

Hearing Statement

On behalf Legal and General Assurance Society Limited (Link Life Fund)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This statement has been prepared by JLL on behalf of Legal and General Assurance Limited (Link Life Fund, hereafter referred to as “Legal and General”). It follows the representations previously made in response to all stages of the Bromley Local Plan preparation, and most recently the representations made in December 2016 in response to the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan, which is now under consideration at Examination in Public.
- 1.2. These further representations directly respond to the *Planning Inspector’s Matter, Issues and Questions* document and precede the Local Plan Hearing scheduled for December 2017. In particular, this document will seek to address Issue 3, relating to the proposed Spatial Strategy and Issue 11, relating to the proposed employment policies.

2. ISSUE 3: Is the Spatial Strategy for Bromley sound having regard to: the needs and demands of the Borough; the relationship with national policy and Government objectives; the provisions of the London Plan; and, the evidence base and preparatory processes? Has the Plan been positively prepared?

Point 9: Will the strategy satisfactorily and sustainably deliver the new development and infrastructure needed over the Plan period?

- 2.1. The Draft Local Plan lacks an up to date objective assessment of future needs for employment floorspace, as required in paragraphs 14 and 160 of the NPPF. The employment evidence base documents which support the Draft Local Plan range in date of publishing from 2010 to 2015 and not all provide an assessment of future needs in terms of floor space or jobs. Where they do, the figures vary drastically.
- 2.2. In light of this, the Draft Local Plan utilises GLA projections, instead, to provide the expected job growth over the plan period. This is stated at 25,000 additional jobs (albeit later in the Draft Plan, at para 6.1.2).
- 2.3. In relation to the Spatial Strategy, whilst the Cray Business Corridor being recognised as the main industrial and business area within the Borough is welcomed, paragraph 1.4.13 states:

“the reuse of existing employment land and floorspace for business use is prioritised with modern and more efficient buildings”.
- 2.4. The reuse of existing employment land and floorspace is a logical consideration, however, this is not always possible given the reliance on land coming available, competing land ownership and the provision of private/public funding. It is therefore a short-sighted view on how the projected substantial employment growth is to be accommodated.
- 2.5. Despite the evidence base documents being out of date, it is clear from these documents that intensification alone is not a sufficient strategy. However, there is no mention of additional land being required and/or allocated for employment use and it is therefore unclear in the Spatial Strategy as to how this identified uplift in employment provision will be met.

- 2.6. The employment position will be discussed in more depth in relation to Issue 11 later in this Hearing Statement, however it is clear that the Spatial Strategy does not satisfactorily nor sustainably deliver the new employment development needed over the Plan period. One the one hand because the objectively assessed need for employment development is outdated and insufficient, and on the other because the strategy does not allow for additional employment land to come forward.
- 2.7. It is therefore suggested that the Council update its employment evidence base documents to direct a realistic Spatial Strategy based on identified need.

Point 11: Is the spatial location of development proposed across the Borough justified, given the concentrations of development in the Plan?

- 2.8. The Draft Local Plan identifies three strategic areas for economic growth across the Borough. These locations are considered appropriate. However, given the strategy is focussed on reusing existing employment land and floorspace, it is maintained that this is not sufficient to meet the projected employment growth identified in the Plan. Instead, the expansion of these areas should also be considered, where appropriate.
- 2.9. This is raised in a number of the evidence base documents, where sites which have expansion potential were identified. The alternative site assessment for the Cray Business Corridor included in Appendix 4 of our previous representations (and re-provided at Appendix 1 of this statement) was based on the *Planning for Growth in Bromley: Cray Business Corridor Study* (URS, 2014) evidence base document. It provided a summary of the intensification and/or expansion potential of the existing employment clusters in the area. Of the nine sites identified, only two are available for expansion in the immediate term, and only two for intensification in the medium term. This leaves the remaining five sites unavailable for expansion or intensification.
- 2.10. In light of the above, the Council should consider the expansion of these strategic areas for economic growth to meet the additional employment floor space required.

Point 12: The preparatory work for the Plan has not included a comprehensive review of Green Belt to accommodate development but only changes, where necessary, to meet certain development needs. Justify this approach and its implications for the spatial strategy.

- 2.11. The NPPF outlines at paragraph 83 that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. The last review of the Green Belt was undertaken in 2012, alongside a review of Metropolitan Open Land and Urban Open Space boundaries and in the preparation of the Local Plan, Green Belt amendments have only been considered for the provision of education, traveller accommodation and Biggin Hill Airport.
- 2.12. Furthermore, a significant portion of the evidence base utilised in the formation of the Draft Local Plan post-dates the 2012 Green Belt review, including the employment evidence base documents. As such, the evidence base documents which have been relied on in the preparation of the Draft Local Plan, are not aligned.
- 2.13. In light of the GLA and Draft Local Plan projections and for additional jobs over the plan period, what this means in terms of additional floor space, and the fact that this cannot be met under the proposed employment strategy, it is entirely reasonable for the Council to undertake an up to date review of the Green Belt with a view to meeting objectively assessed development needs.
- 2.14. In particular, the Council should consider the removal of an area adjacent to the long established Crayfields Industrial Estate from the Green Belt. This has been proposed in every one of our previous representations, but has been consistently dismissed at the first filter without assessment, solely because it did not comprise one of the three criteria above despite the identified need for employment land.

3. ISSUE 11: Are the policies for employment in Bromley justified, consistent with national policy and will they be effective?

Point 50: Does the plan provide for the positive planning of employment growth and an adequate analysis of employment floorspace needs in the Borough?

- 3.1. As stated in paragraph 2.1 above, the Draft Local Plan lacks an up to date objective assessment of future needs for employment floorspace, as required in paragraphs 14 and 160 of the NPPF. The employment evidence base documents which support the Draft Local Plan range in date of publishing from 2010 to 2015, and not all provide an assessment of future needs in terms of floor space or jobs (indeed, the most recently published document does not). Where they do, the figures range drastically and as such paragraph 6.1.2 of the Draft Local Plan instead uses GLA projections to identify a total of 25,000 additional jobs being required over the plan period.
- 3.2. With specific regard to employment floorspace needs in the borough, as included in the question raised at Point 50, the Draft Local Plan provides no such calculation, relying solely on job numbers.
- 3.3. From our own calculations, based on a best case scenario of high employment densities (9sqm to 12sqm per job, typical for office provision within the HCA Employment Density Guide¹), 25,000 jobs equates to 225,000sqm-300,000sqm of additional employment floor space. This will be even higher when lower density uses are considered, such as industrial, manufacturing, and storage and distribution (ranging from 36sqm to 70sqm per employee). In light of this, our previous representations suggested additional floor area in excess of 250,000sqm would be required to accommodate the 25,000 additional jobs.
- 3.4. Draft Policy 81 relates to the protection of existing Strategic Industrial Locations, to ensure there is no loss of existing employment floorspace, which is welcomed. However, the expansion of such sites whilst being somewhat suggested in the supporting text, is not recognised in the policy.
- 3.5. The Draft Local Plan does also make limited provision for additional jobs through the intensification of some sites and existing buildings located within the three identified growth areas, however this is considered inadequate. A high level indication of growth in job numbers is provided in relation to Biggin Hill and Business Improvement Areas in general, however the calculations shown in paragraphs 2.17 and 2.18 of our previous representation identifies that this results in just 4,300 additional jobs (30,000sqm in floor area) and falls far below the required 25,000 jobs. No comprehensive or quantifiable information is provided as to the level of additional jobs or floor area other areas could potentially accommodate. As such, adequate analysis of existing and proposed employment floorspace based on identified need, has not been provided.
- 3.6. In light of the above, there is a lack of consistency within the evidence base documents, in objectively assessing the employment need over the plan period. Furthermore, there is a lack of quantitative analysis included in the Draft Local Plan to demonstrate that this need can be met within the proposed strategy.
- 3.7. The policies which are included, are limited to the intensification of existing sites and do not allow for the expansion of sites. This is entirely misaligned with evidence base documents, which clearly identify that intensification is limited and that expansion of existing sites should be considered.
- 3.8. As such, the Draft Local Plan does not provide for the positive planning of employment growth and adequate analysis of employment floorspace needs in the Borough. The council should update its evidence base documents for employment need to establish a clear position and consider the expansion of existing employment areas to accommodate the projected growth, in terms of job numbers and employment floorspace. This should be undertaken alongside a comprehensive review of the Green Belt to identify where it is not fulfilling its function and

¹ HCA Employment Density Guide final report November 2015.

where expansion of existing employment areas into the currently designated Green Belt might be appropriate, such as Crayfields Business and Industrial Parks.

Point 51: Is the evidence base sound and the wording of policy 81 sufficiently precise to define the SIL and the uses allowed within it, including a limited amount of ancillary retail use? How will the dual designation of SIL and office cluster at Cray Business Corridor work? How do the allocations of sites in the Green Belt covered by policy 81 allow for potential expansion of businesses? Should the latter part of the policy refer to “waste management and disposal”, or having regard to the waste hierarchy, only waste management?

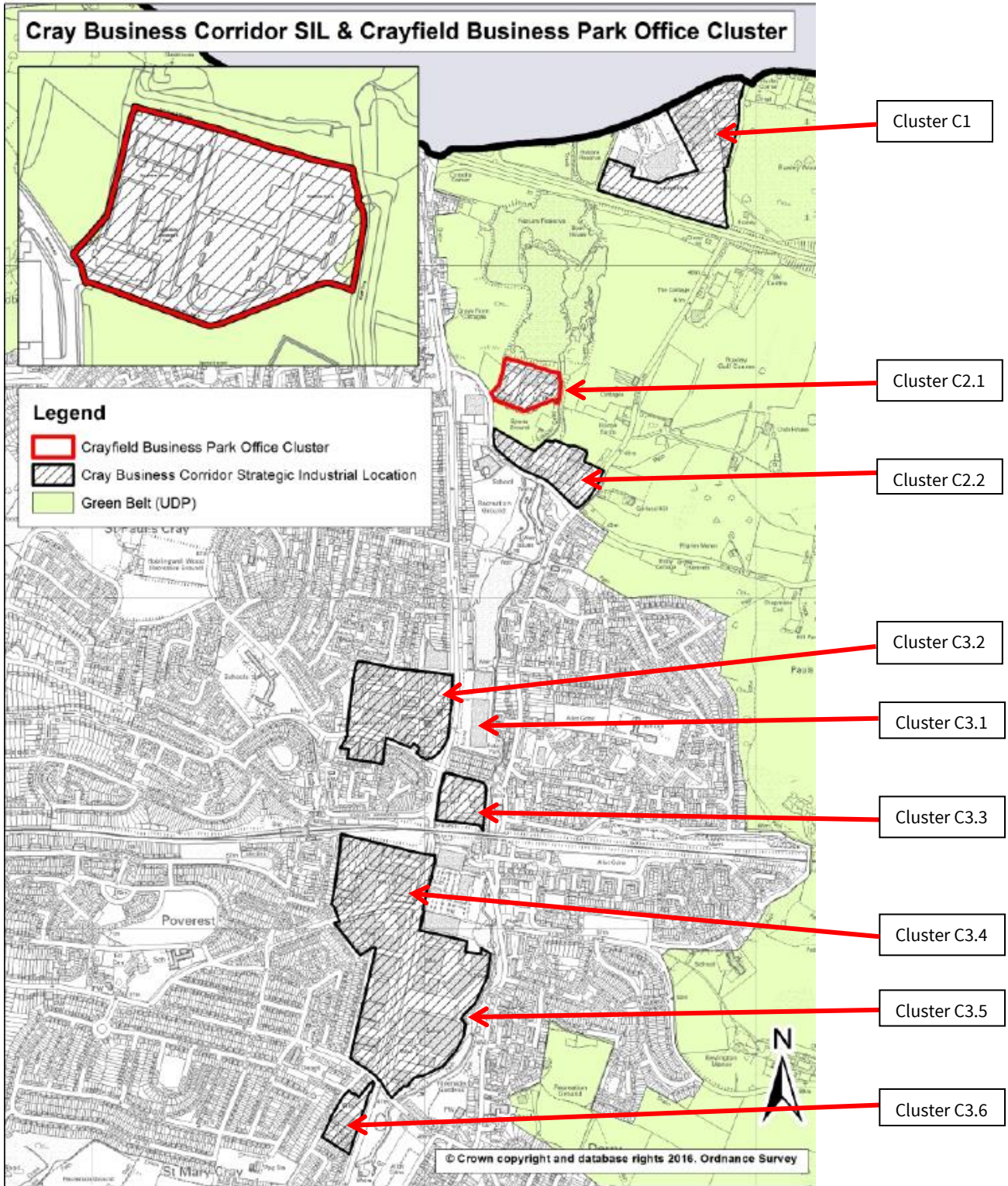
- 3.9. It is not considered that the employment evidence base documents are sound for the purposes of preparing the Local Plan, since a majority of them are outdated, inconsistent, and therefore do not account for changes in the economic climate of recent years or provide a realistic employment position for Bromley.
- 3.10. Supporting paragraph 6.1.13 to Policy 81 identifies the Cray Business Corridor as a key opportunity to provide employment floorspace. However, as identified in Paragraph 2.9 above, the Alternative Site Assessment for the Cray Business Corridor which was based on the employment evidence base document specific to the Cray Business Corridor², identifies that there is limited scope for intensification and/or expansion of the area (re-provided in Appendix 1 of this statement).
- 3.11. This links to the question above regarding the expansion of employment sites allocated adjacent to the Green Belt. In particular, Crayfields Industrial Park and Crayfields Business Park which are allocated as a Strategic Industrial Location, Locally Significant Industrial Sites and Allocated Officer Clusters are limited in terms of expansion, due to them being bounded by the Green Belt. It is noted in numerous evidence base documents that this area has potential to expand, but cannot as this would extend into an area of Green Belt, which is not currently fulfilling its function.
- 3.12. This has not been addressed or considered by the Council, and Policy 81 provides no scope for expansion to this area, which would help to provide the additional employment floor space required. Indeed, a detail assessment of the removal of this site from the Green Belt has been included in our previous representations and has been consistently raised with the Council, however it has been repeatedly and unjustifiably dismissed at the first filter and not taken any further.
- 3.13. In light of the above, the Council should provide an updated employment review, assess the quantifiable justification for solely relying on the intensification of existing sites, and explore whether these areas can be expanded to meet the additional employment floor space required. This should also involve a comprehensive review of the Green Belt to ensure it still fulfils its requirements, and the potential amendment to boundaries on employment grounds in order to meet the employment need proposed in the Draft Local Plan.

Jen Sanders
Associate Director on behalf of JLL
16th November 2017

² Planning for Growth in Bromley: Cray Business Corridor Study (URS, 2014)

Appendix 1: Cray Business Corridor Site Assessment

Plan: Extract of Cray Business Corridor from Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan



Site Sequential Assessment of Allocated Employment Clusters within the Cray Business Area

Potential for Intensification / Redevelopment Key:

	Immediate Potential
	Medium – long term
	No potential at this stage

URS CLUSTER NUMBER	EMPLOYMENT AREA / NAME OF CLUSTER	SIZE	LAND USE	PLANNING POLICY POSITION	CURRENTLY DEVELOPED	PTAL	NEIGHBOURHOOD ISSUES	POTENTIAL FOR EXPANSION
C1	Ruxley Corner / Foots Cray Business Industrial Area	8.45ha	B1c / B2 / B8 / Vacant Land	Proposed SIL (Draft Local Plan) SIL (Industrial Business Park, London Plan) Business Area (UDP)	Yes	2	No sensitive adjacent uses	<p>There are 2 potentials areas for intensification on site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Klinger Works (2.7ha) - this has recently gained prior approval for demolition of the existing building (16/04470/DEMCON), pending the future redevelopment of the site. Previous applications in 2004 proposed the redevelopment of the site for mixed use A1 retail and C1 Hotel. The vacant land (3.11ha) to the south of the site has potential for redevelopment, however there are considerable access concerns owing to the Tesco superstore immediately to the north. In addition, it is understood that this site has been purchased by Tesco for the future expansion of the superstore.
C2.1	Crayfields Park Business	2.08ha	B1a	Proposed Office Cluster (Draft Local Plan) Business Area (UDP)	Yes	1a	No sensitive adjacent uses	The site has only (relatively) recently been developed with the existing units being of high quality. There is little scope for intensification on site, however it is noted that the infill site to the south (Area 3) makes a realistic development opportunity.
C2.2	Crayfields Park Industrial	3.36hs	B8 / B1a / A4	Proposed SIL (Draft Local Plan) Business Area (UDP)	Yes	1b	No sensitive adjacent uses	The site is fully occupied and units have recently been upgraded by virtue of planning permission. There is little scope for intensification on site, however it is noted that the infill site to the north (Area 3) makes a realistic development opportunity.
C3.1	St. Mary's Industrial Park	12.76	B8 / B1a / A1-A3 / utilities	Industrial Business Park (UDP)	Yes	2	No immediate sensitive uses, however there are residential properties adjacent to the employment site at Lessons Hill.	There is no vacant land or derelict buildings within the cluster; the clusters are fully developed and well used, with no locations for redevelopment or intensification. It is also noted that area 3.1 has almost entirely been developed for retail and retail warehousing with some sui generis.
C3.2	St. Mary's Industrial Park			Proposed SIL (Draft Local Plan) SIL (Industrial Business Park, London Plan) Industrial Business Park (UDP)		3		

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C3.3	St. Mary's Industrial Park Cary Business Park	2.75	B2 / B1c / A1 Transport Functions	Proposed SIL (Draft Local Plan) SIL (Industrial Business Park, London Plan) Business Area (UDP)	Yes	3	No sensitive adjacent uses.	There is no vacant land or derelict buildings within the cluster; the cluster is fully developed and well used, with no locations for redevelopment or intensification. The cluster predominantly consists of Brookfield Industrial Estate with B2 / B8 occupiers. It is also noted that some land has been lost to retail warehousing along Sevenoaks Way.
C3.4	St. Mary's Industrial Park Cary Business Park	10.53	B1a / B1c / B2 / B8 / A1	Proposed SIL (Draft Local Plan) SIL (Industrial Business Park, London Plan) Business Area (UDP)	Yes	4	No sensitive adjacent uses.	There is no vacant land or derelict buildings within the cluster; the cluster is fully developed and well used, with no locations for redevelopment or intensification. The northern part of the cluster (the Lagoon Road Industrial Area / Cray Avenue Industrial Estate) is considered a potential area for intensification and / or redevelopment in the URS Planning for Growth in Bromley: Cray Business Corridor Study (2014) based on "significant vacancy, some signs of a lack of investment, relatively poor quality commercial stock and lower intensity development". Since the time of the URS report, it is noted that there has been some occupancy take-up and several planning applications for changes of use of the buildings, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 3 - change of use from B2 to gym and martial arts facility (ref: 12/00298/FULL2) - Application Permitted • River House - Second floor extension and elevation changed to accommodate office, workshop and plant trade hire (ref: 14/04741/FULL1) - Application Permitted • Excel House - Certificate of Lawfulness of an existing use of Class B1 office space over two floors with warehouse and loading bay at ground (ref: 14/03130/ELUD) - Development is Lawful • Unit 5A - change of use from warehouse to indoor trampoline park and ancillary cafe (ref: 16/04100/FULL1) - Application Permitted
C3.5	St. Mary's Industrial Park Cary Business Park	8.17	B1c / B2 / B8	Proposed SIL (Draft Local Plan); SIL (Industrial Business Park, London Plan) Business Area (UDP)	Yes	4	No sensitive adjacent uses.	Given the recent occupancy improvements and planning permissions for the units, it is unlikely that the area will be available for redevelopment in the near future. In addition, this northern part of the cluster appears to have a multitude of ownerships and therefore the feasibility of all units coming forward for development at this stage is small. As such, this does not present a realistic option for redevelopment and / or intensification.

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C3.6	St. Mary's Cary Industrial Business Park	1.47	B1C / B2 / Utilities	Proposed SIL (Draft Local Plan) SIL (Industrial Business Parks, London Plan) Business Area (UDP)	Yes	3	No sensitive adjacent uses.	There is no vacant land or derelict buildings within the cluster; the cluster is fully developed and well used, with no locations for redevelopment or intensification.
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