughout the construction and operational phases. The flexible nature of the Development means the potential employment generation on-site will vary depending on the use, but the employment created will be in response to market demand. Table 6.1 sets out a summary of the economic benefits generated.

Table 6.1: Economic Benefits Summary

Construction Phase Economic Benefits generated throughout the Construction Phase.	
Gross Direct FTE	270
Gross Direct GVA generated by Gross Direct FTE	£15.0m
Gross Indirect FTE	116
Gross Indirect GVA generated by Gross Indirect FTE	£5.4m



Shinfield Economic Benefits

Conclusion

Proportion of Direct jobs occupied by Wokingham residents	116		
Proportion of Indirect jobs occupied by Wokingham residents	151		
Total net employment effect to Wokingham - direct and indirect jobs	267		
Operational Phase - Economic Benefits generated once development is operational	B2 Use Class	B8 Use Class	B8 + B2 Use Class Scenario
Gross Direct jobs created on-site	224	558	260
GVA generated by Gross Direct on-site jobs	£10.3m	£25.8m	£12.0m
Gross Indirect jobs created on-site	291	726	338
GVA generated by Gross Indirect on-site jobs	£15.8m	£39.4m	£18.3m
Proportion of Direct jobs occupied by Wokingham residents	72	180	84
Proportion of Indirect jobs occupied by Wokingham residents	94	234	109
Total net employment effect to Wokingham - direct and indirect jobs	166 (£8.4m)	414 (£27.7m)	190 (£9.8m)
Business Rate	£945,000	£945,000	£945,000



Appendix A Summary Infographic



Economic Benefits

Shinfield Park, Shinfield

Redevelopment of site for flexible employment use (Use Class E(g) (ii)-(iii)/B2/B8) together with associated servicing areas, parking, landscaping and other associated works

EMPLOYMENT SAFEGUARDED
THROUGHOUT THE
CONSTRUCTION PHASE

DIRECT:

270

INDIRECT:

108

CONSTRUCTION GROSS
VALUE ADDED (GVA)

DIRECT

£15.0M

INDIRECT

£5.8M

TOTAL GVA:

£20.8M

(OVER CONSTRUCTION
PERIOD)

TOTAL GROSS OPERATIONAL JOB RANGE & GVA

SUPPORTING

**224-
558**

DIRECT EMPLOYEES
ACROSS FLEXIBLE
INDUSTRIAL,
MANUFACTURING AND
R&D OCCUPATIONS

**224-
726**

INDIRECT
EMPLOYEES
THROUGHOUT THE
SUPPLY CHAIN

**£26.1M-
£85.9M**

GVA PER
ANNUM

EMPLOYMENT BENEFITING
THE LOCAL AREA AND ACROSS
THE SUPPLY CHAIN

**166-
414 FTE**
EMPLOYEES

**£8.4M-
£27.7M**
GVA PER ANNUM

BUSINESS RATES

£943,000
PER ANNUM

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