AECOM

Employment Land Assessment 2026

Guildford Borough Council

May 2026

Delivering a better world

Prepared for:

Guildford Borough Council
Millmead House, Millmeas, Guildford GU2 4BB

Prepared by:

Bart Monhonval
Associate Director
E: bart.monhonval@aecom.com

AECOM Limited
Aldgate Tower
2 Leman Street
London E1 8FA
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)20 7061 7000
aecom.com

Table of Contents

Figures

Tables

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 AECOM was commissioned by Guildford Borough Council to undertake an Employment Land Assessment. The study sets out a detailed evidence base to support the new Local Plan for Guildford, with the specific aim to ensure that the Local Plan contains sufficient land and suitable policy approaches to drive sustainable economic growth across Guildford Borough.

1.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[1] outlines the principles that Local Planning Authorities should follow in preparing their evidence base to inform employment land policies. The need for Local Planning Authorities to produce an up-to-date employment land evidence base and the suggested format is outlined in national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)[2]. The approach to the study reflects the requirements and directions of this guidance.

1.1.3 The scope of the study includes employment land defined as office and industrial land and businesses, falling under the following use classes:

Offices:

- E(g)(i) Offices; and
- E(g)(ii) Research and Development.

Industrial:

- E(g)(iii) Light industrial;
- B2 General industrial; and
- B8 Storage or distribution

1.1.4 The study also considers the role/impact of Sui Generis (SG) uses, within land designated for employment uses, although this is not central to the Employment Study and forecasting of demand for land for SG uses is not considered.

1.1.5 The area of assessment is the whole of Guildford Borough. In total 30 employment areas were assessed in detail, comprised primarily of designated sites, with additional undesignated sites identified with potential to be considered for designation given the existing or proposed use of the site for employment activities. Where sites do not meet the size-orientated criteria for assessment as set out by the PPG, the stock represented by these is still captured in the study within the total floorspace calculations, and property market analysis.

1.2 Policy Context

1.2.1 Guildford's employment land strategy is shaped by a robust framework of national, regional, and local policies. At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) require local authorities to maintain an up-to-date, evidence-based approach to employment land, supporting sustainable economic growth, innovation, and productivity. The draft NPPF (2025) places further emphasis on brownfield-first development, infrastructure provision, and the need for flexible, responsive planning to meet evolving business needs.

1.2.2 Regionally, Surrey's Economic Growth Strategy (2025), Local Transport Plan (2022–2032), and Economic Future Forward to 2030 all prioritise innovation, infrastructure, skills, and

[1] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2024); National Planning Policy Framework
[2] Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government, (2019); Planning Practice Guidance.

inclusive growth. These strategies reinforce Guildford's role as a regional economic hub, emphasising connectivity, digital infrastructure, and sustainable development.

1.2.3 Locally, the Guildford Borough Local Plan (2019) and supporting evidence, such as the 2017 Employment Land Needs Assessment and the 2022 Economic Strategy, focus on safeguarding key employment sites, including Surrey Research Park and Slyfield Industrial Estate. The Local Plan allocates several strategic sites for employment, such as at Blackwell Farm, Gosden Hill Farm, and Wisley Airfield, and encourages intensification and modernisation of existing stock to ensure a diverse, high-quality supply of business space.

1.3 Functional Economic Market Area

1.3.1 Guildford's functional economic market area is defined by strong economic, transport, and property market linkages with the neighbouring authorities of Woking and Waverley. Together, they form the Guildford's FEMA.

1.3.2 Commuting patterns reveal that Guildford is relatively self-contained, with high inflow and outflow commuting, but also serves as a net importer of labour. The borough's strategic location on the A3 and mainline rail network underpins its role as a key employment centre for Surrey and the wider South East. Overlapping commercial and housing markets connect Guildford with neighbouring authorities, especially Woking and Waverley. The borough is part of the Surrey office and industrial property market, with Guildford Central and Guildford Fringe as distinct sub-markets. Governance arrangements, including the West Surrey new unitary authority which will be establishing in April 2027 following local government reorganisation, provide a framework for collaborative economic development, infrastructure investment, and skills planning.

1.4 Socio-Economic Profile

1.4.1 Guildford stands out as one of the most dynamic and prosperous boroughs in Surrey and the wider South East, underpinned by a highly skilled population, strong economic fundamentals, and a diverse business base. The borough's population has grown steadily over the past decade, reaching approximately 148,000 residents as of the latest estimates. This growth is driven by both natural increase and net inward migration, reflecting Guildford's reputation as an attractive place to live, work, and invest. The age profile is relatively balanced, with a significant proportion of working-age adults and a growing cohort of young professionals and families, drawn by high-quality schools, amenities, and connectivity.

1.4.2 Educational attainment in Guildford is notably high, with 44% of residents holding degree-level qualifications or above, which is substantially above regional and national averages. This concentration of human capital is a key driver of economic competitiveness, supporting innovation, entrepreneurship, and productivity across multiple sectors. The borough benefits from the presence of the University of Surrey, which not only provides a pipeline of skilled graduates but also anchors research, development, and knowledge transfer activities. The university's influence extends into the wider economy through partnerships with local businesses, spin-outs, and the Surrey Research Park, which hosts over 200 companies in fields such as life sciences, digital technology, and engineering.

1.4.3 Labour market indicators confirm Guildford's position as an employment hotspot. The employment rate is 83.1%, significantly higher than the South East average, and job density stands at 0.98, indicating nearly one job per working-age resident. Economic activity rates are similarly robust, with low levels of unemployment and economic inactivity. Guildford's workforce is characterised by high levels of professional, managerial, and technical occupations, reflecting the borough's strong representation in knowledge-intensive industries.

1.4.4 The economic structure of Guildford is diverse and resilient. Professional, scientific, and technical activities account for 14% of local employment, supported by a significant presence in health (15%) and wholesale/retail (13%). The borough's sectoral mix is further enriched by strengths in education, information and communication, and financial services.

This diversity provides a buffer against economic shocks and supports long-term growth, as evidenced during recent periods of national and global uncertainty. The public sector, including health and education, remains a major employer, but the private sector is vibrant and expanding, particularly in high-value, innovative fields.

1.4.5 Guildford's business environment is marked by entrepreneurial dynamism and a healthy churn of new enterprises. Business registration rates consistently outpace de-registrations, with micro and small businesses forming the backbone of the local economy. While most firms employ fewer than ten people, the borough is also home to several large employers, including multinational corporations, research institutions, and public sector organisations. The Surrey Research Park and Guildford Business Park serve as focal points for business growth, attracting inward investment and fostering clusters of activity in emerging sectors.

1.4.6 Earnings and productivity in Guildford are among the highest in the region. Gross Value Added (GVA) per head and average workplace earnings both exceed South East and national benchmarks, reflecting the borough's concentration of high-value jobs and skilled labour. This prosperity is underpinned by strong infrastructure, including excellent transport links via the A3, M25, and mainline rail, as well as digital connectivity and access to high-quality amenities.

1.4.7 Looking ahead, Guildford faces both opportunities and challenges. The borough's socio-economic strengths position it well to capitalise on growth in knowledge-based industries, life sciences, and creative sectors. However, issues such as housing affordability, skills gaps in certain technical fields, and the need for ongoing investment in infrastructure and placemaking will require careful management. Ensuring that economic growth is inclusive and sustainable, benefiting all communities and supporting environmental objectives, remains a key priority for local policy.

1.5 Current Supply

1.5.1 Guildford's current supply of employment land is both diverse and strategically significant, reflecting the borough's role as a major economic centre within Surrey and the wider South East. The supply encompasses a broad range of designated sites, each contributing to the area's capacity to support business growth, innovation, and job creation. The portfolio is underpinned by a combination of long-established industrial estates, modern business parks, and a variety of smaller, locally significant sites that collectively provide for the needs of a wide spectrum of occupiers.

1.5.2 Guildford's employment land supply has 30 designated employment sites[3]. These sites range from large, regionally important locations such as Slyfield Industrial Estate and Surrey Research Park to smaller, more specialised or rural sites that cater to niche sectors and local businesses.

1.5.3 Slyfield Industrial Estate is the borough's largest concentration of industrial and warehousing space, offering a mix of unit sizes and types that accommodate logistics, distribution, manufacturing, and service sector activities. Surrey Research Park, by contrast, is a centre of excellence for knowledge-based industries, particularly in science, technology, and innovation. The park is closely linked to the University of Surrey and provides a supportive environment for start-ups, scale-ups, and established firms in sectors such as life sciences, digital technology, and engineering. The high-quality, flexible accommodation on offer, combined with access to research expertise and collaboration opportunities, makes the park a key driver of Guildford's economic competitiveness.

1.5.4 Other Strategic Employment Sites include Guildford Business Park, Woodbridge Meadows, and Burnt Common. These sites offer a mix of office, light industrial, and storage/distribution space, with varying levels of modernity and specification. Guildford Business Park, for example, provides modern, campus-style office accommodation, while Woodbridge Meadows is characterised by a mix of older industrial units and more recent commercial

[3] The Guildford Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (LPSS) identifies 28 designated employment sites. However, in this study, Home Farm is sub-divided into two sites (East and West) and Burnt Common is now considered designated due to the ongoing delivery of employment space on this site.

developments. Burnt Common, located near the A3, is a good location for logistics and warehousing, benefiting from excellent connectivity and a range of unit sizes.

1.5.5 In addition to these Strategic Employment Sites, Guildford's employment land portfolio includes a number of smaller, Locally Significant Employment Sites. These locations often serve the needs of micro and small businesses, providing affordable, flexible space in accessible locations. Rural and undesignated sites also play a role, supporting local economic activity and offering opportunities for intensification or redevelopment where appropriate.

1.5.6 The quality and condition of Guildford's employment land and premises are generally high, particularly in the larger, more modern business parks and industrial estates. However, there is considerable variation across the portfolio. Some older industrial estates and office buildings are in need of refurbishment or redevelopment to meet modern standards of energy efficiency, accessibility, and workplace wellbeing. The tightening of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) is a key driver of investment in retrofit and upgrade, with landlords increasingly recognising the need to future-proof their assets in order to retain and attract occupiers.

1.5.7 The supply of undeveloped employment land in Guildford is relatively limited, with 8.7 hectares of vacant land identified across five Strategic Employment Sites[4]. In addition, there is potential for up to 1.9 hectares of additional supply through the intensification of existing sites, particularly where older, low-density uses can be replaced with higher-value, more efficient development. The scope for intensification is greatest in locations with good access to transport infrastructure and services, and where planning policy supports the principle of higher-density employment use.

1.5.8 The planning pipeline in Guildford includes a mix of new developments, refurbishments, and changes of use. Recent years have seen some loss of office floorspace, primarily as a result of permitted development rights allowing conversion to residential or educational uses. While these changes have contributed to meeting housing and other needs, they have also reduced the stock of available office space, particularly in the town centre and other accessible locations. At the same time, there has been a net gain in industrial floorspace, with new developments coming forward on allocated sites and through the redevelopment of obsolete premises. The delivery of current pipeline schemes is subject to a range of factors, including market conditions, viability, and infrastructure provision, and ongoing monitoring is essential to ensure that data is available on whether planned supply is realised. This is expected to develop the equivalent of 0.2 hectares of employment land.

1.5.9 Strategically, the current supply of employment land in Guildford is broadly aligned with projected demand, but there are clear pressures for high-quality, flexible office and industrial space (particularly B8). The challenge for policy-makers is to ensure that the supply of land and premises keeps pace with evolving business needs, supports economic diversification, and enables the transition to a low-carbon, knowledge-based economy. This will require a proactive approach to safeguarding and enhancing core employment sites, supporting investment in retrofit and modernisation, and enabling the delivery of new, sustainable workspace in accessible locations.

1.6 Property Market Profile

Office Market [E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii)]

1.6.1 The office market in Guildford is particularly well-developed, with an estimated 399,000 square metres of floorspace distributed across the town centre and a number of high-profile business parks. Key locations include the Surrey Research Park, which is internationally recognised for its focus on science, technology, and knowledge-based industries, and Guildford Business Park, which provides modern, flexible accommodation for a range of occupiers. In the town centre, a mix of traditional office buildings and newer developments cater to professional services, creative industries, and start-ups, benefiting from proximity to

[4] Woodbridge Meadows; Burnt Common - London Road; Surrey Research Park; Guildford Business Park; Send Business Centre

transport links, retail, and leisure amenities. The presence of the University of Surrey acts as a catalyst for innovation, supporting the growth of spin-out companies and fostering collaboration between academia and business.

1.6.2 Demand for office space in Guildford remains robust, underpinned by the borough's highly skilled workforce, excellent connectivity, and strong reputation as a business location. However, the market faces a pronounced shortage of Grade A space, particularly in the most accessible and desirable locations (town centre). This has led to upward pressure on rents and increased competition among occupiers seeking high-quality premises. As a result, there is a growing trend towards the refurbishment and retrofitting of older buildings, with landlords investing in upgrades to meet modern standards of energy efficiency, flexibility, and workplace wellbeing.

1.6.3 The shift towards hybrid and flexible working, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has also influenced occupier requirements, with increased demand for adaptable, serviced, and collaborative workspace models. While some occupiers have reduced their overall floorspace needs, the emphasis on quality, location, and amenity provision has intensified.

Industrial Market [E(g)(iii), B2 and B8]

1.6.4 The industrial market in Guildford is equally significant, with 207,200 sqm of floorspace, supporting a broad spectrum of economic activity from logistics and distribution (with B8 accounting for 75% of the total industrial floorspace) to advanced manufacturing and life sciences. The borough's principal industrial locations include Slyfield Industrial Estate, Woodbridge Meadows, and Burnt Common, each offering a range of unit sizes and formats. These estates are strategically positioned to take advantage of Guildford's access to the A3, M25, and wider South East transport network, making them attractive to logistics operators, last-mile delivery firms, and businesses with regional supply chains. The industrial stock in Guildford is a mix of older, legacy premises and newer, high-specification units, reflecting both the borough's long-standing industrial base and recent investment in modern facilities.

1.6.5 Demand for industrial space is strong, particularly for logistics, warehousing, and high-tech manufacturing. Vacancy rates for light industrial and storage/distribution space are below regional averages, indicating a tight market and strong competition for available units. However, there is some spare capacity in general industrial stock, suggesting opportunities for intensification, redevelopment, or repurposing to meet changing business needs. Rents for industrial space are above both regional and national comparators, reflecting the quality of the offer, the strength of local demand, and the limited availability of modern units. The market is also responding to the growing importance of sustainability and energy efficiency, with new developments and refurbishments increasingly designed to meet higher environmental standards.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

1.6.6 A significant and cross-cutting issue for both the office and industrial markets is the need to comply with tightening Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). The government's trajectory towards higher energy performance requirements, with potential targets of EPC C by 2027 and EPC B by 2030, has major implications for Guildford's commercial property stock. A substantial proportion of existing buildings – particularly older offices and industrial units – will require upgrading to meet these standards.

1.6.7 This regulatory pressure is driving investment in retrofit and refurbishment, with landlords and occupiers increasingly prioritising sustainability, energy efficiency, and environmental performance. While this transition presents challenges in terms of cost and potential disruption, it also offers opportunities to future-proof Guildford's employment land, enhance its business environment, and support the transition to a low-carbon economy.

1.7 Future Demand

1.7.1 The Guildford ELA adopts a robust, multi-scenario approach to forecasting future demand for employment land and floorspace over the period 2025–2045. This approach is in line with Planning Practice Guidance and recognises the inherent uncertainty in long-term economic forecasting. The study models a range of scenarios to test how different economic, demographic, and market trends could affect the need for office and industrial space. The scenarios are:

- Labour Demand Scenario (using both Experian and Oxford Economics forecasts)
- Labour Supply Scenario (again using both Experian and Oxford Economics)
- Past Take-Up Scenario (trend-based, using historic absorption rates)

1.7.2 Each scenario is underpinned by specific assumptions about employment growth, population change, and market behaviour. The study also applies adjustments for replacement of losses (to account for floorspace lost to alternative uses), and all scenarios are rebased to align with the latest official employment statistics.

Scenario 1: Labour Demand

1.7.3 The "Labour Demand" scenario projects future requirements for office and industrial space based on econometric forecasts of employment growth by sector. Both Experian and Oxford Economics employment forecasts are used to provide a range of outcomes, rebased to ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data for consistency.

1.7.4 The Experian Labour Demand forecasts a net additional requirement of approximately 74,000 sqm of office floorspace and 13,700 sqm of industrial floorspace by 2045, translating to 8.1 ha and 3.0 ha of land respectively.

1.7.5 Oxford Economics Labour Demand forecasts a slightly lower net additional requirement of 65,700 sqm of office space and 20,800 sqm of industrial space (7.1 ha and 4.6 ha of land).

1.7.6 The largest employment growth is anticipated in professional, scientific, and technical activities, health, wholesale, and computing & information services. Declines are forecast in manufacturing and public administration. On the office market, growth is expected to be driven by Guildford's strong knowledge economy, with demand focused on high-quality, flexible, and centrally located office space, particularly in clusters like Surrey Research Park and Guildford Business Park. On the industrial market, the demand for industrial space is primarily for storage and distribution (B8), reflecting national trends in logistics and e-commerce. Some decline is expected in traditional manufacturing (B2) and light industrial (E(g)(iii)) uses.

Scenario 2: Labour Supply

1.7.7 The "Labour Supply" scenario estimates future requirements based on projected changes in the resident workforce, derived from the latest population and housing growth forecasts (Housing Needs Assessment). The increase in working-age population is converted into local labour supply, then distributed across sectors in line with forecast trends.

1.7.8 Experian Labour Supply projects a net additional requirement of 85,1000 sqm of office floorspace and 16,200 sqm of industrial floorspace to 2045 (9.3 ha and 3.6 ha of land).

1.7.9 Oxford Economics Labour Supply projects a net additional requirement of 51,000 sqm of office space and 6,100 sqm of industrial space (5.5 ha and 1.4 ha of land).

1.7.10 The labour supply scenarios generally result in lower requirements than the labour demand scenarios, as they are constrained by the projected growth in the local workforce. The fastest relative growth is expected in research and development (E(g)(ii)), but the largest absolute growth is in general office jobs (E(g)(i)).

Scenario 3: Past Take-Up

1.7.11 The "Past Take-Up" scenario projects future needs by extrapolating historic net absorption rates of employment floorspace (from CoStar data, 2009–2025) forward to 2045. This scenario is particularly useful for testing the realism of demand-based forecasts in the context of actual market behaviour.

1.7.12 The past 10-year average suggests a net decline in demand for both office (-4,500 sqm) and industrial (-16,000 sqm) floorspace by 2045, reflecting recent subdued market activity and the impact of structural changes such as hybrid working and the repurposing of older stock.

1.7.13 This scenario is considered pessimistic, as it may understate future requirements if economic growth or structural shifts (i.e. in logistics) accelerate.

Replacement of Losses and Allowance for Optimum Frictional Vacancy

1.7.14 Across all scenarios, an allowance is made for the replacement of employment floorspace lost to alternative uses (such as residential). The study assumes 25% of office losses and 50% of industrial losses will need to be replaced, taking into consideration that not all space will need to be replaced due to shifts in working patterns and technological progress. This adjustment increases the net requirement for new floorspace, ensuring that the employment land portfolio is not eroded over time.

1.7.15 An allowance for optimum frictional vacancy (to ensure space is available to allow businesses to move between premises based on their needs) is also applied to gross employment space requirements. A rate of 8% for office space and 5% for industrial space is assumed.

Preferred Scenario and Rationale

1.7.16 After considering the quantitative outcomes and qualitative evidence, the study identifies a preferred scenario for planning purposes:

- Office Space: The preferred scenario is based on the average of the Oxford Economics labour demand and supply forecasts, projecting a net additional requirement of approximately 58,400 sqm of office floorspace (6.3 ha of land) by 2045. This balances the need to support economic growth with the realities of market trends, hybrid working, and the risk of overestimating demand.
- Industrial Space: The preferred scenario, based on the labour demand (Oxford Economics) forecast, projecting a net additional requirement of 20,800 sqm of industrial floorspace (4.6 ha of land) by 2045, with demand focused on high-quality logistics and flexible industrial units.

1.7.17 This preferred scenario is considered both ambitious and deliverable, reflecting Guildford's role as a regional economic hub, the strength of its knowledge economy, and the ongoing demand for modern, sustainable workspace. The scenario also acknowledges the risks associated with hybrid working, the potential for further losses to alternative uses, and the need for ongoing monitoring and flexibility.

1.8 Comparison Between Supply and Demand

1.8.1 When the preferred demand scenario is compared to the supply that is certain to be delivered (i.e. under construction), the analysis shows that, in aggregate, this supply will be insufficient to meet projected needs over the plan period. An overall shortfall of 88,300 sqm (11.3 ha) is identified. The main shortfall comes from office space (71,100 sqm or 7.4 ha).

1.8.2 When considering less certain supply, the shortfall can be reduced. This uncertain supply has been identified as potential space that could be delivered on currently designated employment sites. This uncertain supply includes floorspace which has planning permission but is not yet implemented (i.e. construction has not started), vacant land identified on employment sites (suitable for development and currently without planning approval), and employment land that could be suitable for intensification and/or redevelopment. When taking this additional supply into consideration, the gap analysis shows a small deficit of 23,600 sqm (but a surplus of 1.1 ha of employment land). This is driven by a surplus of industrial space (27,600 sqm or 6.1 ha) whilst there would still be a deficit of office space (51,200 sqm or 5 ha).

1.8.3 This shows that, in order to respond to future demand, a reorganisation of employment sites should be considered, allowing for additional office space to be delivered, particularly in locations in and around the town centre (where the demand is located). Additional sites may also need to be allocated to employment use, in order to ensure that sufficient land is available to respond to future demand.

1.9 Recommendations

1.9.1 The Guildford Employment Land Assessment 2026 advocates for a balanced and flexible approach to managing employment land across the borough. The Council is encouraged to support the needs of businesses of all sizes and sectors, ensuring that policy decisions are underpinned by a robust and regularly updated evidence base. This includes maintaining a monitoring framework to track supply, demand, and delivery risks. The overarching aim is to avoid both over-protection and under-protection of employment sites, enabling the release or repurposing of land where justified by clear evidence, while safeguarding Strategic and Locally Significant Employment Sites unless suitable relocation can be secured.

1.9.2 A particular focus is placed on the protection and enhancement of Guildford's core office clusters, especially those in and around the town centre. These clusters are vital for supporting high-value employment and promoting sustainable travel patterns. The recommendations highlight the importance of refurbishing and retrofitting existing office stock to meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) and evolving market expectations, including digital infrastructure and adaptability for hybrid working. The Council should also encourage the provision of flexible, collaborative, and affordable workspace, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and creative or digital sectors. Timely delivery of extant permissions and pipeline developments is essential, and regular review of site allocations should be undertaken to ensure alignment with market demand and deliverability.

1.9.3 The Council should closely monitor losses of employment land to alternative uses, including residential and student accommodation, as well as risks arising from permitted development rights (PDR). Any changes should be justified by robust evidence and offset by new provision elsewhere in the borough. The use of Article 4 Directions or similar policy tools is recommended to retain employment capacity, especially in the town centre, where office space is most at risk from PDR.

1.9.4 For industrial space, the report recommends safeguarding strategic sites, especially those with good access to the strategic road network and potential for intensification. There is a recognised need to allocate additional land for B8 logistics uses, focusing on locations with direct access to the A3 and other key corridors. Where industrial sites are underperforming or facing pressure for alternative uses, the Council should plan for managed relocation to new or expanded sites, thereby enabling the release of land for housing or mixed-use redevelopment. Supporting the development of modern, energy-efficient industrial and manufacturing premises is also prioritised, with a particular emphasis on clean growth sectors such as life sciences and advanced manufacturing.

1.9.5 Infrastructure delivery is identified as a critical enabler of employment land. The Council should ensure that employment land strategies are supported by timely delivery of transport, digital, and utilities infrastructure to unlock growth and enhance the attractiveness of sites.

1.9.6 Finally, the report recommends maintaining a dynamic and responsive approach to employment land allocation. The Council will need to consider sources of supply to meet identified needs. Regular updates to the evidence base and periodic reviews of site allocations are essential to ensure that policies remain aligned with market signals and delivery risks. This should be considered as part of the 5-year review of the adopted Local Plan.

2. Introduction

2.1 Study Context

2.1.1 AECOM was commissioned by Guildford Borough Council to undertake an Employment Land Assessment (ELA) to inform the emerging Local Plan. The study provides a robust and up-to-date evidence base to ensure that Guildford's Local Plan contains sufficient land and appropriate policy approaches to support sustainable economic growth across the borough. The assessment is set against the backdrop of national planning policy, notably the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which outlines the principles that local planning authorities should follow in preparing evidence to inform employment land policies. The NPPF, supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), emphasises the need for local plans to be underpinned by a clear understanding of business needs, market trends, and the functional economic geography of the area.

2.1.2 The scope of the Guildford ELA encompasses all employment land within the borough, defined as land and premises used for office and industrial activities. This includes the following use classes: E(g)(i) (offices), E(g)(ii) (research and development), E(g)(iii) (light industrial), B2 (general industrial), and B8 (storage and distribution). The study also considers the role and need of Sui Generis employment uses, although forecasting demand for these is not central to the assessment. In total, 30 designated employment sites were assessed in detail, as well as a range of non-designated land that could deliver future supply in response to demand for employment land. Where sites did not meet the size criteria for detailed assessment, their contribution was still captured through overall floorspace calculations and market analysis.

2.2 Objectives

2.2.1 The primary objective of the Guildford Employment Land Assessment is to provide a detailed, evidence-based understanding of the current and future requirements for employment land and premises in the borough. The study aims to:

- Assess the quantity and quality of existing employment land and its suitability to support ongoing and future economic activity.
- Identify the likely future demand for employment land and floorspace over the Local Plan period, taking into account projected economic growth, sectoral trends, and population change.
- Compare the supply of existing and potential employment land against forecast demand, identifying any gaps or surpluses.
- Provide clear, actionable recommendations for employment land policies, including the identification of strategic and locally significant employment sites, and guidance on the protection, release, or intensification of sites.
- Ensure that the Local Plan is responsive to the needs of key growth sectors, supports innovation and enterprise, and aligns with broader economic strategies at the local and regional level.

2.2.2 Within these broad aims, the study also considers specific issues such as the impact of permitted development rights, the need for flexible and modern workspace, and the implications of evolving energy efficiency standards.

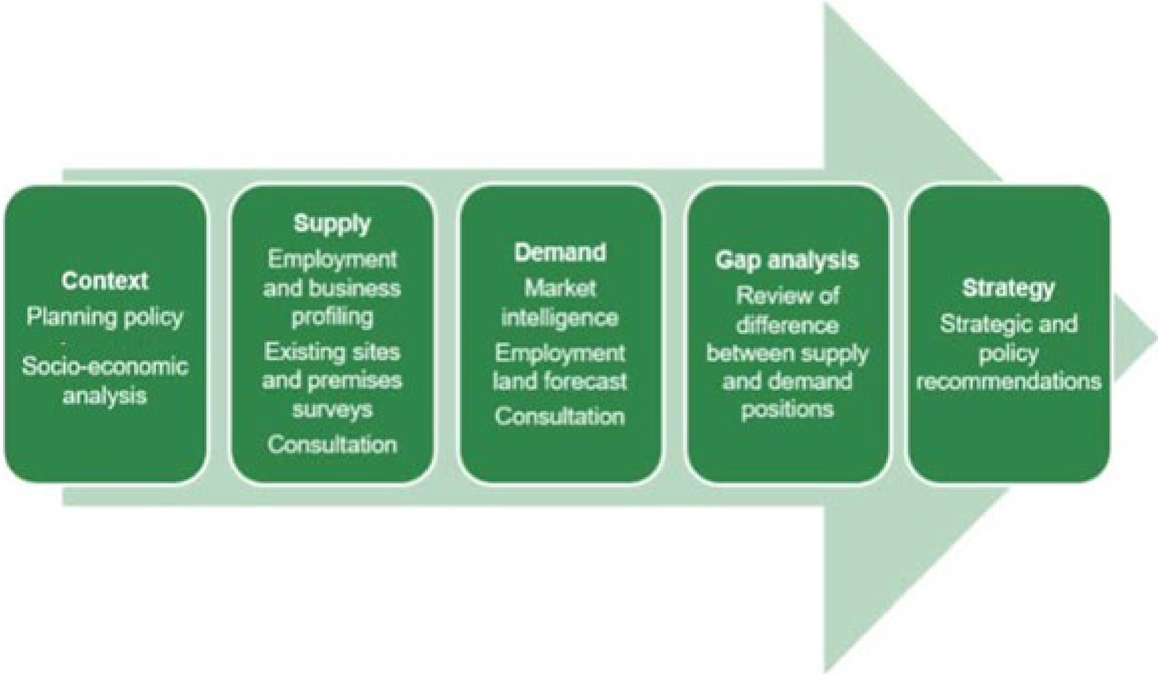
2.3 Approach

2.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the principles that Local Planning Authorities should follow in order to prepare their evidence base which informs the development of employment land policies.

2.3.2 The need for Local Planning Authorities to produce an up-to-date employment land evidence base, along with the suggested format, is outlined in National Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG'), published in March 2025. The PPG is periodically updated; the 'Housing and Economic Needs Assessment' was published in 2015 and last updated in 2025.

2.3.3 The methodology and tasks forming the approach to this ENA have been designed to conform to the PPG. This approach is illustrated in Figure 2-1.

Figure 2-1 Approach to Study



2.4 Report Structure

2.4.1 The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Policy Context**: Reviews national, regional, and local policy frameworks relevant to employment land.
- **Definition of the Functional Economic** Market Area: Analyses Guildford's economic geography, including commuting patterns, property markets, and governance linkages.
- **Socio-economic Profile**: Provides an overview of population, workforce, business base, and economic performance.
- **Property Market Profile**: Examines the office and industrial property markets, including trends in supply, demand, rents, and vacancy rates.
- **Current Supply**: Details the characteristics and assessment of existing employment sites, including site surveys and criteria-based evaluations.
- **Future Demand**: Sets out the methodology and results of demand forecasting, including scenario analysis and sensitivity testing.
- **Comparison Between Supply and Demand**: Compares projected needs with available and potential supply, identifying gaps and opportunities.
- **Conclusions and Recommendations**: Summarises the evidence and provides policy recommendations for the Local Plan.

3. Policy Context

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section outlines the planning policy and strategic context of relevance to employment land in the Borough.

3.2 National Planning Policy/Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

3.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework[5] (NPPF) consolidates the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies for England and provides overarching guidance on the Government's development aims. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which the Government states should be seen as a common theme running through plan-making and decision-taking.

3.2.2 In relation to the economy and employment land, the NPPF states that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. They should support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Decisions should also allow an area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses, and address any challenges of the future.

3.2.3 In addition, the Framework aims to identify strategic sites for local and inward investment, address potential barriers to investment, allow for new and flexible working practices, and enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.

3.2.4 The NPPF encourages planning policies to establish a clear economic vision and strategy that actively promotes sustainable growth, aligning with national policies outlined in Invest 2035: The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2025)

3.2.5 A draft update to the NPPF (December 2025) was published on 16th December 2025 for consultation, open until March 2026. Once adopted, the draft NPPF (2025) will supersede the current NPPF 2024. Its adoption is not expected before the second half of 2026.

3.2.6 The draft NPPF published in December 2025 includes several changes relevant to employment land, focusing on supporting economic growth and ensuring that land of the right type is available in the right places to meet development needs. These changes include:

- Emphasis on the identification and allocation of land for employment uses (as part of local plans) which ensures sufficient land is available to support growth, innovation, and productivity;
- Emphasis on brownfield-first development;
- The presumption in favour of sustainable development applies to employment land within settlements, meaning that planning applications for employment uses on brownfield sites are more likely to be approved unless harms substantially outweigh benefits;
- The introduction of clearer requirements for the infrastructure needed to support employment land, including affordable housing and on-site and off-site infrastructure.

[5] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, (2024); National Planning Policy Framework.

3.2.7 The draft NPPF (December 2025) is subject to modifications, following consultation, and therefore should not be considered as final and not assumed to be superseding the current NPPF (2024) until formal approval.

Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025

3.2.8 The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025[6] is new framework legislation for England that reforms town and country planning and consenting for major infrastructure, including housing, transport, energy and related development. The Act supports faster strategic planning and infrastructure delivery to support economic growth and job creation alongside large-scale housing.

Planning Practice Guidance (2025)

3.2.9 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)[7] includes guidance on housing and economic needs assessments, and housing and economic land availability assessments.

3.2.10 Guidance on housing and economic needs assessments states that authorities need to prepare an evidence base to understand existing business needs, which will have to reflect local circumstances and market conditions. This includes assessing the best fit functional economic market area (FEMA), existing stock of land for employment uses within the area, recent pattern of employment land supply and loss, market demand and failure, and wider market signals relating to economic growth.

3.2.11 For housing and economic land availability assessments, PPG requires local planning authorities to work with other local authorities within the functional economic market area when assessing availability of land. A wide range of sites should be considered including existing sites that could be improved, intensified or changed.

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2022 (2022)

3.2.12 In 2022, the Government amended the previous Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Order 2015)[8] which introduced permitted development rights (hereafter referred to as 'PDR') allowing certain building and development works to be carried out without the need of the normal planning process[9]. These rights exist under the General Permitted Development order (GDPO) and were introduced to facilitate housing growth to meet targets across England. New types of permitted development have been introduced to make it easier for people to extend their home, create new homes in existing buildings such as offices, shops and warehouses or demolish vacant previously classified B1(a), B1(b), B1(c) or C3 space and rebuild as residential.

3.2.13 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No. 3) Order 2020 came into effect on 31 August 2020. This dealt with PDRs for demolition and rebuilding as residential. Article 4 of the 2020 Order added a new class ZA to the 2015 Order, dealing with demolition of buildings and construction of new dwellings in their place. To fall within the scope of this new PDR, the building to be demolished must:

- have been built before 1 January 1990;
- be vacant, redundant or free-standing; and
- fall within the following use-classes on 12 March 2020:
    - B1(a) offices

[6] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2025/34
[7] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2025). Planning Practice Guidance
[8] HM Government, (2016); The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended.
[9] HM Government, (2016); The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended.

- B1(b) research and development
- B1(c) industrial processes (light industrial)
- C3 residential (only applicable for free-standing, purpose-built residential blocks of flats).

3.2.14 This PDR is subject to the prior approval process, and the building must have been vacant for at least six months prior to the date of the application for prior approval.

3.2.15 Class MA of the general committed development order, introduced in August 2021, allows the change of use of commercial, business, and service premises to change to residential without the need for planning permission.

3.2.16 The current Use Classes were last updated on 1 September 2020. Class B now comprises B2 General Industrial and B8 Storage and Distribution, while previously classified B1(a), B1(b) and B1(c) uses are now as follows:

- E(g)(i): Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions;
- E(g)(ii) Research and development of products or processes; and
- E(g)(iii) Industrial processes.

Localism Act (2011) (Duty to Co-operate) (2011)

3.2.17 The Duty to Co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development falls under the Localism Act of 2011[10]. It places a duty on LPAs, County Councils and public bodies in England to undertake active engagement between one another, to share findings and work together across a number of activities relating to planning and sustainable development. More specifically, with regard to this employment land review, it may mean collaborating to resolve any imbalances with supply and demand of employment land across a FEMA.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023)

3.2.18 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act[11] was given Royal Assent in October 2023 at which point it was enacted in law. The Act aims to *'speed up the planning system, hold developers to account, cut bureaucracy, and encourage more councils to put in place plans to enable the building of new homes'*[12]. A central tenet of the Act included the introduction of National Development Management Policies (NPMPs) which give the same weight as local plans in decision-making on planning applications; the scope of which could be anything that concerns the development or use of land in England.

3.2.19 The Act abolishes the 'duty to cooperate' with the intention that a new 'flexible alignment policy' will be introduced by the Government[13], subject to regulations coming into force. Although not yet developed, the alignment policy will be used for 'developing infrastructure in common'. Some concerns have been raised that cooperation between local authorities may become disincentivised[14].

Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy (2024)

3.2.20 Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy[15] sets out a long-term, place-based approach to economic growth, focusing on high-potential sectors and regions, and prioritising investment in strategic industrial sites and clusters. The strategy identifies eight

---

[10] UK Public General Acts, (2011); Localism Act 2011.
[11] Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.
[12] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, (2023); New laws to speed up planning, build homes and level up. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-speed-up-planning-build-homes-and-level-up
[13] House of Commons Library, (2023); Planning reforms in England: Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and further changes.
[14] Royal Town Planning Institute, (2023); March 2023 NPPF consultation response. Available at: https://www.rtpi.org.uk/consultations-rtpi/2023/march/march-2023-nppf-consultation-response/
[15] Department for Business & Trade, Invest 2035: the UK's modern industrial strategy (updated 24 November 2024). Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/invest-2035-the-uks-modern-industrial-strategy/invest-2035-the-uks-modern-industrial-strategy

growth-driving sectors: advanced manufacturing, clean energy industries, creative industries, defence, digital and technology business, financial services, life sciences, and professional and business services. Many of these key sectors align with Guildford's key growth sectors including financial services, life sciences, professional and business services, digital and technology.

3.2.21 A core objective of the industrial strategy is unleashing the full potential of cities and regions. To do so, the strategy aims to concentrate efforts on places with the greatest potential for the growth sectors, places with high-potential clusters and strategic industrial sites. This is particularly relevant for Guildford, which demonstrates significant strengths in sectors such as life science (i.e. Surrey Research Park) and professional services.

3.3 Local and Regional Planning Policy/Guidance

2025-2035: Surrey's Economic Growth Strategy (2025)

3.3.1 The Surrey Economic Growth Strategy[16] set out the long-term focus and priorities to drive forward sustainable growth across Surrey. It highlights the ambition as positioning Surrey as one of the UK's leading regional economies. The Strategy sets out the region's economic and strategic context, emphasising the opportunities and challenges facing Surrey's economic growth.

3.3.2 In order to achieve its ambition, the Strategy sets out three strategic priorities:

- Priority 1: Ensuring Surrey's residents can support the workforce and skills demands of Surrey businesses;
- Priority 2: Creating the right conditions for Surrey businesses to start, grow and thrive; and
- Priority 3: Enabling economic infrastructure to unlock growth through place-based approaches.

3.3.3 The Strategy highlights the important of collaboration between local authorities, businesses, and educational institutions to support innovation and resilience, while also placing strong emphasis on sustainability, digital connectivity, and the role of infrastructure in underpinning future growth.

Surrey Infrastructure Study (2017)

3.3.4 The Surrey Infrastructure Study[17] provides a comprehensive assessment of infrastructure needs to support planned growth in Surrey up to around 2031. It covers a wide range of infrastructure types, including transport, utilities (water, energy), education, health, social care, green infrastructure, flood risk, and digital connectivity.

3.3.5 The Study estimates the scale, type and timing of infrastructure required across different geographic areas of Surrey. It forms part of the evidence base for planning, identifying constraints and capacity gaps to ensure that infrastructure keeps up with housing and employment growth.

3.3.6 Key themes include ensuring that infrastructure is delivered in a timely manner alongside development, that funding and delivery mechanisms are identified, and that places with weaker infrastructure capacity are recognised. The study also emphasises the need for infrastructure planning to be spatially informed (i.e., geographically specific), to help local authorities, developers and infrastructure providers coordinate investment.

[16] Surrey County Council, (2025); 2025-2035: Surrey's Economic Growth Strategy.
[17] Surrey County Council, (2017); Surrey Infrastructure Study. Available at: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/development/surrey-future/surrey-infrastructure-study

Surrey Local Transport Plan 2022-2032 (2022)

3.3.7 The Surrey Local Transport Plan 2022-2032[18] is Surrey County Council's fourth transport plan. It outlines an ambitious roadmap for transforming the county's transport system by 2032 (and beyond), with a focus on reducing carbon emissions, improving accessibility, supporting sustainable modes of travel, and enhancing quality of life for residents.

3.3.8 The Plan sets out a vision of:

> *"A future-ready transport system that allows Surrey to lead the UK in achieving a low-carbon, economically prosperous, healthy and inclusive county with excellent quality of life for all residents, whilst seeking to enhance the built and natural environments".*

3.3.9 It identified four key objectives aligned to major challenges:

- Rapidly reducing carbon emissions and getting Surrey on track for net-zero by 2050;
- Supporting Surrey's growth ambitions and enabling people and businesses to prosper sustainably;
- Ensuring well-connected communities that encourage social mobility and that no-one is left behind; and
- Creating thriving communities with clean air, excellent health, wellbeing and quality of life.

3.3.10 It should be noted that Surrey County Council will cease existing in April 2027, it its powers and services are incorporated within the new West Surrey unitary authority[19].

Surrey's Economic Future Forward to 2030: Our Economic Strategy Statement (2020)

3.3.11 The Surrey Economic Future Forward to 2030[20] strategy presents Surrey County Council's long-term approach to boosting economic growth and resilience through to 2030. The Strategy reflects on Surrey's economic strengths and challenges, such as its highly educated workforce, connectivity to London and international markets, rising costs, affordability pressures, and disparities in opportunity across the country.

3.3.12 Key themes and strategic aims in the strategy include:

- Supporting high value, innovation-led economic sectors;
- Enhancing inclusive growth, ensuring that all parts of Surrey and all communities benefit;
- Improving productivity through skills, infrastructure and connectivity;
- Promoting sustainable growth, including resilience to climate change and the transition to a carbon-less economy; and
- Strengthening collaboration between local institutions (businesses, educational bodies, districts, county council) to drive strategic initiatives.

3.3.13 The Strategy also sets out priority interventions or areas of focus, such as boosting digital infrastructure, improving transport connectivity, investing in skills and training, supporting businesses (particularly SMEs), and ensuring that the built environment can accommodate future growth.

---

[18] Surrey County Council, (2022); Surrey Local Transport Plan 2022-2032. Available at: https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/commonplace-customer-assets/surreyltp4/Surrey%20Transport%20Plan.pdf
[19] The new authority will cover the areas of Guildford, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Waverley, and Woking and replace Surrey County Council over this area.
[20] Surrey County Council, (2020); Surrey's Economic Future: Forward to 2030: Our Economic Strategy Statement. Available at: https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=74942

Shaping Surrey's Future: Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Final Plan (2025)

3.3.14 The Shaping Surrey's Future Final Plan[21] sets out Surrey's proposals for devolved powers and the reform of local government structures. The document highlights the opportunities of replacing the current two-tier system with unitary governance, intended to improve efficiency, strategic capacity, and responsiveness to local communities. It explored different structural options and evaluates their implications for local democracy, service delivery, and economic growth.

3.3.15 Two principal models were proposed, including a two-unitary model and a three-unitary model. In October 2025, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed that the two-unitary model will be introduced in Surrey and replace the existing 11 District and Borough Councils (lower tier) and the single Surrey County Council (upper tier) from 1st April 2027. The two Unitary Councils will be:

- West Surrey: Guildford, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Health, Waverley and Woking; and
- East Surrey: Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate & Banstead, and Tandridge.

3.3.16 The Plan emphasises that governance reform is intended to support stronger place-based leadership, enhance the county's ability to negotiate with central government, and deliver improved economic and social outcomes.

Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015-2034 (2019)

3.3.17 The Guildford Borough Local Plan[22] established the framework for growth and development to 2034. It sets out policies to support economic prosperity, enhance employment opportunities, and ensure that sufficient land and premises are available for a range of business needs.

3.3.18 The Plan makes provision for 4-5 hectares (ha) of new employment land and 41,000-47,000 square metres (sqm) of office and R&D floorspace, with a particular focus on supporting Guildford's role as a regional hub for knowledge-intensive industries. Policies are safeguard key employment locations, including the Surrey Research Park, Guildford Business Park, and the Slyfield Industrial Estate, ensuring their continued contribution to the local economy.

3.3.19 Three major strategic sites are allocated to deliver a mix of residential and employment uses:

- Blackwell Farm – c.35,000 sqm employment floorspace;
- Gosden Hill Farm – c.10,000 sqm employment floorspace; and
- Former Wisley Airfield – c.4,300 sqm employment floorspace[23].

3.3.20 In addition to new allocations, the Plan supports the regeneration and intensification of existing employment sites to provide modern, flexible space suited to emerging sectors. It also sets policies to maintain the vitality of Guildford town centre as the primary location for offices and higher-value employment, alongside retail, leisure, and cultural functions.

[21] Surrey County Council, (2025); Shaping Surrey's Future: Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Final Plan. Available at: https://elmbridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-05/Shaping%20Surrey%E2%80%99s%20Future%20-%20Final%20Plan%20%E2%80%93%20May%202025.pdf
[22] Guildford Borough Council, (2019); Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015-2034. Available at: https://www.guildford.gov.uk/guildfordlocalplan
[23] Of which, approximately 1,800 sqm of employment floorspace (B1a) and approximately 2,500 sqm of employment floorspace (B2/B8)

Guildford Borough Employment Land Needs Assessment (2017)

3.3.21 The 2017 Guildford Borough Employment Land Needs Assessment[24] prepared by AECOM for the Council, provided the key evidence base for employment land policy in the Local Plan. It assessed future economic development needs in like with the NPPF and PPG, drawing on economic forecasts, property market analysis, and consultation with local stakeholders.

3.3.22 The study identified that Guildford's employment space is characterised by strong representation in the office and R&D sectors, particularly within knowledge-intensive industries such as ICT, professional services, life sciences and creative industries, supported by the University of Surrey and the Surrey Research Park. Industrial and distribution uses were found to play a more limited role but remain important locally, especially around Slyfield and other established estates. Pressures from residential development and permitted development rights had already resulted in losses of B-class space, raising concerns about the adequacy of supply in qualitative terms.

3.3.23 In quantitative terms, the ELNA forecast a requirement to 2034 of around 39,800 sqm of office/R&D space and 3.9 ha of additional industrial land. The report noted that much of this could be met through existing commitments, but stressed the importance of protecting and modernising key employment sites such as the Surrey Research Park, Guildford Business Park, and the Slyfield Industrial Estate. The study concluded that while overall provision was likely sufficient in numerical terms, there was a need for ongoing monitoring and a focus on delivering modern, flexible, and affordable space to meet the demands of high-value sectors and SMEs.

Guildford's Economic Strategy – Evidence Base (2022)

3.3.24 The Evidence Base for Guildford's Economic Strategy[25] provides a comprehensive analysis of the borough's economic landscape, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and informs the 'Reinvigorating Guildford's Economy' strategic documents published in 2023[26].

3.3.25 The evidence base highlights a crucial need for increased supply and improved quality in strategic locations to support key economic sectors and maintain the economic competitiveness of Guildford. The availability of employment land sites is considered a vital factor in attracting new firms and retaining those that have the opportunity to scale up.

3.3.26 Key opportunity sites identified for commercial expansion include Burnt Common, Blackwell Farm, and Wisley Air Field, as well as potential development that could be unlocked by the new rail stations to the west and to the east of the town centre[27] (Guildford East and Guildford West).

Reinvigorating Guildford's Economy: Our Accessible Economic Development Strategy (2023)

3.3.27 The Accessible Economic Development Strategy[28] is a ten-year strategy which sets the vision of re-establishing Guildford as *"the beating heart of Surrey's economy"*, with a modern, innovative, inclusive and green economic base. It is structure around six thematic priorities:

[24] AECOM, (2017); Guildford Employment Land Needs Assessment. Available at: https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/25490/Employment-Land-Needs-Assessment.

[25] Avison Young and Guildford Borough Council, (2022); Guildford's Economic Strategy – Evidence Base. Available at: https://democracy.guildford.gov.uk/documents/s28770/Item%207%203%20-%20Guildford%20Economic%20Development%20Evidence%20Base.pdf

[26] See below

[27] The proposed "Guildford East" and "Guildford West" stations remain only policy aspirations at this stage

[28] Avison Young and Guildford Borough Council, (2023); Reinvigorating Guildford's Economy: Our Accessible Economic Development Strategy. Available at: https://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/35494/Guildford-Economic-Development-Strategy-Accessible/pdf/Guildford_Economic_Development_Strategy_Accessible.pdf?m=1684508421333

- Productivity: supporting enterprise, clustering, and innovation;
- Property: ensuring sufficient and suitable business space;
- People: improving skills and employability;
- Provision: upgrading physical and digital infrastructure;
- Place: revitalising Guildford town centre; and
- Planet: reducing the environmental footprint of economic activity.

3.3.28 The Strategy highlights Guildford's assets and positions the Borough as a leading location for entrepreneurs and businesses in the South East. Partnership working with local and regional stakeholders is emphasised as key to delivery.

Reinvigorating Guildford's Economy: Our Economic Development Action Plan (2023)

3.3.29 The Economic Development Action Plan[29] accompanies the Economic Development Strategy, and translates the Strategy into detailed deliverables across the six themes. Each action is assigned timescales, lead partners, and delivery 'levers' (anchor, facilitator, advocate, marketer, commissioner, deliverer) to ensure clear accountability.

3.3.30 The Plan is designed to be flexible, with short, medium, and long-term measures and regular monitoring to ensure the Strategy's vision translates into tangible outcomes for the local economy.

[29] Avison Young and Guildford Borough Council, (2023); Reinvigorating Guildford's Economy: Our Economic Development Action Plan. Available at: https://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/35495/Guildford-Economic-Development-Draft-Action-Plan/pdf/Guildford_Economic_Development_Draft_Action_Plan.pdf?m=1684508491297

4. Definition of the Functional Economic Market Area

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The PPG requires local planning authorities (LPAs) to assess development needs working with other LPAs in the relevant Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) in line with the duty to cooperate. It adds that local communities, partner organisations, businesses, business representative organisations and Higher Education Institutions, among others, should be involved in the preparation of the evidence base in relation to development needs.

4.1.2 It is stated that needs for economic uses should be assessed in relation to the functional economic area whilst identifying and recognising smaller sub-markets with specific features and 'market segments.'

4.1.3 The PPG advises there is no standard approach to defining a FEMA but notes in Paragraph 012 that:

> *'the geography of commercial property markets should be thought of in terms of the requirements of the market in terms of the location of premises, and the spatial factors used in analysing demand and supply, often referred to as the functional economic market area.'*

4.1.4 It goes on to add, in Paragraph 019, that:

> *'Since patterns of economic activity vary from place to place, there is no standard approach to defining a functional economic market area.'*

4.1.5 However, it is possible to define them taking account of factors including:

- Spatial economic profile;
- Travel to work areas;
- Commercial property market areas;
- Housing market areas;
- Consumer market areas;
- Transport and infrastructure networks; and
- Economic governance and partnerships areas.

4.1.6 The methodology for defining the FEMA is therefore based on commuting data, administrative boundaries and housing and commercial property markets to identify an area that records the highest self-containment in terms of commuting flows, and which also best fits the administrative boundaries, housing and commercial property markets.

4.2 Travel to Work Area

4.2.1 The PPG does not prescribe a threshold of self-containment (people who live and work in the same area) to help define the FEMA. AECOM has adopted the ONS's definition of Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that states that:

> *'The current criterion for defining the TTWAs is that generally at least 75% of an area's resident workforce work in the area and at least 75% of the people who work in the area also live in the area… however, for areas with a working population in excess of 25,000, self-containment rates as low as 66.7% are accepted.'*

4.2.2 The lower 66.7% threshold for self-containment for origin and destination commuting is therefore appropriate in the case of Guildford, which has a working population in excess of 25,000.

4.2.3 The ONS publishes Origin-Destination data (also known as flow data) as part of the Census, which includes the travel-to-work patterns of individuals. Table 4-1 provides a summary of total commuting inflows and outflows for Guildford. The data indicates that in 2021, 23,578 people commuted into Guildford, and 14,749 people commuted from Guildford, generating an overall net positive inflow of 8,829 people.

4.2.4 However, it is recognised that Census 2021 took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures. Generally, the 2021 Census data reflects the shift to home working seen during this period resulting in lower levels of overall commuting across the majority of areas. While the proportion of people travelling to work is widely reported as being below pre-pandemic levels, trends from the National Travel Survey[30] and Opinions and Lifestyle Survey[31] suggest that the long-term impact of the pandemic on commuting has brought about a shift toward hybrid work, rather than full-time homeworking, and the number of commuting trips has started to recover since the pandemic.

4.2.5 Given the potential uncertainty surrounding the 2021 data, both sets of commuting data (from Census 2021 and Census 2011) are presented. In 2011, 38,489 people commuted into Guildford from a different local authority area for work, whilst 30,458 commuted from Guildford to another local authority area for work, generating an overall net inflow of +8,031.

Table 4-1 Guildford worker inflows and outflows[32]

2021 Census			2011 Census		
Inflow	**Outflow**	**Net change**	**Inflow**	**Outflow**	**Net change**
23,578	14,749	+8,829	38,489	30,458	+8,031

Source: Office for National Statistics; Census 2011: Origin-Destination data; Office for National Statistics; Census 2021: Origin-Destination data.

Inflow self-containment

4.2.6 Detailed Origin-Destination data indicates that in 2021 Guildford had an inflow self-containment rate – including those who worked at or from home at the time of the Census – of 70.0%, meaning that 70.0% of jobs in the local authority area were taken by people residing there. This is above the 66.7% threshold of ONS's self-containment definition of travel to work areas. Therefore, according to the 2021 Census, Guildford was considered to be self-contained as a travel to work area in regard to inflows.

4.2.7 In 2011, Guildford had an inflow self-containment rate of 39.2%, which is lower than in Census 2021, and below the 66.7% threshold of ONS's self-containment definition of travel to work areas. Therefore, according to the 2011 Census, Guildford was not considered to be self-contained as a travel to work area in regard to inflows.

4.2.8 Detailed Origin-Destination data (inflows) is presented in Table 4-2 for the top 10 origins, for both 2011 and 2021. The data indicates that 7,730 jobs in Guildford are taken by residents of Waverley, with 4,626 from Woking, with other key inflow locations including Rushmoor and Surrey Heath.

4.2.9 The 2011 Census data highlights that Guildford forms a TTWA with a wider range of local authorities including Waverley, Woking, Rushmoor, and Surrey Heath.

[30] Department for Transport (2024); National Travel Survey. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics
[31] Office for National Statistics (2023); Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. UK Data Service. Available at: https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/series/series?id=2000043
[32] Total, excluding workers who both live and work in Guildford

Table 4-2 Guildford worker top inflows[33]

2021 Census			2011 Census		
Usual Residence	Working in Guildford	Self-containment[34]	Usual Residence	Working in Guildford	Self-containment
Guildford	55,024	70.0%	Guildford	24,820	39.2%
Waverley	4,334	75.5%	Waverley	7,730	51.4%
Rushmoor	2,866	79.2%	Woking	4,626	58.7%
Woking	2,626	82.5%	Rushmoor	3,579	64.4%
Surrey Heath	1,415	84.3%	Surrey Heath	2,224	67.9%
East Hampshire	1,327	86.0%	East Hampshire	1,804	70.7%
Mole Valley	1,105	87.4%	Mole Valley	1,792	73.6%
Hart	830	88.5%	Hart	1,294	75.6%
Elmbridge	612	89.2%	Elmbridge	1,204	77.5%
Horsham	518	89.9%	Horsham	847	78.9%

Source: Office for National Statistics; Census 2011: Origin-Destination data; Office for National Statistics; Census 2021: Origin-Destination data.

Outflow self-containment

4.2.10 Detailed Origin-Destination data indicates that in 2021, Guildford had an outflow self-containment rate of 78.9%, meaning that 78.9% of working residents in Guildford are employed within the local authority area. This is above the 66.7% threshold of ONS's self-containment definition of travel to work areas. Therefore, according to the 2021 Census, Guildford was considered to be self-contained as a travel to work area in regard to outflows.

4.2.11 In 2011, Guildford had an outflow self-containment rate of 44.9%, which is again lower than in Census 2021, and is below the 66.7% threshold of ONS's self-containment definition of travel to work areas. Therefore, according to the 2011 Census, Guildford was not considered to be self-contained as a travel to work area in regard to outflows. The Census 2011 data suggests that Guildford, and the local authority areas of Waverley, Westminster, Woking, and Rushmoor formed a TTWA from an outflow perspective.

4.2.12 Detailed Origin-Destination data (outflows) is presented in Table 4-3 for the top ten destinations, for both 2011 and 2021.

[33] Note that the sum of inflows (excluding Guildford residents) presented in this table will not match the total inflows presented in Table 4-1 as this table only presents the top inflows.
[34] Calculated as Guildford's self-containment rate – cumulative of workers commuting from top inflow local authorities.

Table 4-3 Guildford worker outflows

2021 Census			2011 Census		
Usual place of work	**Residing in Guildford**	**Self-containment**	**Usual place of work**	**Residing in Guildford**	**Self-containment**
Guildford	55,024	78.9%	Guildford	24,820	44.9%
Waverley	2,720	82.8%	Waverley	3,722	51.6%
Woking	1,702	85.2%	Westminster	3,207	57.4%
Rushmoor	1,349	87.1%	Woking	3,093	63.0%
Surrey Heath	994	88.6%	Rushmoor	2,656	67.8%
Elmbridge	949	89.9%	Elmbridge	1,579	70.7%
Mole Valley	697	90.9%	Surrey Heath	1,560	73.5%
Runnymede	490	91.6%	Mole Valley	1,503	76.2%
Hart	352	92.1%	Runnymede	916	77.9%
Kingston upon Thames	305	92.6%	Kingston upon Thames	634	79.0%

Source: Office for National Statistics; Census 2011: Origin-Destination data; Office for National Statistics; Census 2021: Origin-Destination data.

4.3 Transport Networks

4.3.1 As with the commute to work assessment, an analysis of the transport network is a useful indicator of the potential size and shape of the FEMA for Guildford. The average commute time can be applied to understand the catchment area (inflow commuting of workforce), as well as the extent of the area of potential employment for local residents (outflow commuting of workforce). This defines the employment market area.

4.3.2 The average commute time in the UK is 59 minutes per day[35], or 63 minutes by National Rail[36], or the equivalent of circa 30 minutes' journey each way. It is recognised that some commuter journeys may be longer in duration than this.

4.3.3 However, for the purposes of developing a broadly representative FEMA, the principal employment market area is defined as the geographical area reachable from Guildford in the average commute time (from the outer boundaries of the local authority area by road, and from stations within Guildford by rail).

Road

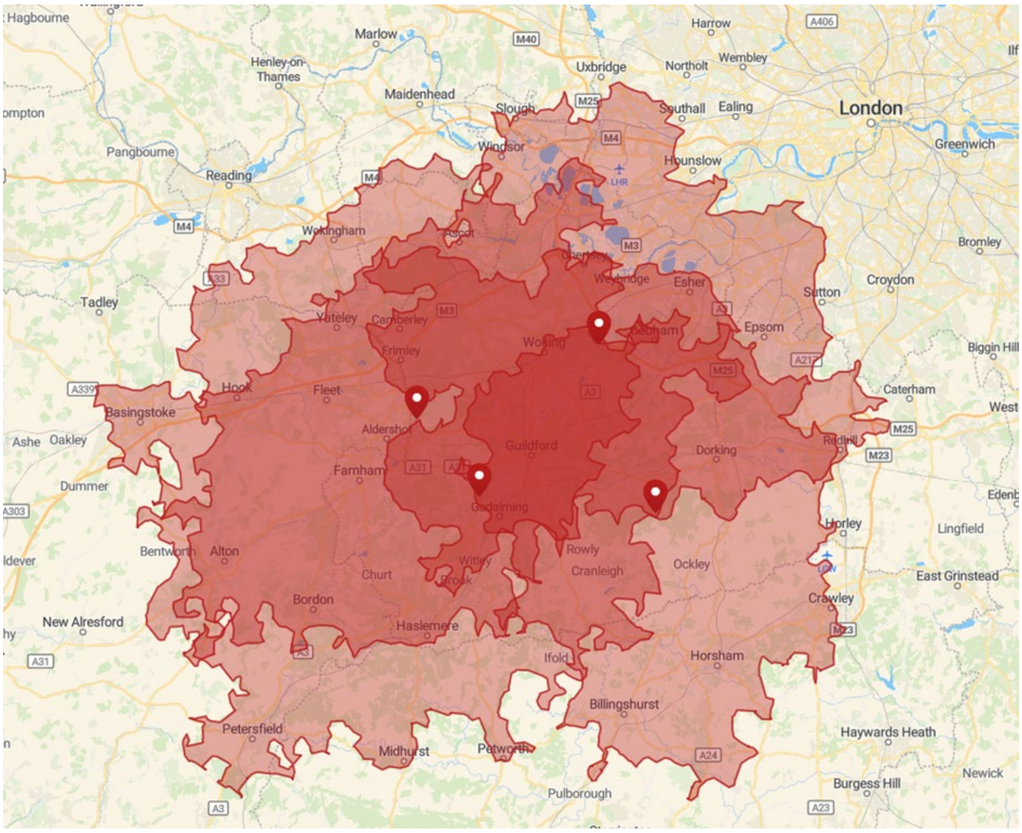
4.3.4 The Guildford area is serviced by several strategic roads which provide direct links to major urban centres including London, Portsmouth, and Southampton. These roads include the A3, M25 and M3[37].

4.3.5 Respecting speed regulation, 32 local authorities are reachable by car, within a 30-minute drive, from Guildford. As shown in Figure 4-1, these are: Wandsworth, Croydon, Tandridge, Mid Sussex, Crawley, Wokingham, Surrey Heath, Waverley, Rushmoor, Hart, East Hampshire, Chichester, Slough, Basingstoke and Deane, Ealing, Woking, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead, Epsom and Ewell, Sutton, Merton, Windsor and Maidenhead,

[35] Safe Workers (2023). Long Commutes to Work What are UK Averages & How Far is Too Far? Available at: https://www.safeworkers.co.uk/health-wellbeing/effects-of-long-commutes-to-work/#:~:text=The%20average%20commute%20in%20the,and%20from%20work%20each%20day
[36] Statista (2023). Average commuting time in Great Britain in October to December 2020, by mode of transportation. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/300712/average-time-taken-to-travel-to-work-in-the-united-kingdom/
[37] Guildford Borough Council (2017) Guildford Borough Transport Strategy 2017. Available at: https://www.g-bug.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Guildford_Borough_Transport_Strategy_2017-1.pdf

Buckinghamshire, Horsham, Elmbridge, Kingston upon Thames, Richmond upon Thames, Hounslow, Spelthorne, Hillingdon, Runnymede, and Bracknell Forest.

Figure 4-1 Catchment area of 30-minute journey by road from Guildford



Source: Smappen, How Far Can I Go?[38]

Rail

4.3.6 Guildford benefits from two stations in the urban area, Guildford Station and London Road (Guildford) Station, as well as other stations at Shalford, North Camp, Ash, Ash Vale, Chilworth, Gomshall, Effingham Junction, Horsley, Clandon, and Wanborough. Table 4-4 provides a list of stations which can be reached within 30 minutes (by rail) from a station within Guildford, not including those listed within Guildford.

[38] Smappen, How Fair Can I Go? Available at: https://www.smappen.com/app

Table 4-4 Railway stations accessible within 30-minute rail journey from a railway station in Guildford

Stations	Local authority
Clapham Junction	Wandsworth
Woking	Woking
Earlsfield	Wandsworth
Wimbledon	Merton
Surbiton	Kingston upon Thames
Hinchley Wood	Elmbridge
Claygate	Elmbridge
Oxshott	Elmbridge
Cobham & Stoke D'Abernon	Elmbridge
Redhill	Reigate and Banstead
Dorking	Mole Valley
Reigate	Reigate and Banstead
Farncombe	Waverley
Godalming	Waverley
Milford	Waverley
Witley	Waverley
Haslemere	Waverley
Frimley	Surrey Heath
Liphook	East Hampshire
Worplesdon	Woking
Brookwood	Woking
West Byfleet	Woking
Farnborough North	Rushmoor
Addlestone	Runnymede
Blackwater	Hart
Sandhurst	Bracknell Forest
Crowthorne	Bracknell Forest
Wokingham	Wokingham
Reading	Reading

Source: Trainline

4.4 Housing Market Area

4.4.1 The Guildford Housing Needs Assessment 2026, produced by Iceni on behalf of Guildford Council[39], confirms the findings of the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015[40] in concluding:

> *"There are clearly a complex set of relationships at play; however, data across all three primary sources clearly demonstrates significant integration between Guildford, Waverley and Woking. This is borne out in all of the strands of*

[39] Not yet published at the time of writing
[40] GL Hearn (2015) West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment: Guildford, Waverley and Woking Borough Councils. Available at: https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/25486/Strategic-Housing-Market-Assessment

analysis. The triangulation of the sources strongly supports defining these three authorities within the same Housing Market Area. We therefore consider the definition of a Guildford centric HMA covering these three authorities as a core area to be appropriate".

4.5 Commercial property market area

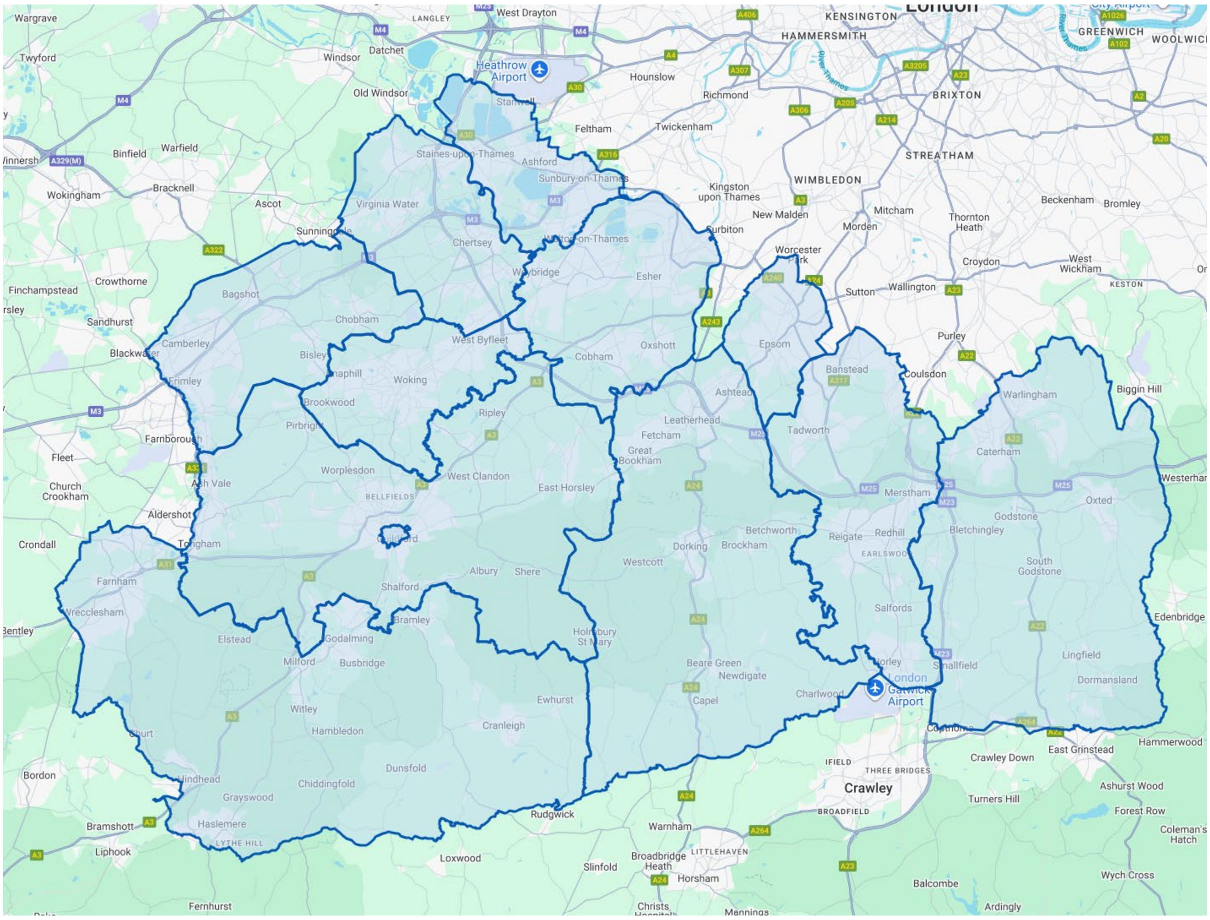
4.5.1 The FEMA is also influenced by the commercial property market area in which Guildford sits. Commercial property market areas are geographic boundaries that serve to define core areas that are competitive with each other. Markets are defined by buildings presenting similar characteristics and are formed of non-overlapping areas (i.e. a place cannot be part of two property market areas at the same time).

4.5.2 For the purposes of this Employment Study, it is relevant to look at both the office and industrial property markets. CoStar, a comprehensive database of real estate data throughout the UK, is a useful source of information and provides pre-defined office and industrial property market areas for the entire UK. CoStar defined markets have therefore been assumed as part of the analysis.

4.5.3 Both the industrial and office markets are defined as Surrey.

4.5.4 Guildford Fringe and Guildford Central are defined as their own office sub-markets within the Surrey office market, as shown in Figure 4-2. The rest of the sub-markets forming the Surrey office property market include Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Tandridge, Waverley, Woking.

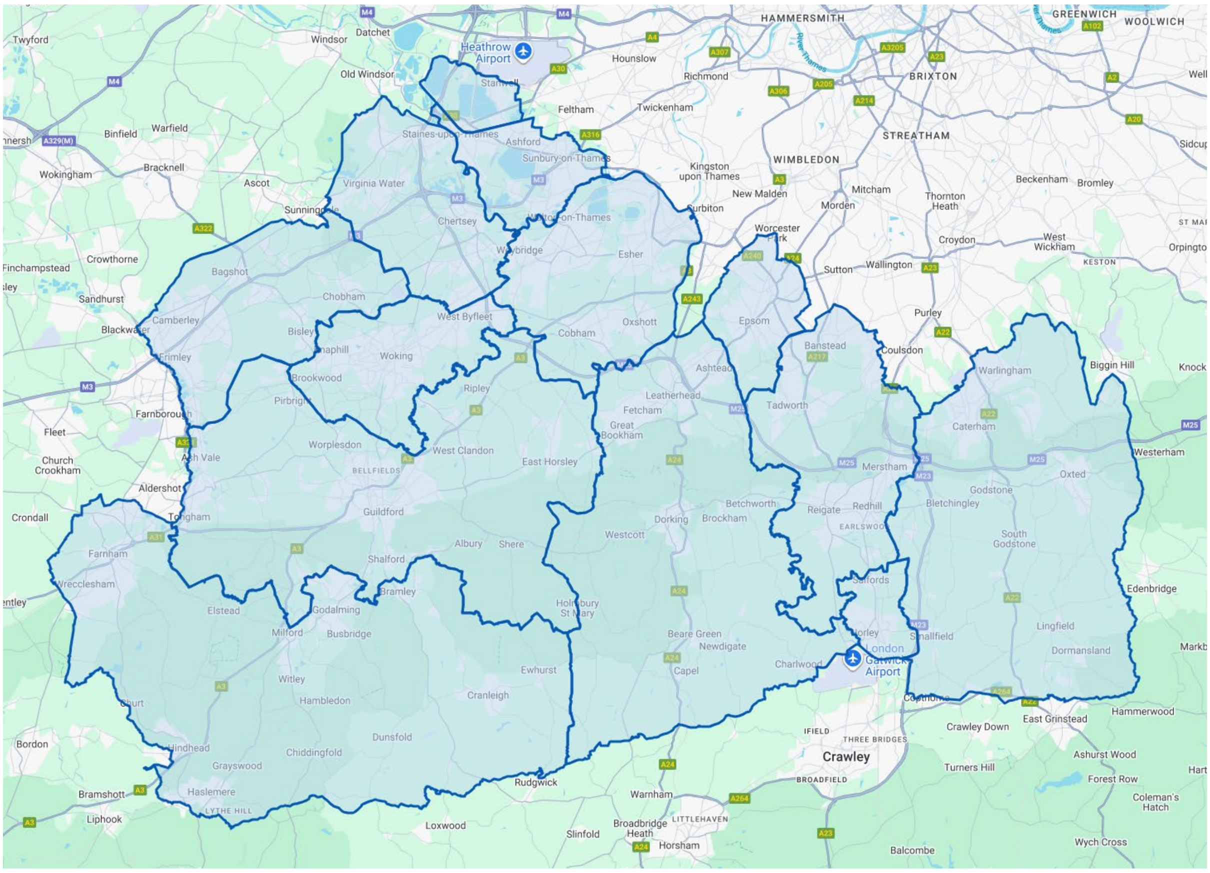
Figure 4-2 Surrey Office Market



Source: CoStar 2025

4.5.5 Guildford is defined as its own industrial sub-market within the Surrey industrial market, as shown in Figure 4-3. The rest of the sub-markets forming the Surrey industrial property market include Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Gatwick North, Heathrow South, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Tandridge, Waverley, Woking.

Figure 4-3 Surrey Industrial Market



Source: CoStar 2025

4.6 Economic governance and partnerships area

4.6.1 Guildford's economic governance is currently overseen by Surrey County Council. Following the dissolution of the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)[41] in 2024, Surrey County Council assumed responsibility for the LEP's strategic functions, including infrastructure investment, business support, and skills development. Surrey County Council's economic strategy emphasises sustainable growth, innovation, and connectivity, with Guildford.

4.6.2 At the time of writing, a devolution framework for Surrey has been agreed and will see Lower Tier Local Authorities within the County being combined into two unitary authorities: East Surrey and West Surrey. This will take effect in April 2027, subject to the necessary orders being made, and will see Guildford becoming part of West Surrey alongside Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Waverley and Woking[42].

4.7 Summary

4.7.1 Guildford is relatively self-contained economically, with some important connections either from an economic governance perspective (administrative boundaries), market characteristics (housing and commercial property markets) and connectivity (travel to work and transport infrastructure).

[41] Economic and Social Research Council (2020) Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership Profile. Available at: https://lipsit.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Enterprise-M3-LEP-Profile.pdf
[42] Surrey Plans for Devolution, Surrey County Council. Available at: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/lgr/plans

4.7.2 Based on the assessment conducted in this section, and as summarised in Table 4-5 overleaf, it can be reasonably concluded that Guildford is particularly connected with two other local authority areas:

- Woking (by virtue of the road and rail network, the housing and property market areas, and economic governance area, and being a key location in relation to worker flows); and
- Waverley (by virtue of the road and rail network, the housing and property market areas, and economic governance area, and being a key location in relation to worker flows).

Table 4-5 Summary of FEMA analysis

	2011 Inflow self-containment	2011 Outflow self-containment	2021 Inflow-self containment	2021 Outflow self-containment	Road network	Rail network	Housing market area	Property market area	Economic Governance Area
Guildford	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Woking	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Waverley	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Surrey Heath	X				X	X		X	X
Runnymede					X	X		X	X
Rushmoor	X	X			X	X			
Spelthorne					X			X	X
East Hampshire					X	X			
Mole Valley					X	X		X	
Hart					X	X			
Elmbridge					X	X		X	
Basingstoke & Deane					X				
Westminster		X							

Source: AECOM

5. Socio-economic Profile

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section profiles Guildford's economic strengths and weaknesses that may impact upon employment land and premises requirements. Key indicators provided include:

- Population by age;
- Economic activity;
- Job density;
- Employment by industry sector;
- Business stock, size and demography;
- Qualifications and Occupations;
- Earnings; and
- Gross Value Added (GVA).

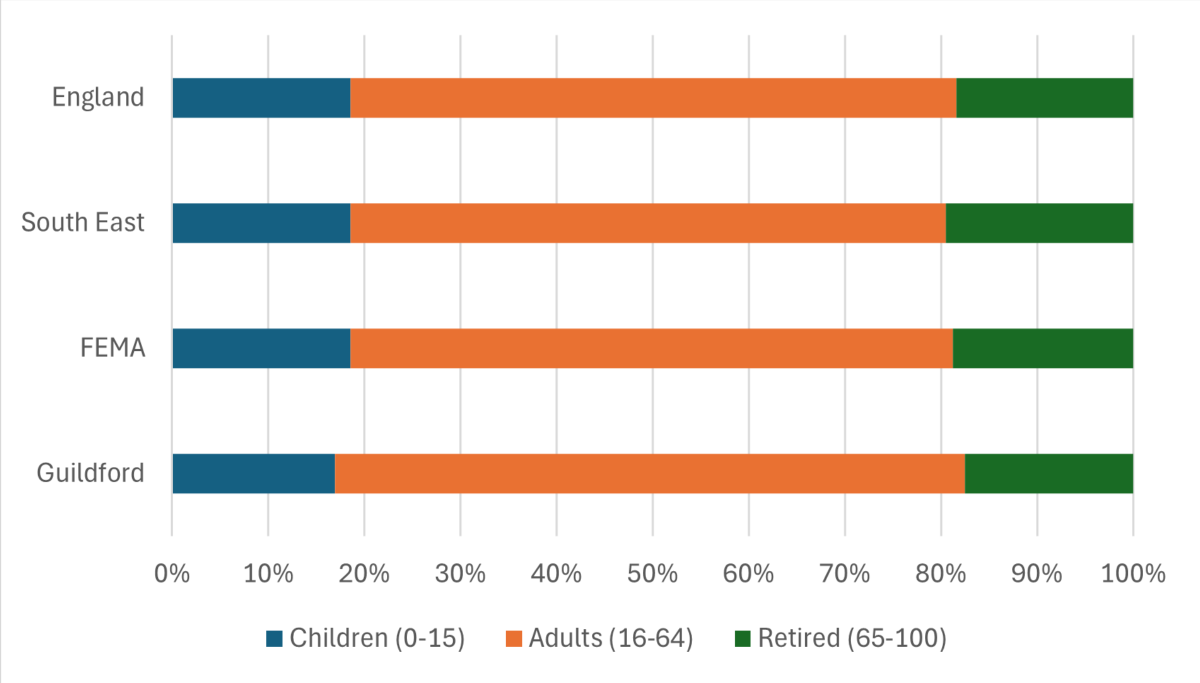
5.1.2 To provide a comprehensive assessment, Guildford is benchmarked against the FEMA, the South East region and England.

5.2 Population

5.2.1 The future economic needs of Guildford will be driven in part by trends in the growth of the resident population. ONS Census 2021 shows that the population in Guildford was 143,686, making up 38.2% of the population in the FEMA and 1.5% of the population in the South East Region. This figure slightly differs from the figure provided by the ONS in the Mid-Year Population Estimates, which indicates a population of 144,013 in Guildford in 2021.

5.2.2 The working age population (individuals aged 16 – 64) of Guildford, in 2021, accounted for 65.6% of the total population (or 94,216). This is more than the proportion of working age persons in the FEMA (62.7%), the South East (62.0%) and England (63.0%). This is shown in Figure 5-1.

Figure 5-1 Population Structure



Source: ONS Census (2021), Age by Single Year

5.2.3 The share of working age population has decreased in Guildford since the last Employment Land Assessment[43] was published, in 2017, from 66.5% (ONS Census 2011) to 65.6%. This trend is also observed across the FEMA, with a decrease in working age population from 63.8% to 62.7%, and across England (64.8% to 63%). In absolute terms, the working population of Guildford still increased in size, from 91,238 in 2011 to 94,258 in 2021 meaning that to retain the same percentage of employment within its own population, an additional 3,020 jobs would have needed to be delivered in the Borough over this period. Between 2011 and 2021, the working age population has increased by 3.2%, which is higher than the FEMA (2.8%) but lower than the South East (4.4%) and England (3.7%).

5.2.4 Both ONS Census data and Mid-Year Estimates data show that the population of Guilford grew by 4.7% between 2011 and 2021. Compared to the other geographies, the population of Guildford grew at a lower rate than the FEMA (5.0%), South East (7.4%), and England (6.5%) over the same period.

5.2.5 The ONS population projection data[44] illustrates what an area's population structure may look like in the future. By 2041, the population of Guildford is expected to reach 158,089, representing a growth of 10.1% from 2021. This is faster growth than across the FEMA (9.1%) but slower than across the South East (12.3%), and across England (12%).

5.2.6 The working population of Guildford is predicted to grow by 7.9%, to 101,627 (+7,429 persons). As for the total population, this is a slower rate than across the South East and England, but faster than across FEMA. The growth in working age population, although slower than across the South East and England, may have implications for economic development in the Borough. Growing working-age population typically correlates with increased labour supply and consumer demand, potentially stimulating local businesses, productivity, and innovation. This typically supports the need for infrastructure development, attracting investment, and expanding the pool of skilled workers. This is shown in Table 5-1.

[43] Guildford Land Needs Assessment 2017. Available at: https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/25490/Employment-Land-Needs-Assessment
[44] Office for National Statistics; Population Projections

Table 5-1 Estimated Population Change by 2041 Across the Study Areas

	Guildford	FEMA	South East	England
All ages	10.1%	9.1%	12.3%	12.0%
Aged 0 - 15	-4.1%	-8.3%	-7.8%	-7.8%
Aged 16 - 64	7.9%	6.7%	9.9%	9.9%
Aged 65+	31.8%	34.8%	39.5%	39.5%

Source: ONS Population Projections

5.3 Economic Activity

5.3.1 The Annual Population Survey (APS)[45] provides the most recent economic activity, employment, and self-employment statistics for the UK.

5.3.2 Economic activity data measures the proportion of working age residents who are active members of the labour market in an area. As of December 2024, the economic activity rate (aged 16-64) in Guildford is 88.3%. This is higher than the FEMA (85.2%), the South East (81.2%), and England (78.7%) averages.

5.3.3 The economic activity rate in Guildford has increased significantly since 2014 (as reported in the Guildford Land Needs Assessment 2017) from 75.8% to 88.3%. This trend is reflective of the upward trend observed across the FEMA, which saw its economic activity rate increase from 78.9% to 85.2%. This outperforms both the regional and national performance, which saw their economic activity rate increase slightly from 79.7% and 77.3% to 81.2% and 78.7% respectively. Several local characteristics have made Guildford and the FEMA more prone to rising economic activity than the South East and England, including a highly educated population, and a strong concentration of employment in sectors which have grown and drew more residents into work or active job search.

5.3.4 The employment rate in Guildford, as of December 2024, is 83.1%. This is higher than the average across the FEMA (81.6%), the South East (78.4%), and England (75.6%).

5.3.5 The self-employment rate in Guildford (9.6%) is broadly in line with the averages across the South East (9.8%), and England (9.4%), but lower than the average across the FEMA (11.7%).

5.3.6 Data for the economic activity rate, employment rate, and self-employment rate for all geographies is summarised in Table 5-2 below.

Table 5-2 Economic Activity

	Guildford	FEMA	South East	England
Economic activity rate - aged 16-64	88.3%	85.2%	81.2%	78.7%
Employment rate - aged 16-64	83.1%	81.6%	78.4%	75.6%
% aged 16-64 who are self employed	9.6%	11.7%	9.8%	9.4%

Source: ONS. Annual Population Survey (January 2024-December 2024)

5.4 Job Density

5.4.1 Job density[46], which is the number of jobs in an area divided by the working age resident population (aged 16 – 64), was estimated to be 0.98 in 2023 in Guildford, which is higher

[45] ONS; Annual Population Survey (APS) (January 2024 to December 2024).
[46] Office for National Statistics (2023); Job Density

than the average across the FEMA (0.85), also higher than in the South East (0.86) and England (0.87). This suggests that Guildford has a very healthy job market with employment opportunities for its residents of working age. Comparing the job density in Guildford of 0.98 and its employment rate (83.1%), it can be concluded that Guildford is a net provider of jobs for residents living outside the local authority.

5.5 Employment by Industry

5.5.1 The 2024 Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)[47] provides a detailed breakdown of employment in Guildford by broad industrial sectors. This data shows the scale of employment by sector in Guildford, the performance of the sectors between 2015 and 2024 and how Guildford's profile compares with wider geographies.

5.5.2 Four broad industrial sectors in Guildford provide over 50% of all employment. They are: Human health and social work activities; Education; Professional, scientific and technical activities; and Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles.

5.5.3 Of these four dominant broad industrial sectors, only Human health and social work activities and Education have seen a growth in employment between 2015 and 2024. A wide range of other sectors have also experienced growth over this period, including Financial and insurance activities; Administrative and support service activities; and Information and communication (predominantly office-based activities).

5.5.4 The concentration of employment, and therefore clusterisation of activities in Guildford, can be assessed through the calculation of Location Quotients (LQs). LQs are a statistical measure of relative concentration in one area compared to another area. An LQ of 1.0 indicates that a sector's share of employment is broadly in line with the wider area. An LQ greater than 1.0 indicates that the sector is more concentrated locally (i.e. within Guildford), suggesting relative saturation, while an LQ below 1.0 suggests under-representation in the local area (Guildford).

5.5.5 Guildford's employment profile highlights a number of areas of clusterisation relative to the FEMA, South East and England. The Financial and insurance activities sector records an LQ of 1.6 against the FEMA, and 1.6 and 1.2 against the South East and England respectively. Similarly, Public administration and defence; compulsory social security has a high LQ of 1.6 against the FEMA, 1.5 against the South East and 1.2 against England, reflecting significant relative strength in the sector (combined with a positive growth of 13% between 2015 and 2024). Professional, Scientific and Technical activities is another concentrated industry within Guildford, employing 11,000 people (13% of total), with an LQ of 1.0 against the FEMA but higher LQs for the South East (1.4) and England (1.3), which underlines its regional significance.

5.5.6 A more detailed breakdown by industry is presented in Table 5-3.

[47] Office for National Statistics, (2024); Business Register and Employment Survey 2023.

Table 5-3 Employment by Industry

	Guildford (2024)	Share of Total	2015 - 2024 Change (%)	LQ		
				FEMA	South East	England
A : Agriculture, forestry and fishing	600	1%	-14%	0.8	0.5	0.6
B : Mining and quarrying	20	0%	33%	0.9	0.5	0.3
C : Manufacturing	2,500	3%	-29%	0.6	0.5	0.4
D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	225	0%	125%	1.3	0.8	0.7
E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	300	0%	-14%	1.0	0.4	0.5
F : Construction	4,000	5%	14%	1.0	0.8	0.9
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11,000	13%	-15%	1.0	0.8	0.9
H : Transportation and storage	2,000	2%	14%	0.9	0.5	0.5
I : Accommodation and food service activities	7,000	8%	17%	0.9	1.0	1.1
J : Information and communication	6,000	7%	20%	0.9	1.3	1.5
K : Financial and insurance activities	3,500	4%	40%	1.6	1.6	1.2
L : Real estate activities	1,250	1%	-17%	0.8	0.8	0.6
M : Professional, scientific and technical activities	11,000	13%	0%	1.0	1.4	1.3
N : Administrative and support service activities	4,500	5%	29%	0.9	0.6	0.6
O : Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	4,500	5%	13%	1.6	1.5	1.2
P : Education	11,000	13%	22%	1.0	1.3	1.5
Q : Human health and social work activities	13,000	15%	30%	1.2	1.1	1.1
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	3,000	3%	0%	0.9	1.3	1.4
S : Other service activities	1,500	2%	-33%	0.7	0.8	0.9
TOTAL	**86,895**	**100%**	**8%**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey: open access

5.5.7 It can be noted that that Guildford Borough Employment Land Needs Assessment 2017 identified several sectors which had an LQ above 1 (compared to England). Notable changes include the small drop in concentration in Professional, scientific and technical activities (from an LQ of 1.5 to 1.3); the drop in concentration in Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (from 1.3 to 0.9) and the increase in concentration in Financial and insurance activities (from 0.9 to 1.2). These changes indicate a small shift in the economy of Guildford, with a decreasing reliance on secondary activities (i.e. wholesale) and a higher concentration of jobs in the service industry (i.e. finance) and service activities (i.e. education, health, accommodation and food service activities).

Table 5-4 Employment LQ 2015-2024 (vs England)

	LQ 2015	LQ 2024
M : Professional, scientific and technical activities	1.5	1.3
J : Information and communication	1.5	1.5
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.4	1.4
P : Education	1.3	1.5
O : Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	1.3	1.2
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	1.3	0.9
I : Accommodation and food service activities	1	1.1
K : Financial and insurance activities	0.9	1.2
Q : Human health and social work activities	1	1.1

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey: open access

5.6 Business Stock

5.6.1 ONS Business Count data indicated that there were 7,135 enterprises located in Guildford in 2024. When broken down by employment size band, most businesses were classed as micro (defined as companies employing up to nine employees), making up 83.6% of businesses. This is slightly lower than the rates in the FEMA (86.3%), the South East 85.2%), and England overall (84.6%). This proportion of micro businesses highlights the importance of small size premises in the Borough in supporting economic activity.

5.6.2 There was a total of 6,305 micro businesses, 675 small businesses (10 to 49 employees), 130 medium businesses (50 to 249 employees), and 25 large businesses (250 employees or more) located in the Borough in 2024. A breakdown by percentage can be seen in Table 5-5.

Table 5-5 Business Counts by Employment Size Band Across the Study Areas

	Guildford	FEMA	South East	England
Micro (0 to 9)	83.6%	86.3%	85.2%	84.6%
Small (10 to 49)	13.6%	11.3%	12.1%	12.4%
Medium-sized (50 to 249)	2.6%	2.2%	2.4%	2.6%
Large (250+)	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%

Source: UK Business Counts - local units by industry and employment size band

5.6.3 VAT registration and de-registration rates provide an indication of the entrepreneurial characteristics of a statistical area. Data on this indicator is sourced from the ONS business demography publication[48], which provides numbers for business ‘births’ and ‘deaths’ and is presented in Table 5-6. The data shows that from 2016 to 2023 business registrations in Guildford decreased from 995 to 690, a decline of around 30.7%. During the same period, the FEMA, South East, and England also experienced decreases in business registrations, with 30.3%, 23.2%, and 24.6% drops respectively. Business de-registrations in Guildford and the FEMA decreased by 19.3% and 12.1% respectively between 2016 and 2023, while in the South East and England, they increased by 0.8% and 10.8% respectively. With consistent registrations greater than de-registrations, the entrepreneurial environment in the

[48] Office for National Statistics, (2023); Business demography, UK.

Borough could be considered as strong. However, the decrease in the number of registrations since 2016 (and de-registrations – although not as clear) indicates that entrepreneurship may not be as dynamic as it used to be, with fewer entrepreneurs taking the risk of starting a new business.

Table 5-6 Business registrations and de-registrations in Guildford (2016-2023)

Year	Registration	De-registration	Net change
2016	995	750	245
2017	895	825	70
2018	730	675	55
2019	820	760	60
2020	710	705	5
2021	775	775	0
2022	725	845	-120
2023	690	605	85

Source: Office for National Statistics, (2024); Business demography, UK.

5.7 Qualifications and Occupations

5.7.1 Figure 5-2 shows of breakdown of qualification levels across Guildford, the FEMA, the South East, and England. Guildford has a highly skilled workforce compared to the South East, and England. In 2021, 44% of residents in Guildford held qualifications at Level 4 or above (degree level or equivalent), which was lower than the FEMA (45.1%), but higher than the South East (36%) and England (34%). A higher proportion of residents with advanced qualifications can attract businesses requiring skilled labour, drive innovation, and enhance productivity.

5.7.2 The share of residents in Guilford holding qualifications at Level 4 or above has increased since 2014[49], from 39% to 44%, whilst it decreased both across the South East and England (from 43% to 36% and from 35.7% to 34% respectively). The good performance in Guildford is supported by the presence of the University of Surrey, and the retention of students (post-graduation) in Guildford where highly-skilled jobs are available

5.7.3 Conversely, the proportion of residents with no formal qualifications in Guildford (11%) is lower than in the FEMA (11.9%), the South East (15%) and England as a whole (18%). Similarly, the share of the population qualified only to Level 1 (7%) is lower than in comparator areas, indicating a comparatively small proportion of residents with very limited qualifications.

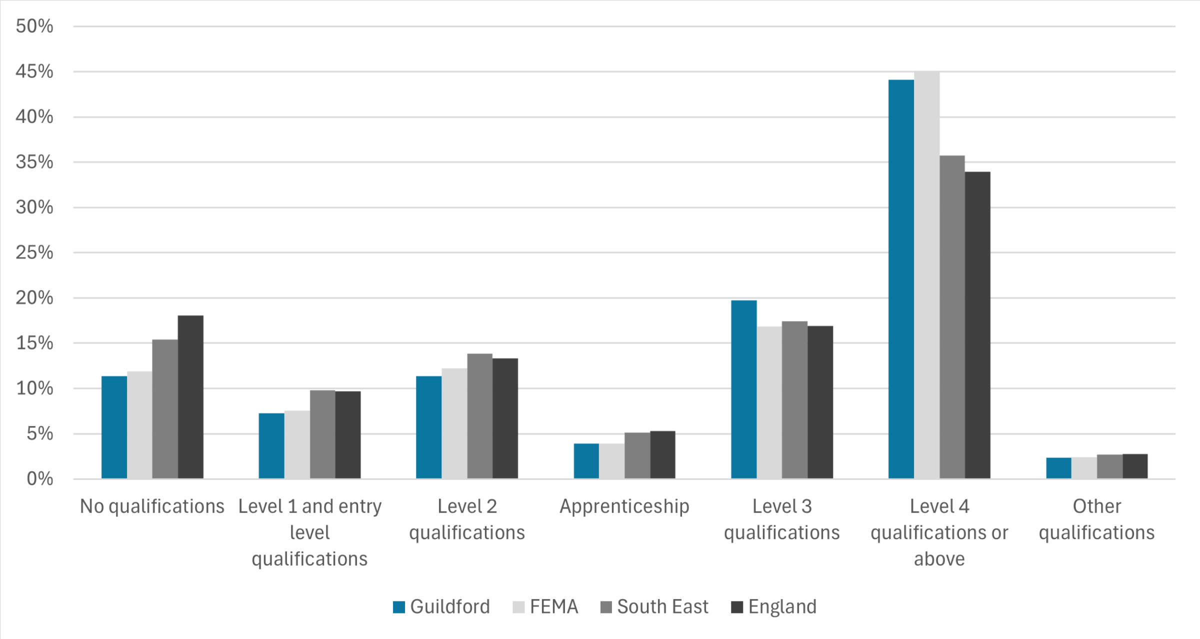
5.7.4 The proportion of residents with no formal qualifications in Guildford has also increased since 2014, from 6.1% to 11%. This follows the regional and national trends, which saw an increase from 5.6% and 8.6% to 15% and 18% respectively.

5.7.5 The increase in both the proportion of residents holding qualifications at Level 4 or above and the proportion of residents with no formal qualifications highlights increasing inequalities.

5.7.6 Intermediate qualification levels (Levels 2 and 3, and apprenticeships) are broadly comparable with the FEMA, South East, and England, though Guildford records a slightly higher share of residents at Level 3 (20% compared with 17% across the other geographies). Apprenticeship attainment is consistent at 4% locally, marginally below the regional and national averages (5%).

[49] Guildford Land Needs Assessment 2017. Available at: https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/25490/Employment-Land-Needs-Assessment

Figure 5-2 Highest Level of Qualification Across the Study Areas



Source: ONS (2021). Census 2021: Highest Level of Qualification

5.7.7 Analysis of the occupational profile of Guildford's residents shows that 59.8% are employed in managerial, professional and technical occupations (standard occupational classification (SOC) groups 1-3). This is marginally above the FEMA average (59.5%), and notably above the South East (50.4%) and England (46.4%). This correlates with the Borough's qualification profile, where the proportion of residents educated to Level 4 and above is significantly higher than regional and national benchmarks. The single largest employment category is professional occupations (26.4%), followed by managers, directors and senior officials (17.4%) and associate professional and technical occupations (16.1%).

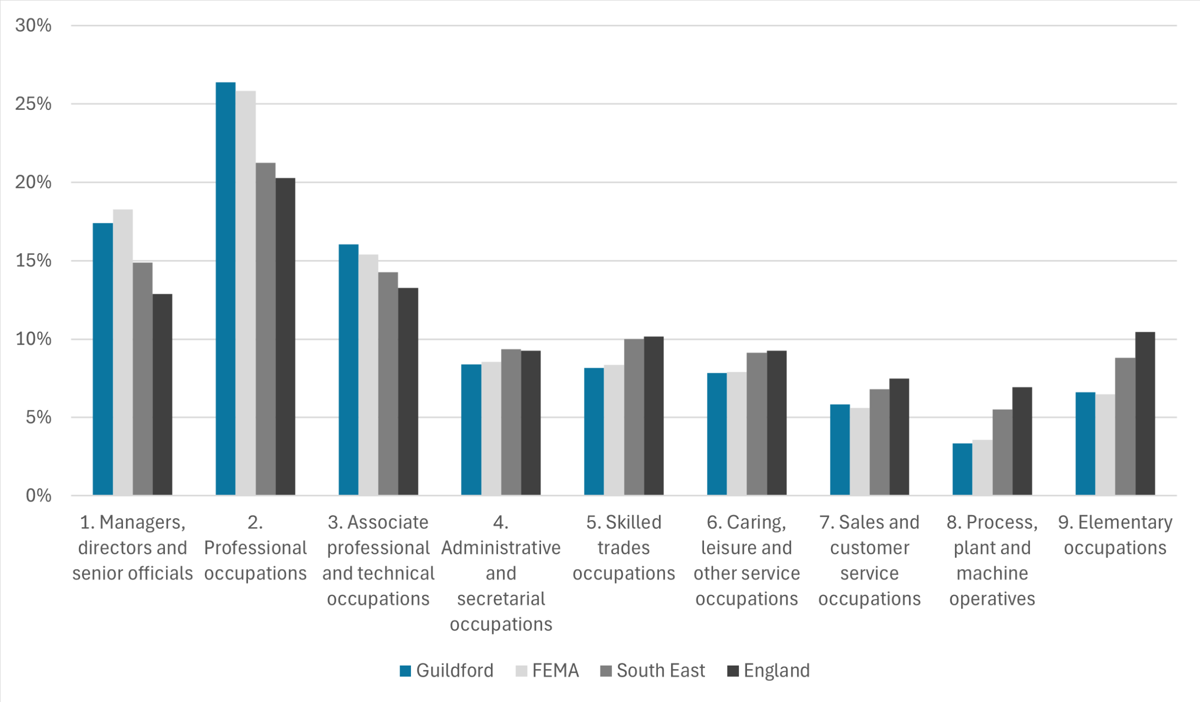
5.7.8 The share of residents in managerial, professional and technical occupations in Guildford (59%) has slightly decrease since the last Guildford Employment Land Needs Assessment 2017 was published, which reported a total of 62% of residents in these occupations. This slight decrease suggests a small shift towards support and service related occupations for residents of Guildford – although marginal.

5.7.9 The proportion of residents within SOC groups 4-5 (administrative, secretarial, and skilled trades) is 16.5%, which is lower than the FEMA (16.9%), the South East (19.3%) and England (19.4% respectively). The proportion of residents employed within SOC groups 6-9 (which primarily comprise lower skilled occupations[50]) is 23.6%, which is in line with the FEMA (23.6%), but below both the South East (30.3%) and England (34.1%). Within this group, Guildford records a relatively lower proportion of residents in process, plant and machine operative roles (3.4%) and elementary occupations (6.6%) compared with the national average (6.9% and 10.5% respectively).

5.7.10 A more detailed breakdown across occupation type is seen in Figure 5-3.

[50] Lower skill occupations are defined as: elementary occupations; process, plant and machine operatives; sales and customer service occupations. Medium skill occupations are defined as: caring, leisure and other service; skilled trades occupations; administrative and secretarial. High skill occupations are defined as: associate prof & tech occupations; professional occupations; managers, directors and senior officials.

Figure 5-3 Occupation Across the Study Areas



Source: ONS (2021). Census 2021: Occupation

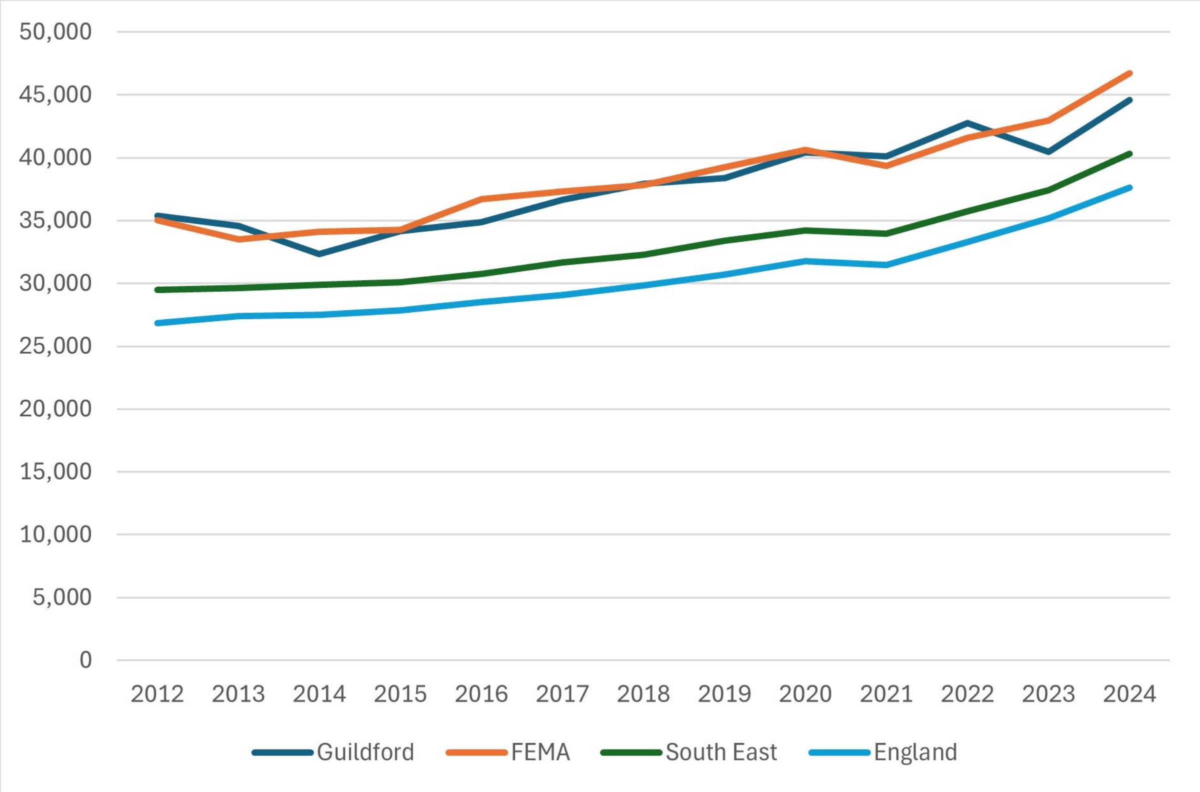
5.8 Earnings

5.8.1 The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings[51] shows that the median annual gross pay for full time workers who reside in Guildford was £44,602 in 2024. This was higher than the earnings in the South East (£40,339) and England (£37,617), but lower than that of the FEMA (£46,708). The higher median in the FEMA is influenced by the greater medians in Waverley and Woking (compared to Guildford). Workplace based earnings shows that for people who work in Guildford, annual gross pay was £44,773, higher than the FEMA (£42,425), South East (£39,038) and England (£37,630). The slight difference between resident-based[52] and workplace-based[53] earnings suggest the presence of residents in other Boroughs commuting to Guildford to access the higher paying jobs present there.

5.8.2 Figure 5-4 shows that Guildford has recorded a steady increase in resident-based annual earnings over time, broadly reflecting the general economic trend over the last decade across all comparative areas. Earnings have been higher than the regional and national average, but the average growth rate from 2012 to 2024 has been slightly lower in Guildford (26.1%) compared to across the FEMA (33.2%), South East (36.9%) and England (42.2%). This indicates a positive growth trajectory, albeit whilst Guildford is performing well, it has not performed as strongly as the FEMA in terms wage growth, which is particularly due to a drop in annual earnings in 2023.

[51] Office for National Statistics (2024). Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE).
[52] Earnings of people residing in Guildford (regardless of workplace)
[53] Earnings of people working in Guildford (regardless of where they live)

Figure 5-4 Median Average Annual Earnings (Full-Time Workers) Across the Study Areas (Resident-Based) (£)



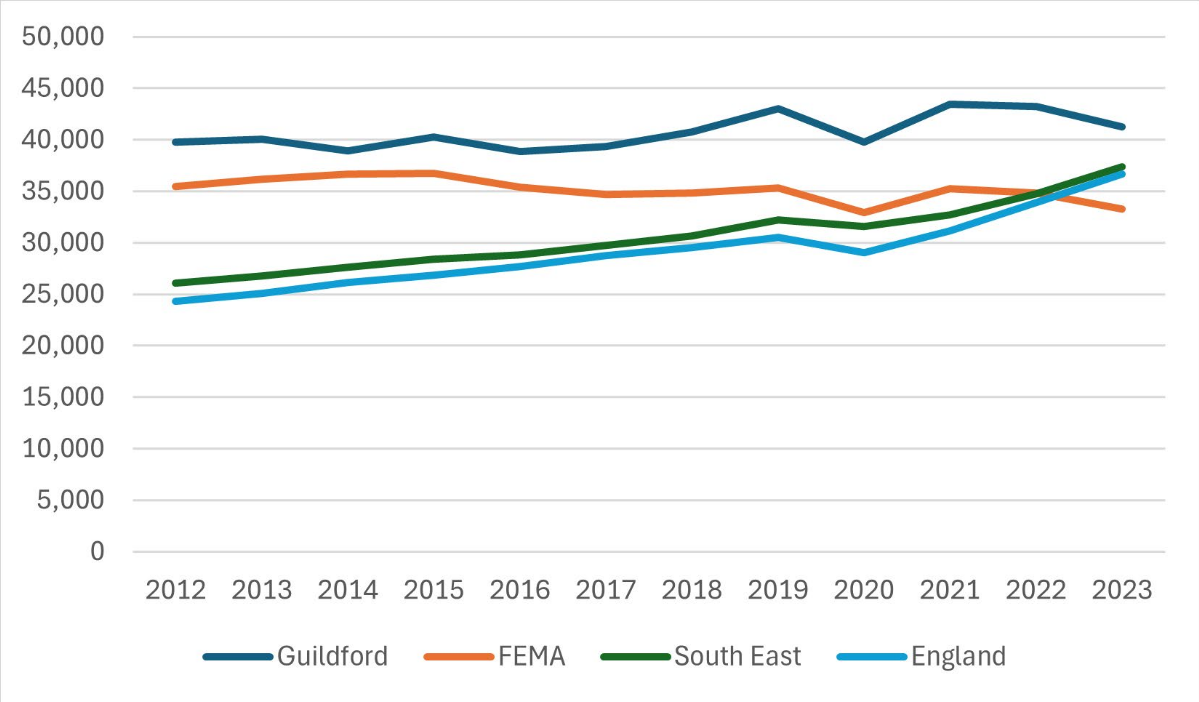
Source: Office for National Statistics (2024); Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – Resident Analysis.

5.9 Gross Value Added

5.9.1 Productivity, as measured by GVA per head[54], stood at £41,236 in Guildford in 2023. This is higher than the FEMA (£33,298), South East (£37,385) and England (£36,632). This indicates that Guildford outperforms its immediate economic area, and the regional and national averages in terms of productivity. Between 2012 and 2023, the data highlights a noticeable divergence between Guildford and the FEMA. However, since 2012, both Guildford and the FEMA have experienced slow growth and near stagnation from 2012 to 2017. The South East has experienced gradual growth from 2012 to 2019 with more accelerated growth from 2020 to 2023, which resulted in the South East and England outperforming the FEMA in terms of growth in 2022. As shown in Figure 5-5, Guildford's GVA per head remained above that of the FEMA, South East and England over the last decade, but the gap with the South East and England has been reducing.

[54] ONS (2023). Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) at Current Prices

Figure 5-5 GVA per Head Across Study Areas (£)



Source: Office for National Statistics, (2023), Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) at Current Prices

5.9.2 Overall, this indicates that Guildford has experienced steady economic growth and higher earnings compared to the regional and national average. The persistent higher productivity compared to regional and national averages highlights Guildford's ability to attract high-value enterprises, and encourage business investment to enhance overall productivity and continue outperforming other comparator areas.

5.10 Summary

5.10.1 This section has provided an analysis of the socio-economic profile of Guildford, drawing on the latest available data and benchmarking against the wider FEMA, South East and England where appropriate. This helps provide context when considering the changes to the supply and demand for employment land, which is analysed in the following sections.

5.10.2 The data from the last Census indicates that the population of Guildford increased by 4.7% between the years 2011 to 2021. This growth rate is lower than the growth rate in the FEMA, South East and England, where the population increased by 5.0%, 7.4%, and 6.5% respectively. However, the working population of Guildford increased at a higher rate (3.2%) than across the FEMA (2.8%) but lower than the South East (4.4%) and England (3.7%). The latest ONS population projections show that the population in Guildford is expected to increase by 10.1% between 2021 and 2041. This is a higher rate of growth than is anticipated over the same time period across the FEMA (9.1%), but a lower rate than across the South East (12.3%) and England (12.0%). Future population growth is driven by people aged 65 and over (+31.8% in Guildford, which is lower than across the FEMA, South East and England), whilst the working age population is expected to grow by 7.9% in Guildford (which is lower than across the South East and England, but higher than across the FEMA).

5.10.3 The economic activity rate in Guildford is 88.3%, which is higher than across the FEMA (85.2%), the South East (81.2%) and England as a whole (78.7%). Guildford's employment rate (83.1%) is also higher than the FEMA (81.6%), South East (78.4%), and England (75.6%) as a whole.

5.10.4 Job density is high in Guildford, at 0.98, which indicates the number of jobs in the Borough is sensibly similar to the size of the working age population. This density is higher than the FEMA (0.85), South East (0.86) and England (0.87) which demonstrates the importance of Guildford in terms of employment in its wider area.

5.10.5 The human health and social work activities sector employs the greatest share of Guildford's workforce (15%). This share is broadly in line with the FEMA, but slightly higher than in the South East and England. Professional, scientific and technical activities have the second largest share of Guildford's workforce (14%), which is also a higher proportion than across the South East and England. However, this sector has not experienced any growth (in terms of employment) between 2015 and 2024. Wholesale and retail trade is also an important sector in Guildford (13% of total employment) but is less concentrated than across the FEMA, South East and England. The sector also experienced a decline of employment (-15%) between 2015 and 2024. Both the Information and communication and the Financial and insurance activities, which are smaller sectors in the Guildford economy (7% and 4% of employment respectively) experienced growth between 2015 and 2024 and are highly concentrated in the Borough (i.e. with LQ's above 1 against the FEMA, except for Information and communication which has an LQ of 0.9, the South East and England). The manufacturing sector employs 3% of Guildford's workforce which is also a lower proportion of employment in relation to all other comparator areas. Employment in this sector declined by 29% between 2015 and 2024.

5.10.6 The size profile of businesses in Guildford is broadly similar to that of other comparator geographies, with most businesses having between 1 and 9 employees (88.4% in Guildford). There are 20 large businesses in Guildford (businesses with more than 250 employees) out of a total of 7,135 businesses in the Borough. With a number of businesses registration higher than de-registrations between 2016 and 2023, in all years with exception of 2021 and 2022 (impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic), the entrepreneurial environment in the Borough can be considered as strong.

5.10.7 With regard to occupational profiles, 59% of Guildford's residents have managerial, professional and technical occupations (standard occupational classification (SOC) groups 1-3), which is slightly lower than across the FEMA (60%), but higher than across the South East (50%) and England as a whole (46%). The proportion of Guildford residents in 'lower skilled occupations' (24%) is broadly in line with the FEMA, but lower than South East and England averages.

5.10.8 Guildford residents are, on average, educated to a higher level than across the South East and the national average, but broadly in line with the FEMA average. The proportion of residents educated to degree level and above is 44% in Guildford and 45% across the FEMA, compared to 36% in the South East and 34% in England. This skills profile is reflected in gross annual pay (resident analysis), where gross annual pay in Guildford (£44,602) is higher than across the South East (£40,339) and England as a whole (£37,617), but lower than across the FEMA (£46,708).

6. Current Supply

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section provides a summary of the characteristics of the current and future supply of employment land in Guildford, based on its alignment with market demand. The analysis of employment land was conducted via site surveys and desk-based research.

6.1.2 A total of 30 employment sites have been identified in the assessment of current supply via a review of the following sources:

- Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015 – 2034 (2019);
- Guildford Borough Employment Land Needs Assessment (2017);
- Reinvigorating Guildford's Economy: Our Accessible Economic Development Strategy (2023);
- Reinvigorating Guildford's Economy: Our Economic Development Action Plan (2023); and
- CoStar database.

6.1.3 These employment sites are therefore comprised primarily of designated sites, with additional undesignated sites with potential to be considered for designation. It should be noted that the employment sites identified in the assessment of the current supply capture the floorspace across the employment land use classes that sits within designated land or is within an employment land parcel which is greater than 0.25ha. The study recognises that there is additional floorspace which lies dispersed in land parcels smaller than 0.25ha outside the identified employment sites. Similarly, the employment sites identified below also incorporate non B/E(g) uses, and therefore the site size is not equivalent to the supply of B/E(g) use land in the Borough.

6.2 Criteria Identification and Assessment

6.2.1 In order to characterise the function, quality and development potential of each of the employment sites in Guildford, a series of criteria were developed in order to conduct a detailed assessment. The assessment was conducted based on a set of appraisal criteria (agreed with Guildford Borough Council in advance and drawing on PPG and other guidance as well as AECOM's experience of producing employment land reviews) assessed in the form of quantitative and qualitative analysis (including RAG[55] rating). The criteria and approach to assessment are summarised in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1 Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Approach for Assessment	Rationale
Site Characteristics		
Current Designation	Qualitative Assessment: • Strategic Employment Site (office / industrial) • Locally Significant Employment Site	N/A
Size of Site	Expressed in Hectares	N/A
Site Context	Qualitative Assessment: • Town Centre • Edge of Town • Rest of Urban • Rural	N/A

[55] "Traffic light" assessment system (Red, Amber, Green) used to show the status of Site against the assessed criteria.

Criteria	Approach for Assessment	Rationale
Occupier Typologies	Qualitative Assessment	N/A
Employment/Land Uses	Qualitative Assessment	N/A
Site Environment and Facilities		
Quality of environment and public realm	RAG Rating: **Green** – Very good / good in terms of appearance, evidence of managed site; quality of environment (i.e. lighting, greening, signage). **Amber** – Average in terms of appearance, evidence of managed site; quality of environment (i.e. lighting, greening, signage). **Red** – Poor / very poor in terms of appearance, evidence of managed site; quality of environment (i.e. lighting, greening, signage).	The quality of the public realm is a key consideration across sectors and uses. Whereas historically this would have been more of a consideration for office uses – for which it remains a greater driver – industrial and logistics investors are increasingly looking to accommodate future growth in more of a business park environment incorporating high quality public realm and access to amenities on or in proximity to sites.
Access to facilities and amenities	RAG Rating: **Green** – Very good / good in terms of proximity to town or local centre with wide range of services nearby (i.e. shops, facilities, amenities including restaurants and shops). **Amber** – Average in terms of proximity to town or local centre with some / few services nearby. **Red** – Poor / very poor in terms of proximity to town or local centre, a remote isolated site, with no local services or amenities.	Access to services and amenities is a factor for businesses. The presence of these services enhances employee satisfaction and wellbeing by providing convenient options during breaks or after work. This can lead to higher productivity and employee retention. Additionally, for businesses that frequently host clients or visitors, proximity to quality services and amenities contributes to a positive impression and can play a role in fostering successful business relationships.
Adequacy of servicing	RAG Rating: **Green** – indicates presence of private on-site servicing, such as yard / loading bays. **Amber** – indicates presence of public off-site yard / loading bays. **Red** – indicates absence of servicing.	On-site servicing, such as yard space, loading bays, and security, contribute to the quality of a site. Good servicing contributes to the productivity of businesses and efficiency of their operations. This is particularly relevant for light industrial, industrial and distribution activities.
Potential for 24-hour working	RAG Rating: **Green** – no conflicting uses in surrounding area of site and/or no negative effects from employment activities. **Amber** – some conflicting uses in part of surrounding area of site and/or minor negative effects from employment activities. **Red** – conflicting uses in surrounding area of site and/or major negative effects from employment activities.	Some businesses, particularly in industrial and distribution activities, may have a requirement for 24-hour working (shifts). These activities may not be compatible with other uses, such as residential, due to noise, pollution or traffic considerations.
Adequacy of parking provision	RAG Rating: **Green** – adequate provision of parking. **Amber** – excess provision of parking. **Red** – insufficient provision of parking.	Adequacy of parking provision is an important consideration for businesses to be able to access a wide and diverse pool of labour. This is particularly important for sites located in more rural locations with low public transport connectivity, or business activities requiring the use of motorised vehicles.
Buildings Condition		
General condition of buildings	RAG Rating:	

Criteria	Approach for Assessment	Rationale
Visible impression of buildings age	**Green** – Very good / good in terms of building age (i.e. year of build) and quality (condition, level of maintenance, suitability, and attractiveness of units to occupiers). **Amber** – Average in terms of building age (i.e. year of build) and quality (condition, level of maintenance, suitability, and attractiveness of units to occupiers). **Red** – Poor / very poor in terms of building age (i.e. year of build) and quality (condition, level of maintenance, suitability, and attractiveness of units to occupiers).	Market demand for better quality spaces that are attractive enough to earn employees' commute, support evolving work patterns, and offer a competitive advantage. This is linked to the need for functionality, companies' ESG commitments and wider drivers in relation to minimum energy efficiency standards.
Presence of derelict buildings	RAG Rating: **Green** – no derelict buildings identified. **Amber** – small number of derelict or very poorly maintained buildings across the site (i.e. less than 5%). **Red** –noticeable presence of derelict or very poorly maintained buildings across the site (i.e. more than 5%).	The presence of derelict buildings may indicate a lower market attractiveness of a site, viability constraints, and/or absence of sufficient demand.
Connectivity		
Access to strategic road network	RAG Rating: **Green** – Direct access to strategic road network (A3). **Amber** – Indirect access within 0-5 km of the strategic road network. **Red** – Locations that are over 5 km away with limited or no access to the strategic road network.	Transport connectivity is a key determinant of inward investment, with access to staff, customers and the supply chain key considerations for businesses across production and services sectors. Connectivity in terms of access to the strategic road network is a key driver, and is particularly important for industrial and logistics businesses.
Access to public transport	RAG Rating: **Green** – indicates multiple public transport options (2 or more) i.e. sufficient access by bus and train. **Amber** – indicates at least one sufficient public transport option (i.e. bus or train). **Red** – indicates no / extremely poor access by public transport.	Proximity to public transport is an important consideration for businesses to be able to access a wide and diverse pool of labour, both from local communities and as a means to access requisite skills. This is particularly the case for office employment, which benefits from greater workforce mobility.
Surrounding Uses		
Proximate uses	RAG Rating: **Green** – indicates no conflicting uses in surrounding area. **Amber** – indicates site is partially surrounded by conflicting uses. **Red** – indicates site is fully surrounded by conflicting uses.	The presence of alternative sensitive uses (such as residential) in the surrounding area of a site may restrict the development of certain types of employment uses on this site.
Potential for negative effects on sensitive uses	RAG Rating: **Green** – indicates no negative effects generated by current employment activities (i.e. noise pollution, air pollution, traffic, etc.) **Amber** – indicates some contained negative effects generated by current employment activities (i.e. noise pollution, air pollution, traffic, etc.)	Specific employment activities, generating significant noise, pollution, traffic, could be incompatible with sensitive surrounding uses. This would need to be considered in relation to new developments in the surrounding area (to ensure ability of the site to operate in current condition is not negatively impacted) or in case of relocation of current activities on sites to a different location.

Criteria	Approach for Assessment	Rationale
	Red – indicates negative effects generated by current employment activities (i.e. noise pollution, air pollution, traffic, etc.)	
Development Potential		
Suitability for alternative land uses	Qualitative Assessment	N/A
Presence of vacant developable land	Expressed in Ha	Development potential on existing employment sites provides opportunities to respond to future demand for employment land.
Potential for intensification / redevelopment	Qualitative assessment and potential area for intensification / redevelopment (expressed in ha)	
Office site at risk of Permitted Development Right	Qualitative assessment	Sites at risk of PDR could lead to potential future loss of employment land.

6.3 Assessment of Employment Sites

6.3.1 A detailed assessment of each of the criteria set out above was undertaken for all the designated employment sites in Guildford. This assessment is informed by both desk-based investigation and site surveys conducted on visits which took place in October 2025. Site visits were undertaken in order to confirm and/or enhance desk-based information about the sites.

Site Characteristics

6.3.2 Table 6-2 provides a summary of key characteristics for all 30 designated employment sites in Guildford, including current designation, size of the site, location context, occupier typologies, business types, employment uses and land uses identified within the employment sites.

Table 6-2 Site Characteristics

Ref	Name	Current Designation	Size (ha)	Site Context	Occupier Typologies	Employment Land Uses
1	Slyfield Industrial Estate	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	37.6	Edge of Town	General industrial estate / business area; storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale; offices; recycling / waste / environmental; car repair	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B2; B8; Sui Generis
2	North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	10.1	Rural	Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale; car repair	E(g(iii); B2; B8; Sui Generis
3	Riverway Industrial Estate etc at Peasmarsh	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	8.5	Rural	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale; offices	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B8
4	Woodbridge Meadows	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	10.4	Edge of Town	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale; offices	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B2; B8; Sui Generis; Vacant Land
5	Merrow Lane	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	6.9	Rural	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale; offices	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B8; Sui Generis
6	Quadram Park, Peasmarsh	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	2.6	Rural	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale	E(g)(iii); B8
7	Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	5.7	Edge of Town	Offices; Other	E(g)(i); Sui Generis
8	Henley Business Park, Normandy	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	7.9	Rural	High quality business park; General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale	E(g)(iii); B8
9	Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	2.2	Edge of Town	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale	B8
10	Midleton Road Industrial Estate	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	2.4	Edge of Town	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale	E(g)(iii); Sui Generis
11	Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	1.9	Edge of Town	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale; offices	B8
12	Burnt Common – London Road	Strategic Employment Site - Industrial	10.5	Rural	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale	B2; B8; Vacant Land
13	57 and Liongate Ladymead	Strategic Employment Site - Office	2.1	Edge of Town	Residential	N/A

Ref	Name	Current Designation	Size (ha)	Site Context	Occupier Typologies	Employment Land Uses
14	London Square, Cross Lane	Strategic Employment Site - Office	1.8	Edge of Town	High quality business park	E(g)(i)
15	The Pirbright Institute	Strategic Employment Site - Office	15.8	Rural	Other	E(g)(ii)
16	Surrey Research Park	Strategic Employment Site - Office	27.9	Edge of Town	High quality business park	E(g)(i); E(g)(ii); Vacant Land
17	Guildford Business Park	Strategic Employment Site - Office	5.5	Edge of Town	High quality business park	E(g)(i); Sui Generis; Vacant Land
18	Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios Tannery Lane, Send	Strategic Employment Site - Office	2.5	Rural	General industrial estate / business area; Storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale; offices	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B8; Vacant Land
19	1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill	Strategic Employment Site - Office	2.5	Edge of Town	High quality business park	E(g)(i)
20	The Guildway, Portsmouth Road	Strategic Employment Site - Office	3.9	Rural	High quality business park; offices	E(g)(i)
21	The Courtyard, Wisley	Locally Significant Employment Sites	0.2	Rural	Residential	N/A
22	Grange Court, Tongham	Locally Significant Employment Sites	0.7	Rural	Offices	E(g)(i)
23	The Pines Trading Estate, Broad Street	Locally Significant Employment Sites	1.7	Rural	High quality business park; general industrial estate / business area; storage / warehouse / distribution park / wholesale; offices; council offices	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B8
24	31 Chertsey Street and 1-7 Stoke Road	Locally Significant Employment Sites	0.4	Town Centre	Offices	E(g)(i)
25	65 Woodbridge Road	Locally Significant Employment Sites	0.2	Town Centre	Offices	E(g)(i)
26	Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court	Locally Significant Employment Sites	0.4	Town Centre	Offices; Other	E(g)(i), Sui Generis
27	Broadford Business Park, Shalford	Locally Significant Employment Sites	1.6	Rural	High quality business park; offices	E(g)(i)

Ref	Name	Current Designation	Size (ha)	Site Context	Occupier Typologies	Employment Land Uses
28	Home Farm, Loseley Park (east)	Locally Significant Employment Sites	0.9	Rural	General industrial estate / business area; offices	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii)
29	Home Farm, Loseley Park (west)	Locally Significant Employment Sites	0.4	Rural	General industrial estate / business area	E(g)(iii)
30	Abbey Business Park, Eashing	Locally Significant Employment Sites	0.9	Rural	Offices	E(g)(i)

Site Environment, Facilities, Building Condition, Connectivity

6.3.3 The following text provides an assessment of site environment, facilities, building condition and connectivity for each designated employment site in Guildford (Strategic Employment Sites and Locally Significant Employment Sites).

Strategic Employment Sites

Slyfield Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 1)

6.3.4 Slyfield Industrial Estate is one of Guildford's largest and most established employment sites, featuring a diverse range of building ages and qualities. The estate includes both modern units along its main roads and older, less well-maintained premises in other sections. Its scale and variety provide flexibility for a wide spectrum of employment activities, from light industrial to distribution and business services. Older, poorly maintained buildings may deter higher-value employers and limit appeal for office-based or advanced industrial uses.

6.3.5 The estate benefits from indirect but strategic access to the A3, supporting logistics and distribution operations. However, congestion and parking shortages are notable challenges, particularly during peak hours. The public realm is average, with limited landscaping and some cleanliness concerns, which may affect the perception of the site for higher-value employment uses.

6.3.6 Amenities within the estate are limited, and public transport connectivity is poor, which can impact workforce attraction and retention. While some areas of the site are suitable for 24-hour operations, proximity to residential zones may restrict activities that generate noise or require extended hours on part of the site. Overall, Slyfield's strengths lie in its scale and accessibility, while its weaknesses are primarily related to congestion, limited amenity provision, and environmental quality.

North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale (Site Ref. 2)

6.3.7 This estate is characterised by a mix of gated and open areas, offering a secure environment for a range of employment activities. The presence of nearby amenities such as cafés, a gym, and a Tesco enhances the site's attractiveness for employees, while direct access to the A331 provides strong connectivity for logistics and distribution. Private parking is generally sufficient, though street parking is limited, which may pose challenges for businesses with larger staff or visitor numbers. The site accommodates a range of premises in terms of quality, condition and age, with some light industrial premises being in overall poor condition.

6.3.8 The site's partial seclusion supports some 24-hour operations, but the proximity of residential areas could limit activities that are noisy or require continuous operation. The general environment and quality of the public realm vary across the sites, with parts offering very poor landscaping and some cleanliness concerns, which may affect the perception of the site for higher-value employment uses.

6.3.9 Overall, North and South of Lysons Avenue performs well in accommodating employment activities that benefit from good road access and local amenities. However, its suitability for operations with significant noise or high parking demand is constrained by residential proximity and limited street parking.

Riverway Industrial Estate, Peasmarsh (Site Ref. 3)

6.3.10 Riverway Industrial Estate is a pedestrian-friendly, well-lit site in generally good condition, with most buildings in good or very good condition and some older light industrial units are not in as good condition. The estate is self-contained and supports 24-hour industrial or logistics operations due to its separation from residential areas and adequate servicing and parking.

6.3.11 One limitation is the lack of nearby amenities, with the closest café being a 15-minute walk away, which may affect the site's appeal for workers. Indirect access to the A3 and average public transport connections (reliant on bus services) further reduce its attractiveness for activities that require frequent visitor or staff movement.

6.3.12 Despite these drawbacks, Riverway Industrial Estate performs well for industrial and logistics use thanks to its layout, security, and operational flexibility.

Woodbridge Meadows (Site Ref. 4)

6.3.13 Woodbridge Meadows is located close to Guildford town centre, placing it within easy reach of a wide range of amenities and public transport options. The southern part of the site (south of the railway) features more modern, landscaped buildings including newly delivered student accommodation, while the northern section (north of the railway) concentrates a higher proportion of employment uses and is characterised by a mix of building quality ranging from older stock (storage, light industrial uses) and newer premises (i.e. Porsche dealership). The site provides limited parking, which can be a constraint during peak times.

6.3.14 A large part of the southern part of the site (south of the railway) has been lost to residential (student accommodation) and retains limited employment space. The extreme north of the site is also occupied by a hotel[56]. New premises both in employment use, such as the Porsche dealership, and non-employment use, such as student housing and hotel, enhance the site's attractiveness for higher value employment. This site also accommodates a Thames Water facility and a Royal Mail depot.

6.3.15 Direct access to the A3 enhances the site's appeal for businesses requiring efficient transport links. The good quality environment and accessibility on part of the site (particularly around the newer developments) make Woodbridge Meadows particularly attractive for office and light industrial activities, although residential proximity may limit the feasibility of 24-hour or noisy operations.

Merrow Lane (Site Ref. 5)

6.3.16 Merrow Lane offers a more secluded employment environment, with some areas of the site supporting 24-hour operations. However, the performance of the site in employment use is negatively impacted by average public transport connectivity (reliance on bus services), limited lighting, cleanliness issues, and distant amenities, which all detract from the site's overall attractiveness.

6.3.17 The estate provides adequate parking, but indirect access to the A3 and A25, along with poor public transport, limit its suitability for activities that require frequent staff or visitor movement. The eastern side of the site benefits from greater seclusion, making it more suitable for depot or light industrial uses. The western side of the site is made of a range of employment activities and accommodates premises varying in size and condition.

Quadram Park, Peasmarsh (Site Ref. 6)

6.3.18 Quadram Park is a modern industrial estate located in a secluded area, therefore providing a self-contained environment suitable for 24-hour industrial or logistics operations. The buildings are relatively modern, well-maintained and in good condition. The site provides adequate parking provision for its current activities.

6.3.19 The site is remote from amenities, with the nearest options a 20-minute walk away, and public transport connections are poor. However, the proximity to amenities and availability of public transport is not as critical for industrial uses as it is for office uses. Indirect access to the A3 is a further limitation for businesses that rely on strategic road links, such as industrial and logistics uses on this site.

6.3.20 Despite these challenges, Quadram Park's modern facilities and operational flexibility make it a good candidate for (light) logistics uses – the A3 being easily accessible via New Pond Road (B3000), a secluded rural road. The site is less suited for office-based employment due to its remoteness and lack of amenities.

Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road (Site Ref. 7)

6.3.21 Woodbridge Park benefits from its proximity to Guildford town centre (five minute-walk), offering excellent access to amenities and public transport. The site currently accommodates a range of uses including trade counters, concentrated on the northern half of the site, and offices, concentrated in the south of the site. The site is well-landscaped and

[56] Loss of employment land to alternative uses is discussed further in the section. See paragraph 7.3.109 onwards.

supports 24-hour activities in its northern section, with adequate parking and direct A3 access.

6.3.22 These features make Woodbridge Park attractive for office and light industrial uses, especially for businesses seeking a central location with strong workforce appeal. However, parking can become busy, and the presence of residential properties in the south of the site restricts opportunities for 24-hour activities and noisy and/or polluting light-industrial activities.

6.3.23 The southern section of the site is in residential use, whilst land in the centre of the site accommodates an electric sub-station, taking away land for employment use[57].

Henley Business Park, Normandy (Site Ref. 8)

6.3.24 Henley Business Park is a modern, gated, and secure site with ample parking and high-quality facilities, providing an attractive proposition for businesses. The site provides accommodation for B8 uses and E(g)(iii) as well as ancillary offices.

6.3.25 Its remote location means amenities are very limited, with the nearest options a 40-minute walk away, and public transport is classified as average with the nearest rail station only accessible by bus. This lack of nearby amenities and limited transport connectivity may make it less attractive for office-based employment.

6.3.26 The site's security and parking provision is however ideal for industrial and logistics activities that require a controlled environment, which is reflected in the typology of premises available on site (i.e. industrial and warehousing units).

Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 9)

6.3.27 Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate is modern and well-maintained, with good amenities within a 10-15 minute walk and direct access to the A3. The estate accommodates predominantly trade counters as well as a small number of light distribution warehouses. The estate provides an attractive and functional environment for businesses and visitors.

6.3.28 Public transport access is average, with active travel options and bus services, but the nearest train station is an 11-minute drive away. Parking is adequate but can be limited.

6.3.29 This moderate connectivity supports a range of employment activities, especially for businesses where staff can use buses or cycle, but may be less ideal for those relying on train to commute.

Midleton Road Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 10)

6.3.30 Midleton Road Industrial Estate offers a modern, well-lit environment with good amenities and direct A3 access. The site accommodates a range of light industrial and trade counters, as well as a trampoline park which has its own gated car park (therefore does not impact on surrounding employment uses). Buildings are mostly modern, and provides small to medium size units which could attract small or niche higher-value tenants.

6.3.31 The site is relatively remote and surrounded by other employment uses, supporting 24-hour operations and making it suitable for logistics and industrial activities.

6.3.32 Parking is generally adequate and public transport access is classed as average, with active travel options and bus services, but the nearest train station is an 11-minute drive away. The estate's landscaping is limited, which could affect its attractiveness for some office-based activities or high-value industrial activities.

Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field (Site Ref. 11)

6.3.33 Guildford Industrial Estate accommodates a range of trade counters and light industrial units (light distribution and logistics). The site features an average public realm and good amenities within walking distance. The site is separated from residential areas, supporting 24-hour operations, and offers direct access to the A3 and adequate parking.

6.3.34 While the estate is well-suited for industrial and logistics uses, limited landscaping and maintenance may reduce its appeal for higher-value activities. Public transport access is

[57] Loss of employment land to alternative uses is discussed further in the section. See paragraph 7.3.109 onwards.

average, with active travel options and bus services, but the nearest train station is an 11-minute drive away.

Burnt Common, London Road (Site Ref. 12)

6.3.35 Burnt Common is currently under construction, with new high-quality buildings being developed to provide E(g)(iii), B2, B8 space. The site offers average amenities nearby, such as a Waitrose and petrol station, and benefits from direct access to the A3, making it attractive for future logistics and industrial uses.

6.3.36 Parking is currently limited due to ongoing construction, and amenities are not within easy walking distance. Once completed, the site is expected to provide modern facilities and strong strategic access. Public transport access is considered average, with bus services but no pavement, no cycle lane, and the nearest train station a 35-minute walk away.

6.3.37 Burnt Common's main advantages are its new infrastructure and location, while current limitations include parking and amenity provision during the construction phase.

57 and Liongate Ladymead (Site Ref. 13)

6.3.38 This site is undergoing conversion to residential use, with one building derelict but under renovation. Its location near the town centre provides very good access to amenities and public transport, supporting workforce attraction.

6.3.39 However, the shift towards residential use has removed the full site's employment capacity[58].

London Square, Cross Lane (Site Ref. 14)

6.3.40 London Square is a high-quality, landscaped business park with pedestrian paths and a café onsite. The site is a 10-minute walk from the town centre, providing good access to amenities and public transport, making it highly attractive for office-based employment.

6.3.41 The landscaped environment and modern facilities enhance workforce appeal, though proximity to residential areas restricts noisy or industrial activities – but does not impact on ability of the site to operate in its current configuration as a business park (office). Parking is adequate, and indirect A3 access supports business operations.

The Pirbright Institute (Site Ref. 15)

6.3.42 The Pirbright Institute is a private, gated, landscaped estate with a secluded environment, making it suitable for specialist or research-based employment activities. However, access to amenities is very poor, with only a pub 15 minutes away, and strategic road and public transport connections are limited.

6.3.43 Any expansion of activities on this site would need to be directly related to the Pirbright Institute given security requirements.

Surrey Research Park (Site Ref. 16)

6.3.44 Surrey Research Park is a gated, landscaped site with green spaces, CCTV, and onsite amenities such as a café and accommodates office (E(g)(i)) and research spaces (E(g)(ii)). The park supports 24-hour working and provides good parking, with most buildings being older but some modern units present. Modernisation of the oldest stock may be required to respond to the needs of high-value employment activities traditionally accommodated on this site, and ensure that Surrey Research Park remains a key and premium employment site in Guildford and the wider region.

6.3.45 Direct access to the A3 is a significant advantage for businesses. The site can also be accessed via public transport (bus services). The high-quality environment and amenities make it ideal for research, office, and light industrial employment.

[58] Loss of employment land to alternative uses is discussed further in the section. See paragraph 7.3.109 onwards.

Guildford Business Park (Site Ref. 17)

6.3.46 Guildford Business Park offers modern, secure, and landscaped facilities, with a café onsite and direct A3 access. The site is attractive for office and business park activities, providing excess parking and a secure environment.

6.3.47 Amenities are slightly remote, and public transport is limited to bus services (providing a connection to nearby railway station within 11 minutes), which may affect workforce accessibility. However, overall Guildford Business Park is well-suited for office-based employment, with strong physical and operational characteristics.

6.3.48 South of Guildford Business Park Road, this site accommodates a large car park and vacant land, offering potential for redevelopment and flexible future employment uses.

Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios, Tannery Lane, Send (Site Ref. 18)

6.3.49 Send Business Centre is a remote site accessed via a narrow country road with no pavement uses for light industrial activities. The site also accommodates offices used mainly by businesses in the creative and media industry. While amenities are poor (only one café onsite), the site is suitable for 24-hour indoor business activities and provides adequate parking.

6.3.50 Indirect A3 access and poor public transport limit its appeal for office-based employment, but the self-contained environment supports small industrial and logistics operations which can operate effectively despite narrow country roads.

1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill (Site Ref. 19)

6.3.51 This site is a modern business park, secure and landscaped, with excess underground and surface level parking and direct A3 access. Public transport access is average, with active travel options and bus services, but the train station is an 11-minute drive away. Amenities are available within a 10-15 minute walk, supporting office-based employment.

6.3.52 The high-quality environment and security make the site an attractive location for business park activities.

The Guildway, Portsmouth Road (Site Ref. 20)

6.3.53 The Guildway is a well-lit, landscaped, and pedestrian-friendly business park site used for office activities with features such as electric car charging and benches. Amenities are very poor, with the nearest options a 20-minute walk away, but the site is self-contained and suitable for 24-hour business park activities.

6.3.54 Parking is adequate, though capacity may be insufficient at full occupancy. Indirect A3 access and average public transport are notable drawbacks for this site. Bus services connect to the nearest station, which is also reachable on foot within 25 minutes. However, the pavement is narrow, making active travel between the site and the station an unlikely option for commuters. There is also no cycle lane in and around the site.

Locally Significant Employment Sites

The Courtyard, Wisley (Site Ref. 21)

6.3.55 The Courtyard is a remote site currently under redevelopment for residential use.[59]

Grange Court, Tongham (Site Ref. 22)

6.3.56 Grange Court is a gated, landscaped site with excellent amenities (shops, restaurants, gym within five minutes' walk) and excess parking. Direct A31 access enhances its strategic appeal for office-based employment.

6.3.57 However, proximity to residential areas restricts noisy or industrial activities, but successfully accommodate low density office employment. Public transport is limited with the nearest bus stop 5-10 minutes away.

The Pines Trading Estate, Broad Street (Site Ref. 23)

6.3.58 The Pines is a gated, modern estate with good amenities nearby but is surrounded by residential buildings, limiting the scope of employment activities that can take place on this

[59] Loss of employment land to alternative uses is discussed further in the section. See paragraph 7.3.109 onwards.

site. The high-quality environment and adequate parking make it attractive for office and light industrial activities.

6.3.59 However, residential proximity restricts noisy or 24-hour operations, and public transport is limited, with a bus stop a 5-minute walk from the site but no nearby train station.

31 Chertsey Street and 1–7 Stoke Road (Site Ref. 24)

6.3.60 These sites offer a good public realm and are located next to the town centre, providing excellent amenities and public transport. Indirect A3 access and adequate parking support a range of employment activities.

6.3.61 The sites are highly attractive for office-based employment due to the central location and compatibility with surrounding residential uses.

65 Woodbridge Road (Site Ref. 25)

6.3.62 65 Woodbridge Road has limited public realm but is adjacent to the town centre, offering excellent amenities and public transport. Indirect A3 access and adequate underground parking make it suitable for office-based employment.

6.3.63 The main limitation is the lack of landscaping, but the site's central location and accessibility are significant advantages.

Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court (Site Ref. 26)

6.3.64 These properties are located in the town centre, offering limited public realm but benefiting from excellent amenities and public transport access. Indirect A3 access and adequate parking support office-based employment.

Broadford Business Park, Shalford (Site Ref. 27)

6.3.65 Broadford Business Park is a well-lit, landscaped site with good amenities (shops, restaurants, and a station within 10 minutes' walk). The site is self-contained and suitable for 24-hour operations, with adequate parking. Buildings on site are in good condition but some are starting to get dated and may need refurbishment to remain competitive.

6.3.66 There is no direct A3 access, but good public transport supports office and business park uses as well as some light industrial activities.

Home Farm, Loseley Park (east) (Site Ref. 28)

6.3.67 Home Farm (east) is a gated, green, and well-lit site that is very remote with limited amenities (only a bakery nearby). It is suitable for 24-hour operations and provides adequate parking, making it attractive for industrial and logistics uses.

6.3.68 However, poor strategic road and public transport access are significant drawbacks, limiting its appeal for other employment activities.

Home Farm, Loseley Park (west) (Site Ref. 29)

6.3.69 Home Farm (west) is similar to the east site, being gated and surrounded by green space but lacking lighting and amenities. The site is remote and suitable for 24-hour operations, with adequate parking.

6.3.70 Its main strengths are seclusion and operational flexibility, while poor amenities, lighting, and access are notable weaknesses.

Abbey Business Park, Eashing (Site Ref. 30)

6.3.71 Abbey Business Park is a gated, landscaped estate with green space, a river, and historical buildings in very good condition. Well-maintained historical buildings support specialist or niche employment uses, but may not suit all modern businesses.

6.3.72 Amenities are poor (only a pub and petrol station nearby), but the site is suitable for 24-hour operations and provides adequate parking.

6.3.73 Indirect A3 access and poor public transport are limitations, but the site's environment and building quality make it attractive for office-based employment.

Summary Table

6.3.74 The qualitative analysis presented above is summarised in Table 6-3 which provides a RAG assessment against the stated criteria.

Table 6-3 Site Environments and Facilities, Buildings Condition and Connectivity

Ref	Site	Quality of environment and public realm	Access to facilities and amenities	Adequacy of servicing	Potential for 24-hour working	Adequacy of servicing	Adequacy of parking provision	General condition of buildings	Visible impression of buildings age	Presence of derelict / dilapidated buildings	Access to strategic road network	Access to public transport
1	Slyfield Industrial Estate											
2	North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale											
3	Riverway Industrial Estate etc at Peasmarsh											
4	Woodbridge Meadows											
5	Merrow Lane											
6	Quadram Park, Peasmarsh											
7	Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road											
8	Henley Business Park, Normandy											
9	Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate											
10	Midleton Road Industrial Estate											
11	Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field											
12	Burnt Common – London Road											
13	57 and Liongate Ladymead											
14	London Square, Cross Lane											
15	The Pirbright Institute											
16	Surrey Research Park											
17	Guildford Business Park											
18	Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios Tannery Lane, Send											
19	1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill											
20	The Guildway, Portsmouth Road											
21	The Courtyard, Wisley											
22	Grange Court, Tongham											

Ref	Site	Quality of environment and public realm	Access to facilities and amenities	Adequacy of servicing	Potential for 24-hour working	Adequacy of servicing	Adequacy of parking provision	General condition of buildings	Visible impression of buildings age	Presence of derelict / dilapidated buildings	Access to strategic road network	Access to public transport
23	The Pines Trading Estate, Broad Street											
24	31 Chertsey Street and 1-7 Stoke Road											
25	65 Woodbridge Road											
26	Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court											
27	Broadford Business Park, Shalford											
28	Home Farm, Loseley Park (east)											
29	Home Farm, Loseley Park (west)											
30	Abbey Business Park, Eashing											

Compatibility with Surrounding Uses

6.3.75 The following text provides an assessment of the compatibility of designated employment site in Guildford (Strategic Employment Sites and Locally Significant Employment Sites) with their surrounding area.

Strategic Employment Sites

Slyfield Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 1)

6.3.76 Slyfield Industrial Estate is situated within a predominantly industrial context, with adjacent residential and community uses to the south and allotments to the north. While the estate's scale and established nature support continued employment use, there are notable negative effects on sensitive neighbouring uses, including noise pollution, air pollution, odour, heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic, and significant car traffic. These impacts require careful management to avoid conflict and maintain compatibility with the surrounding area.

North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale (Site Ref. 2)

6.3.77 North and South of Lysons Avenue is embedded within a mixed-use environment that includes both industrial and residential elements. The presence of nearby housing could present challenges, particularly if employment activities generate significant noise, traffic, or visual impacts. Nevertheless, the established employment character of the area helps mitigate these risks, provided that operations remain sensitive to the surrounding community.

Riverway Industrial Estate, Peasmarsh (Site Ref. 3)

6.3.78 This site is located near some residential uses to the north but is otherwise surrounded by compatible employment activities. The site is not particularly noisy, with most activities being wholesaling and distribution generating movement of vans and forklifts. As such, there are currently no significant negative effects on sensitive uses, supporting a stable environment for employment.

Woodbridge Meadows (Site Ref. 4)

6.3.79 Woodbridge Meadows benefits from a location within a commercial corridor, with nearby residential, community, and town centre uses. While the site is generally well-integrated, there is some noise pollution associated with its activities, which may affect sensitive uses in the vicinity. Ongoing monitoring and management of noise impacts are recommended

Merrow Lane (Site Ref. 5)

6.3.80 Merrow Lane is positioned in a setting that includes a mix of employment and residential uses. While the site is well-placed for ongoing employment activity, care must be taken to manage potential conflicts with nearby housing, particularly in relation to traffic movements and operational impacts.

Quadram Park, Peasmarsh (Site Ref. 6)

6.3.81 Quadram Park is surrounded by compatible employment uses, with limited residential intrusion. The site's relationship with its surroundings is positive, and there are few significant conflicts anticipated, supporting a stable environment for employment growth.

Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road (Site Ref. 7)

6.3.82 Woodbridge Park is located in a predominantly commercial area, with adjacent uses that mostly align well with employment activities. The presence of housing to the south of the site limits the potential for intensification in this part of the site. However, the rest of the site's integration with its surroundings is strong, and there are no major constraints identified that would limit employment use.

Henley Business Park, Normandy (Site Ref. 8)

6.3.83 This site is situated in a largely rural context, but with a clear employment focus within the park itself. While the surrounding countryside may limit opportunities for expansion, there are no immediate conflicts with neighbouring uses that would constrain current employment activities.

Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 9)

6.3.84 This site is surrounded by commercial and employment uses, providing a supportive context for ongoing business operations. The site's location away from sensitive residential areas reduces the risk of conflict, making it well-suited for employment purposes.

Midleton Road Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 10)

6.3.85 Midleton Road Industrial Estate is embedded within an area of similar employment uses, with minimal residential presence nearby. This context supports a wide range of employment activities with little risk of conflict arising from neighbouring land uses.

Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field (Site Ref. 11)

6.3.86 The site is located within an established employment area, with compatible surrounding uses and no significant negative effects, supporting ongoing and potentially intensified employment activity.

Burnt Common, London Road (Site Ref. 12)

6.3.87 Burnt Common is positioned adjacent to both employment and some residential uses. Some negative effects, such as noise pollution and HGV traffic, are currently associated with construction activities rather than ongoing industrial operations. These impacts are expected to diminish once construction is complete. Expected future employment activities, centred around distribution and light industrial, should be compatible with surrounding uses.

57 and Liongate Ladymead (Site Ref. 13)

6.3.88 This site is in residential use (including conversion of employment space into new residential).

London Square, Cross Lane (Site Ref. 14)

6.3.89 London Square is situated within a commercial context (business park), with residential uses nearby. No significant negative effects from current activities, which are office-based, are reported. The current employment use, and future uses are considered to be compatible with surrounding uses.

The Pirbright Institute (Site Ref. 15)

6.3.90 The Pirbright Institute is set within a semi-rural environment, surrounded by woods and with limited neighbouring development. No negative effects are identified, supporting its continued use for specialist employment activities.

Surrey Research Park (Site Ref. 16)

6.3.91 Surrey Research Park is surrounded by a mix of academic, research, and business uses, with a hospital to the east and student halls to the south. No significant negative effects are reported, and the site's integration with the wider research and innovation cluster is a key strength.

Guildford Business Park (Site Ref. 17)

6.3.92 This site is surrounded by employment activities and does not generate significant negative effects on other uses in its surrounding area.

Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios, Tannery Lane, Send (Site Ref. 18)

6.3.93 Send Business Centre is located in a rural area, within the proximity of a marina and agricultural land. The activities on site are contained, generating limited noise and no pollution, resulting in no current negative effects on sensitive uses.

1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill (Site Ref. 19)

6.3.94 The site is situated within a business park environment, surrounded by compatible commercial uses and with no significant negative effects, supporting a stable environment for employment activities.

The Guildway, Portsmouth Road (Site Ref. 20)

6.3.95 The Guildway site is situated within a business park environment and no proximate sensitive uses. No negative effects are identified, supporting ongoing employment use.

Locally Significant Employment Sites

The Courtyard, Wisley (Site Ref. 21)

6.3.96 This site is being converted to residential use.

Grange Court, Tongham (Site Ref. 22)

6.3.97 Grange Court is positioned within a residential context. However, no significant negative effects are reported, supporting ongoing office-based employment activities on this site.

The Pines Trading Estate, Broad Street (Site Ref. 23)

6.3.98 The Pines Trading Estate is surrounded by residential uses and green space. The activities on site generate limited noise, no air pollution, and some lightweight traffic, resulting in no current negative effects on nearby residential areas.

31 Chertsey Street and 1–7 Stoke Road (Site Ref. 24)

6.3.99 This site is located in the town centre, within a mix of commercial and residential uses. Despite the proximity of sensitive uses, no significant negative effects are reported from current office-based employment activities taking place on site.

65 Woodbridge Road (Site Ref. 25)

6.3.100 65 Woodbridge Road is situated near the centre of Guildford, with residential and town centre uses nearby. No negative effects are currently identified, supporting compatibility of this site and current activities with surrounding uses.

Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court (Site Ref. 26)

6.3.101 This site is located in the central area of Guildford and is surrounded by a mix of commercial and residential uses. No significant negative effects are reported, supporting compatibility of this site and current activities with surrounding uses.

Broadford Business Park, Shalford (Site Ref. 27)

6.3.102 Broadford Business Park is set within a semi-rural context with some residential use to the west. No negative effects on surrounding uses from activities on this site are identified, supporting current employment use (office and light industrial activities) on this site.

Home Farm, Loseley Park (east) (Site Ref. 28)

6.3.103 Home Farm, Loseley Park (east) is located in a rural setting with no proximate sensitive uses. No negative effects are reported, though access and infrastructure may be limiting factors for employment growth.

Home Farm, Loseley Park (west) (Site Ref. 29)

6.3.104 This site presents the same characteristics as Home Farm, Loseley Park (east) (Site Ref. 28).

Abbey Business Park, Eashing (Site Ref. 30)

6.3.105 Abbey Business Park is set within a rural context, with limited neighbouring development. No negative effects are identified, supporting the niche employment uses taking place on this site. Due to constrained access to the site (i.e. narrow roads), increase in traffic generated by the site could generate a negative effect on surrounding uses.

Summary Table

6.3.106 The qualitative analysis presented above is summarised in Table 6-4 which provides a RAG assessment against the stated criteria.

Table 6-4 Compatibility with Surrounding Uses

Ref.	Site	Proximate uses	Potential for negative effects on sensitive uses
1	Slyfield Industrial Estate		
2	North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale		
3	Riverway Industrial Estate etc at Peasmarsh		
4	Woodbridge Meadows		
5	Merrow Lane		
6	Quadram Park, Peasmarsh		
7	Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road		
8	Henley Business Park, Normandy		
9	Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate		
10	Midleton Road Industrial Estate		
11	Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field		
12	Burnt Ccommon – London Road		
13	57 and Liongate Ladymead		
14	London Square, Cross Lane		
15	The Pirbright Institute		
16	Surrey Research Park		
17	Guildford Business Park		
18	Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios Tannery Lane, Send		
19	1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill		
20	The Guildway, Portsmouth Road		
21	The Courtyard, Wisley		
22	Grange Court, Tongham		
23	The Pines Trading Estate, Broad Street		
24	31 Chertsey Street and 1-7 Stoke Road		
25	65 Woodbridge Road		
26	Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court		
27	Broadford Business Park, Shalford		
28	Home Farm, Loseley Park (east)		
29	Home Farm, Loseley Park (west)		
30	Abbey Business Park, Eashing		

Presence of Vacant Land

6.3.107 Areas of vacant land were identified on employment sites in Guildford based on desk-based research and site survey (undertaken in October 2025). This assessment identified a total of 8.2 ha of land on designated Strategic Employment Site as undeveloped (across five sites). All Locally Significant Employment Sites appear to be fully developed and there is no evidence of vacant land on these sites. These are presented in Table 6-5. Maps identifying vacant land are also provided in Appendix A.

6.3.108 Vacant land on Strategic Employment Sites offers prime opportunities to respond to future demand for employment land.

Table 6-5 Strategic Employment Sites, Vacant Land

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Vacant Land (ha)	% total
4	Woodbridge Meadows[60]	10.4	0.5	5%
12	Burnt Common - London Road	10.5	5.3	50%
16	Surrey Research Park	27.9	1.4	5%
17	Guildford Business Park	1.3	0.3	20%
18	Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios Tannery Lane, Send	2.5	0.7	30%

Development Potential

6.3.109 Most employment sites in Guildford (both Strategic and Locally Significant) are fully developed and deliver high density employment space. Therefore, opportunities for intensification are generally limited.

6.3.110 Some exceptions to this general observation were identified through site visits, with part of sites visibly under-developed or characterised by old/poor quality buildings which could be considered for redevelopment / colocation. These are presented in Table 6-6. It should be noted that this is only a high-level conclusion based on observation and should not be considered as future pipeline. Intensification / redevelopment potential (and % of total) indicates a high-level estimate of additional space that could be delivered through the provision of higher density developments or infill development on the sites (equivalent in land area). Maps identifying land with development potential are provided in Appendix A.

6.3.111 Site surveys, desk-based research and consultation did not provide any evidence that redevelopment of any of those sites (or part of site) was being considered.

Table 6-6 Strategic Employment Sites, Potential for Intensification/Redevelopment/Colocation

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Intensification / Redevelopment Potential (ha)	% total	Comment
1	Slyfield Industrial Estate	37.6	0.9	2.5%	Small number of smaller sites and vacant properties could be redeveloped to higher density, to make best use of land.
2	North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale	10.1	0.5	5%	Small number of very old and/or under-used buildings could be redeveloped, delivering better quality industrial or storage space.
4	Woodbridge Meadows	10.4	2.1	20%	Part of the site, north of the railway line, south of the vacant site and Big Yellow Self Storage, and west of Woodbridge Meadows Road (west of Royal Mail depot) is predominantly made up of low density, low quality industrial spaces which could be considered for intensification.
4	Woodbridge Meadows (Thames Water)	10.4	0.7	7%	The Thames Water Utilities site, north of the railway, is currently

[60] Site on Walnut Tree Close. It can be noted that the site on Woodbridge Meadows, south of Big Yellow Self Storage, is also vacant. However, this site has been accounted for under Planning Pipeline (see section 9.2).

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Intensification / Redevelopment Potential (ha)	% total	Comment
					under-used, and there may be scope to redevelop the site[61].
4	Woodbridge Meadows (Royal Mail)	10.4	1.0	10%	Royal Mail has an active, long-term plan to shift a large share of its fleet from diesel to electric vehicles as part of its "Steps to Zero" net-zero strategy for 2040. This could lead to opportunities for colocation on this site as employment activities become increasingly compatible with other uses (i.e. lower level of noise and air pollution).
5	Merrow Lane	6.9	0.7	10%	Presence of older stock of lower density that could be considered for redevelopment within the western part of the site[62].
9	Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate	2.2	0.1	5%	Under-used car park on north western edge of site.
11	Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field	1.9	0.4	20%	Conversion of excess car parking and redevelopment of some units in poor condition.

Losses to Alternative Uses

6.3.112 Through site surveys, land was identified as no longer providing a purpose for employment use and is therefore considered as being permanently lost to alternative uses. These are presented in Table 6-7. Maps identifying lost land are also provided in Appendix A.

Table 6-7 Strategic and Locally Significant Employment Sites, Land Lost to Alternative Uses

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Lost Land (ha)	% total	Comment
3	Riverway Industrial Estate etc at Peasmarsh	8.5	0.7	8%	Partial loss to care home (north west of site)
4	Woodbridge Meadows	10.4	2.1	20%	Partial loss to student accommodation (south) and presence of Thames Water site (centre)
7	Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road	5.7	2.0	35%	Partial loss to residential (south) and presence of electrical sub-station (centre)
13	57 and Liongate Ladymead	2.1	2.1	100%	Fully lost to residential
21	The Courtyard, Wisley	0.2	0.2	100%	Fully lost to residential
26	Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court	0.4	0.02	5%	Bell House in residential use

Presence of Non-Employment Uses

6.3.113 In addition to land on designated employment sites permanently lost to alternative uses, a number of sites currently accommodate uses that are not traditionally considered as

[61] However, opportunities for intensification of the Thames Water site were already identified in the Guildford Development Framework – Woodbridge Meadows Supplementary Planning Document 2008.
[62] Note that Merrow Highway depot could be suitable for intensification if depot could be relocated (currently operated by Surrey County Council, which will cease existing following the local government reorganisation and creation of the West Surrey UA).

employment use (E(g)(i); E(g)(ii); E(g)(iii), B2; B8). Most commonly, the presence of Sui Generis uses and some retail uses were observed on employment sites. Unlike land that has been lost to alternative uses, it is assumed that the presence of non-employment uses on employment sites does not lead to a permanent loss of this land and that the use could be reverted back to employment use at later stage.

6.3.114 Maps identifying the presence of non-employment uses are provided in Appendix A. The presence of non-employment uses on employment sites contributes to reducing floorspace/land available for employment activities and could impact on the ability of the site to support employment (i.e. particularly if alternative uses generate a large volume of traffic and/or contributes to a lack of parking availability across the site). However, through site surveys, it was assessed that the presence of those uses did not appear to negatively impact on the capacity of the sites to operate as employment sites.

6.3.115 Sites with a high concentration of non-employment activities include:

- Slyfield Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 1): concentration of car dealerships, predominantly along and near Moorfield Road, waste management activities (Chambers Waste Management, on Westfield Road), and sports venues (Ninja Warrior on Thornberry Way, and Blue Spider Climbing on Cobbett Park).
- North and South of Lysons Avenue (Site Ref. 2): a small number of wider activities take place across the site, including a car dealership (to the east of the site) and waste management centre (Suez recycling centre, to the north of the site).
- Riverway Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 3): includes a small number of car and motorbike dealerships (three) and a gym.
- Woodbridge Meadows (Site Ref. 4): presence of a hotel (Travelodge) and car dealerships to the north of the site and Thames Water operational site alongside the railway line. While being defined as employment use, it is worth noting the presence of a Royal Mail depot on this site (in-between the Porsche dealership and Thames Water site).
- Merrow Lane (Site Ref. 5): Surrey County Council operates a large highway depot in the east of the site.
- Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road (Site Ref. 7): presence of an electrical substation in the centre of the site and consumer retailers in the north of the site (i.e. Tile Giant, Wickes). Whilst the consumer retailers did not appear to negatively impact on other employment uses at the time of the site visit, limited parking provision could negatively impact on traffic and congestion in the area.
- Midleton Road Industrial Estate (Site Ref. 10): presence of a trampoline park on the western edge of the site. This venue benefits from a large, gated, private car park and therefore does not impact on other employment uses on the site.
- Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field (Site Ref. 11): presence of a drama school (PPA, to the north of the site), which has potential to attract a large number of people. However, this premises provides large car parking facilities and therefore does not negatively impact on employment activities across the rest of the site.
- Guildford Business Park (car park) (Site Ref. 17): part of the site (south of Guildford Business Park Road) is occupied by a multi-storey car park servicing employment premises on the rest of the Business Park.

6.3.116 Note that the anecdotal presence of cafés and small retail premises has not been reported above.

Offices at Risk of Permitted Development Right (PDR)

6.3.117 Several interacting factors encourage the conversion of office developments to alternative uses (predominantly residential), including:

- Policy and regulatory factors allowing the conversion without the need for full planning permission (subject to prior approval).
- Market and financial drivers associated with value or residential properties largely exceeding those of office space, so conversion under PDR can generate a large land value uplift and higher residual values than retaining office use.
- Under-supply of housing, particularly near transport hubs, contribute to high demand for smaller flats in town centre locations, making office conversions in those areas easier to sell or let.
- Physical suitability of some buildings (regular floorplates, adequate floor-to-ceiling heights, decent servicing and access to daylight) lends themselves to relatively straightforward subdivision into small flats at relatively low cost compared with full redevelopment.
- Older, vacant or under-occupied offices in secondary town-centre and edge-of-centre locations, often with limited prospects of viable Grade A refurbishment, makes their conversion to alternative uses most profitable.

6.3.118 In Guildford, a number of sites present some of those characteristics, and as such could be considered to be at risk of PDR:

- Part of 31 Chertsey Street and 1-7 Stoke Road (Site Ref. 24) – particularly on the southern end of the site (31 Chertsey Street). The risk of PDR on the northern end of the site (Stoke Road) is reduced by the recent refurbishment of the Bottle Works development which now offers a range of flexible Grade A office suites.
- Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court (Site Ref. 26) – although occupancy on this site is currently high and office space is mostly of good quality (including Grade A space), the risk of PDR across the site is evidenced by previous planning applications[63].

6.3.119 The risk of PDR on office space at Abbey Business Park, Eashing (Site Ref. 30) was also considered but discarded due to flood risks in the area. The site being located in Flood Zone 2 and 3, conversion to residential would require evidence that there are no reasonably available sites in a lower-risk zone (the sequential test).

6.4 Summary and Recommendations

6.4.1 Overall, the assessment of identified employment areas indicates that Guildford contains a reasonable range of employment sites of differing quality and type. Most of the sites accommodate a combination of both office and industrial uses, with evidence of sui generis uses amongst this, although some specific, single use sites were also evident. The assessment found that most sites in proximity to the town and other settlements surveyed are functioning well, have high occupancy rates and support a diverse range of business types.

6.4.2 The assessment highlights that the larger and higher performing employment areas tend to be located in proximity to the urban/edge of town areas, or with direct or indirect access to the primary road network, notably the A3 which serves as the primary route linking the Borough to London, and score highly across multiple domains. Employment areas less well connected to the road network were typified as being smaller, offering older/poorer quality buildings, limited formal public realm and access to public transport and amenities. However, there were notable exceptions in The Pirbright Institute (Site Ref. 15) and Broadford Business Park (Site Ref. 27).

6.4.3 Further recommendations are provided in Section 10 (Conclusions and Recommendations) on whether sites should be retained (as performing well in employment use), have their boundary adjusted (to reflect changes of use), considered for release or partial release and

[63] Unimplemented approval on College House from 2023 (23/W/00039) and expired applications on Bell Court from 2019 (19/W/00036) for conversion to residential.

reprovision (if under-performing; or lost to alternative uses), or considered for colocation. These recommendations take into consideration the assessment of Employment Sites presented above, as well as the assessment of future demand and findings of stakeholder engagement.

7. Property Market Profile

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This section presents analysis of the commercial property market in Guildford. It also looks at the state of the stock in relation to Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard and discusses the changing office workspace requirements following the Covid-19 pandemic.

7.1.2 The assessment of the commercial property market makes reference to comparator geographies, namely the FEMA as identified in Section 4, the South East region, and England. This reflects the fact that the commercial property market in Guildford is not self-contained, and instead forms part of a much wider market area encompassing the FEMA, county, and region to some extent, varying somewhat by type of floorspace.

7.1.3 Data presented in this section is derived from CoStar which represents a comprehensive database of up-to-date property market data. Trends are presented where applicable, otherwise data for 2025 Quarter 2 (Q2) is shown, being the most recent period for which complete data is available. All data presented reflects that which is available, and reported by commercial agents, and therefore is subject to gaps and inaccuracies.

7.1.4 Employment-generating properties comprised of office, light industrial, general industrial, and storage and distribution types are considered, in line with the definition of employment land. The relationship between historic and new planning use classes, their relationship to CoStar property type primary and secondary classification, and the nomenclature adopted for this report, are shown in Table 7-1 below. It is recognised that there are other property types which may contribute to employment use activity, but these will not be analysed for the purposes of this evidence base.

Table 7-1 Property Type Classification

Pre-2021 Planning Use Class	New Planning Use Classes	CoStar Primary Type	CoStar Secondary Type
B1a (revoked) – Offices	E(g)(i) – Offices to carry out any operational or administrative function	Office	• All
B1b (revoked) – Research and Development (R&D) [64]	E(g)(ii) – Research and Development	Industrial	• R&D
B1c (revoked) – Industrial Processes	E(g)(iii) – Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity: industrial processes	Light Industrial	• Light distribution • Light manufacturing • Showroom (light industrial)
B2 – General industrial (other than E(g))	B2	Industrial	• Food Processing • Manufacturing • Service
B8 – Storage and Distribution	B8	Industrial	• Distribution • Warehouse • Truck Terminal • Refrigeration/ Cold storage • Showroom (Industrial)

Source: AECOM

7.1.5 In this section, we refer to use classes using the Planning Use Class Order: E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B2; B8.

7.1.6 The section is divided into two sub-sections covering the office market (E(g)(i)) and the industrial market (E(g)(iii); B2; B8); providing an assessment of local and sub-regional floorspace by analysing key property market indicators.

[64] Note that E(g)(ii) is not covered in this section as CoStar only returns 1 value for this use class in Guildford.

7.2 Office market [E(g)(i) uses]

7.2.1 This section presents findings related to the office property market in Guildford, along with comparisons to the FEMA, South East, and England. The principal concentrations of office stock in Guildford are on the edge of Guildford town centre, with business parks such as London Square, Guildford Business Park, 1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill and Surrey Research Park employment sites.

Buildings and floorspace

7.2.2 CoStar data indicates that the office market in Guildford is comprised of 465 properties, i.e. buildings in office use or an office component within a mixed-use building, accommodating 399,060 sqm net internal area (NIA) floorspace, including existing space, and space under renovation.

7.2.3 Table 7-2 shows the number of office properties and the corresponding floorspace (in sqm) for Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England. Guildford accommodates 46.5% of office properties within the FEMA, and accounts for 49.2% of the FEMA's total office floorspace. The data also shows that the average building size in Guildford (858 sqm) is slightly above the average in the FEMA (813 sqm). However, both Guildford and the FEMA have a lower average building size when compared to the South East and England as a whole (911 sqm and 1,155 sqm respectively). This indicates that the supply of office floorspace in Guildford and the FEMA is generally centred around small and medium sized premises.

Table 7-2 Office Properties – Buildings and Floorspace

	Number of Buildings	Floorspace (sqm)	Average Building size (sqm)
Guildford	465	399,060	858
Waverley	321	171,967	536
Woking	213	239,921	1,126
FEMA	999	810,948	813
South East	18,366	16,726,755	911
England	101,279	116,971,878	1,155

Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.2.4 Table 7-3 presents the change in office floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England for the period between 2016 and 2025. It shows that the supply of office floorspace in Guildford experienced an increase of 3.5% during that time, higher than in the FEMA, which recorded a decrease (-4.2%) and the South East (-1.3%), but lower than the increase recorded in England (7.7% respectively).

Table 7-3 Change in office floorspace stock between 2016 and Q2 2025

	Guildford	Waverley	Woking	FEMA	South East	England
Floorspace in 2016 (sqm)	385,563	187,209	273,932	846,704	16,946,823	108,621,784
Floorspace in 2025 (sqm)	399,060	171,967	239,921	810,948	16,726,755	116,971,878
Change (%)	3.5%	-8.1%	-12.4%	-4.2%	-1.3%	7.7%

Source: CoStar, (2025)

Premises

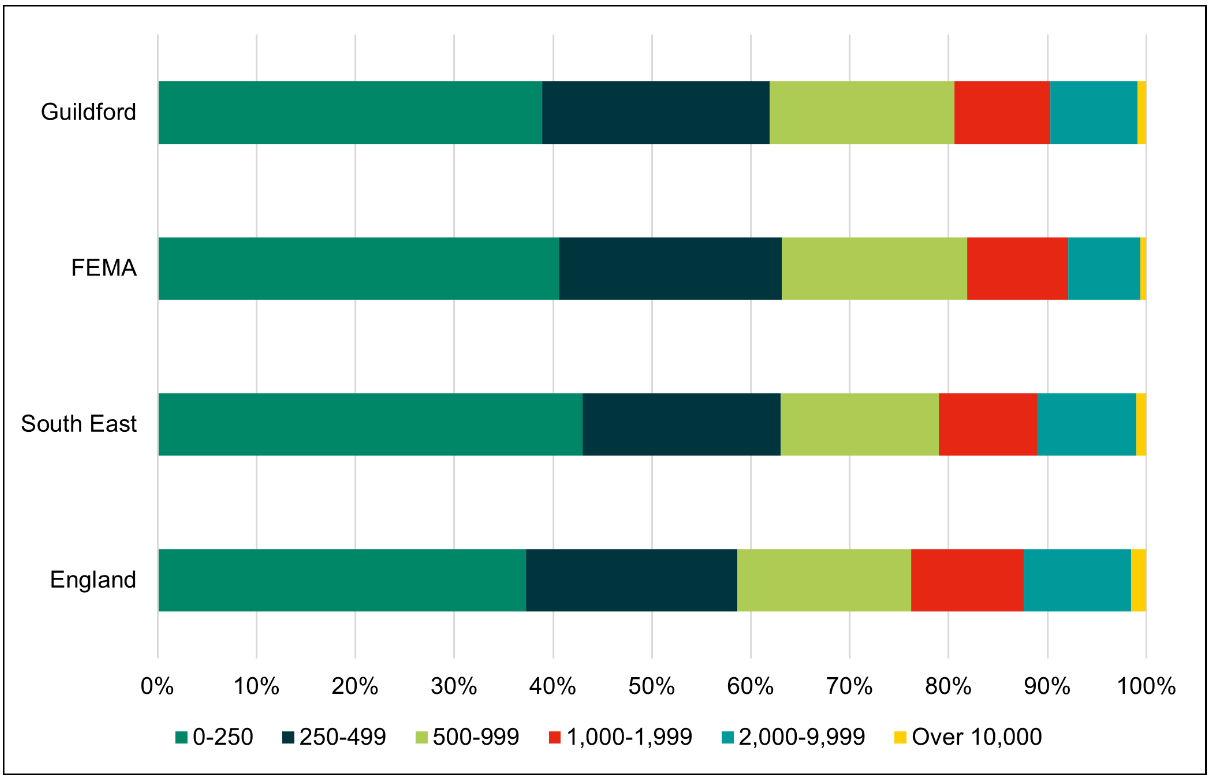
7.2.5 Figure 7-1 shows that 39% of all office units in Guildford are less than 250 sqm in size. Approximately 41% of all units are between 250 and 1,000 sqm, 19% between 1,000 and 10,000 sqm and just below 1% larger than 10,000 sqm.

7.2.6 In general, Guildford, its FEMA, and the South East are typified by smaller office buildings, with buildings less than 500 sqm accounting for 62%, 63% and 63% of total stock, respectively. In contrast, office buildings less than 500 sqm account for 58% across England as a whole.

7.2.7 Consultation with agents has highlighted that, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the shift to hybrid working, many businesses have downsized or are considering downsizing, with smaller but high-quality office space being in steady demand. Agents considered that the demand for large floorplates (>1,500 sqm) is more limited in the Borough.

7.2.8 Out of town office locations are also becoming increasingly less desirable for businesses. Proximity to public transport and amenities is a key requirement for potential occupiers, which favour quality of space (willing to pay higher rates per sqm) over quantity of space. Access to car parking is also a requirement for many businesses, particularly in out of town locations.

Figure 7-1 Office properties - Stock by premises size (sqm) in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England in Q2 2025 (%)



Source: CoStar, (2025)

Vacancy and absorption rates

7.2.9 MHCLG guidance requires employment land studies to consider evidence of market failure such as physical or ownership constraints that prevent employment sites being used effectively. Therefore, this section presents data on vacancy and absorption rates of office E(g)(i) premises in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England.

7.2.10 CoStar records ‘vacancy’ in terms of space which is unoccupied and marketed. Table 7-4 shows the vacancy rate for office floorspace in Guildford, along with the FEMA, South East and England. Guildford has a lower vacancy rate (7.8%) than the FEMA (9.1%) and the South East (8.5%) but is in line with the England (7.8%) average. However, because Guildford contains a large share of the FEMA’s office stock, it still drives up the vacancy rate in this area, accounting for 42% of the vacant office floorspace. With the highest vacancy rate in the FEMA, Woking is the greatest contributor to office space vacancy in the area, accounting for 44% of the vacant stock. Waverley, with the lowest office stock in the FEMA, has the lowest vacancy rate (5.6%).

7.2.11 The office floorspace vacancy rates for Guildford and England are slightly lower than the optimal 8% frictional level, which indicates a balanced market in terms of supply and demand. The FEMA and the South East both have a vacancy rate which is slightly higher than the optimal frictional level. This suggests that supply is broadly in balance in the local market.

7.2.12 However, in response to the impact of Covid-19 on demand for office space, landlords have adopted a more flexible position on short-term let arrangements and rent concessions to retain occupiers. These arrangements are assumed to be temporary, and therefore, in the longer term, it is possible that demand for office space will decrease once the current incentives provided to occupiers (against them retaining their floorspace) are removed.

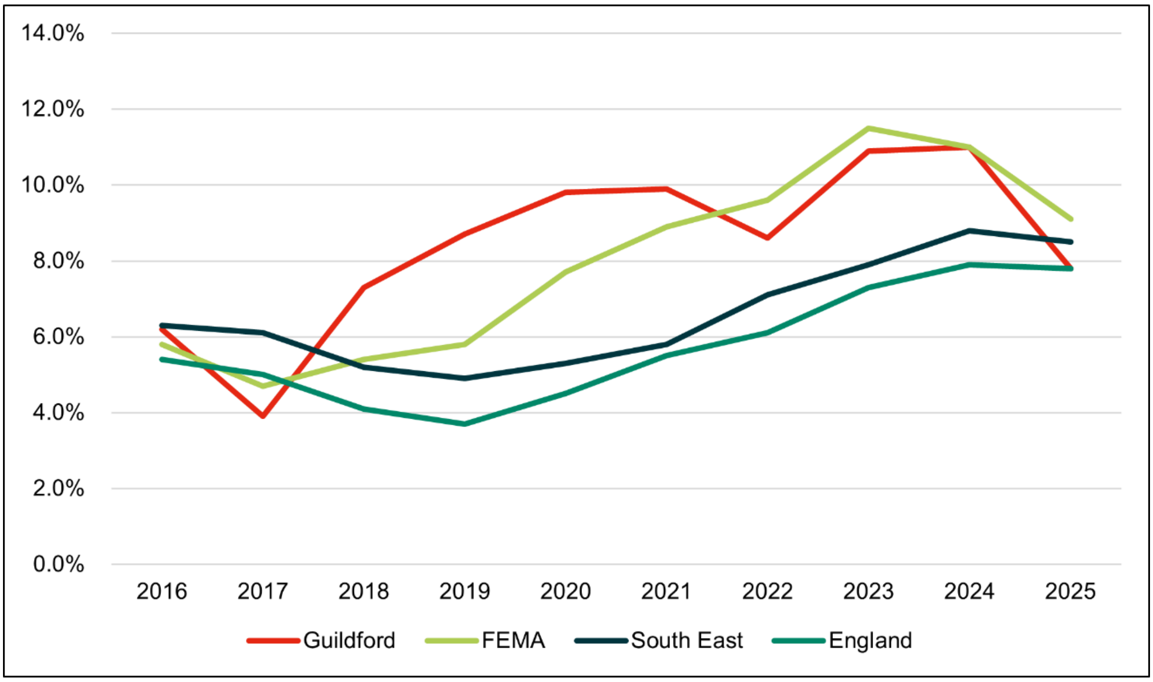
Table 7-4 Vacancy rates of office floorspace in Q2 2025

	Guildford	Waverley	Woking	FEMA	South East	England
Office floorspace						
Vacancy (%)	7.8%	5.6%	13.8%	9.1%	8.5%	7.8%
Vacancy (sqm)	31,064	9,630	33,140	73,834	1,421,444	9,096,221

Source: CoStar, (2025). Figures may not sum due to rounding.

7.2.13 Figure 7-2 shows the change in office floorspace vacancy rates between 2016 and 2025 for Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England. The vacancy rate in Guildford has increased from 6.2% in 2016 to 7.8% in 2025. This represents the smallest change in vacancy rates when compared to the FEMA (from 5.8% in 2016 to 9.1% in 2025), South East (from 6.3% in 2016 to 8.5% in 2025) and England (from 5.4% in 2016 to 7.8% in 2025). Across the FEMA, Woking and Waverley experienced the greatest increases in vacancy rate (from 9.8% in 2016 to 13.8% in 2025, and from 1.6% in 2016 to 5.8% in 2025 respectively).

Figure 7-2 Vacancy rate (%) of office floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025

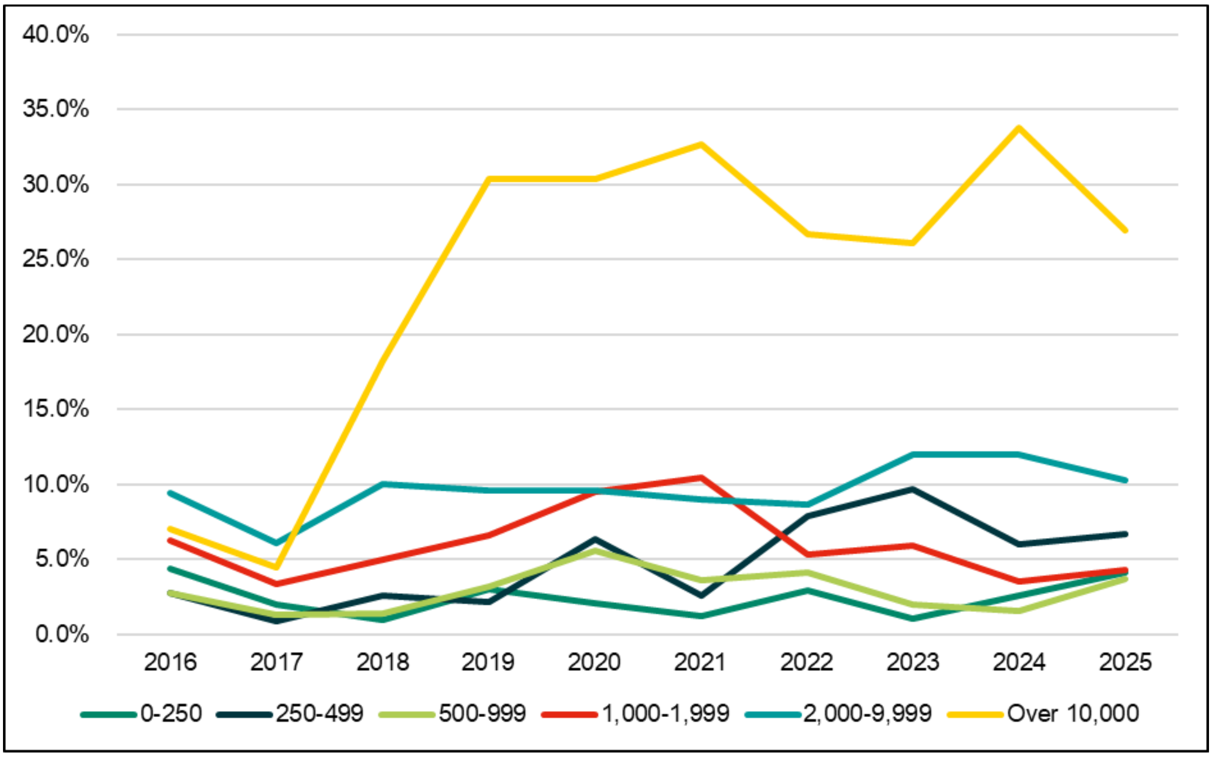


Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.2.14 Figure 7-3 shows the change in vacancy rates by size band. This highlights that premises over 10,000 sqm have seen the greatest increase in the vacancy rate, rising from 7.0% in 2016 to 27.0% in 2025 Q2. In Guildford, office premises under 250 sqm are the only size band to have experienced a decrease in vacancy rates, from 4.4% in 2016 to 4.1% in 2025.

7.2.15 The good performance of small size band units, and the high level of vacancy across larger premises (>10,000 sqm) directly reflects the increasing demand for smaller, more flexible units within the Borough.

Figure 7-3 Vacancy rate (%) of office floorspace in Guildford between 2016 and Q2 2025, by premises size (sqm)

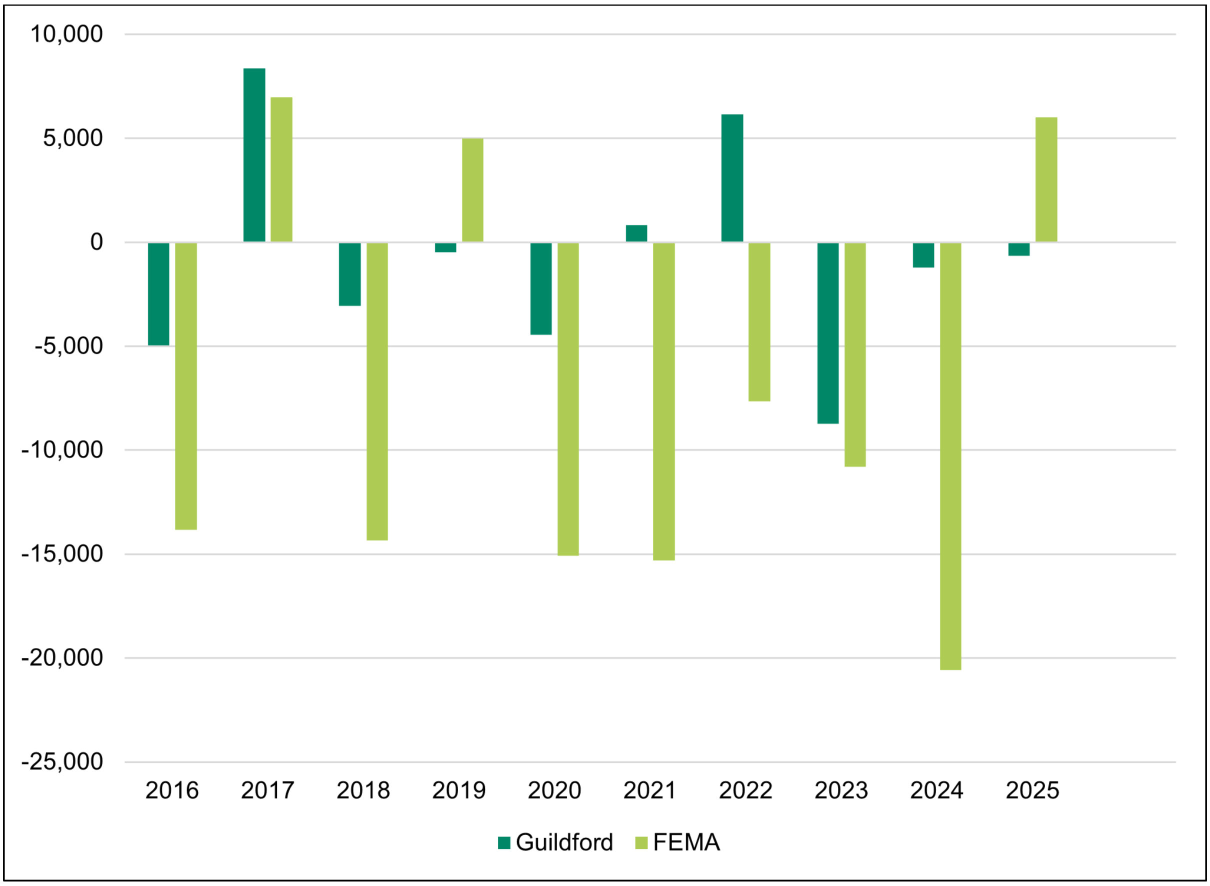


Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.2.16 Net absorption provides another angle on demand. The measure expresses the change in the overall quantum of occupied floorspace, typically recorded year on year. Positive annual net absorption means that a greater amount of space has been occupied from a given year to the next. Net absorption is not the reverse of vacancy as vacancy is an expression of the level of non-occupancy against total stock. In office markets where stock may be in decline, for example due to the conversion of offices to residential use, vacancy may reduce but net absorption would be negative.

7.2.17 Figure 7-4 presents the net absorption of office floorspace in Guildford and the FEMA. In 2017, 2019 and 2025, net absorption was positive in the FEMA. In 2017 and 2022 net absorption was positive in Guildford. However, net absorption has been muted in Guildford apart from in these years. Years post 2020 are likely driven by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the use of office space.

Figure 7-4 Net absorption of office floorspace in Guildford and the FEMA between 2016 and Q2 2025 in sqm



Source: CoStar, (2025)

Rental values

7.2.18 Table 7-5 presents the average rental values recorded in Q2 2025 for office floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England. It shows that the average rental value for office floorspace in Guildford (£365 per sqm) is 15.3% higher than the FEMA average (£309 per sqm). Across the FEMA, Guildford has a broadly comparable rental value to Woking (£325 per sqm), but rental values are considerably higher value than recorded in Waverley (£236 per sqm). Rental values in Guildford and the FEMA are above the average for the South East (£276 per sqm), but only Guildford is marginally higher than the average for England (£344 per sqm), though this is unsurprising given the market, as Guildford and its FEMA are feeder cities to London, introducing higher demand for floorspace and premises, and therefore average higher rent.

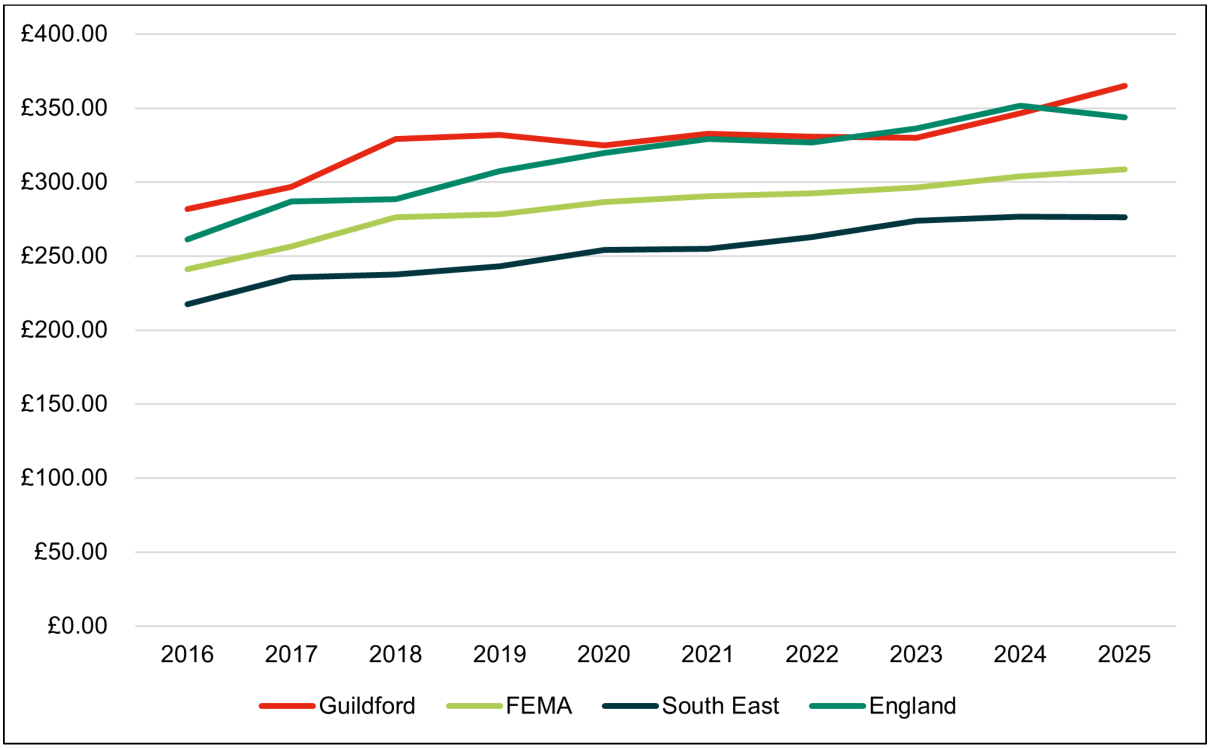
Table 7-5 Average rental values for office floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England

Location	Average £ per sqm
Guildford	365
Waverley	236
Woking	325
FEMA	309
South East	276
England	344

Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.2.19 Figure 7-5 presents the change in rental values in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025. The average rent per sqm has increased in Guildford by an average of 2.6% per annum over this period, higher than the rate across the FEMA (2.5%), and the South East (2.4%), but lower than the rate across England (2.8%).

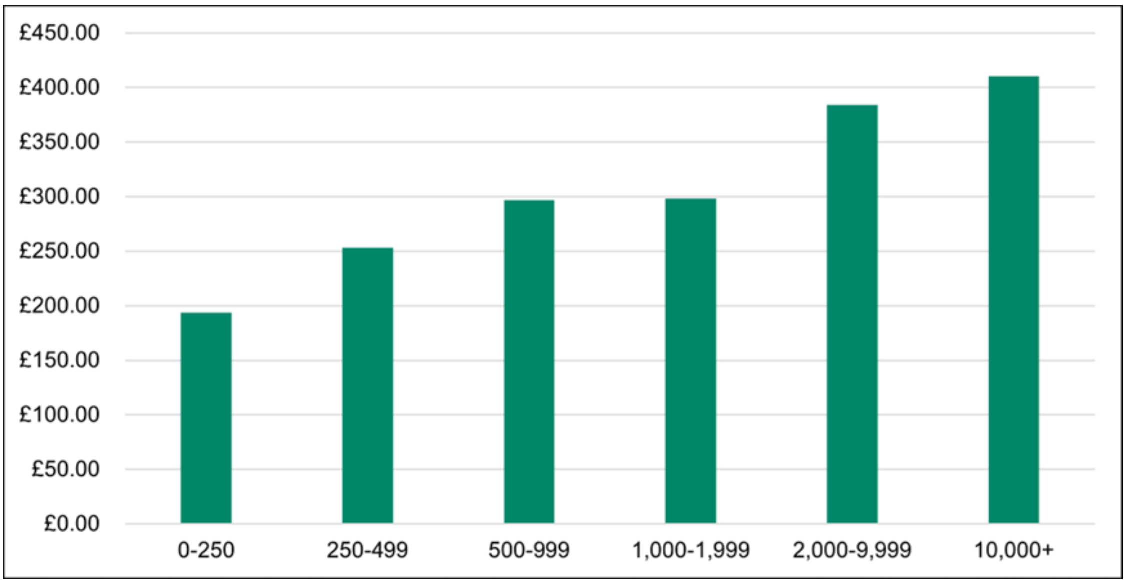
Figure 7-5 Average rent (£ per sqm) for office floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025



Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.2.20 The rental value of office properties in Guildford tends to increase as the overall floorspace of the property increase, wherein those properties with the largest floorspace areas tend to attract the highest rent (£/sqm) on average. This is shown in Figure 7-6. The average rental value of properties between 2,000 and 9,999 sqm in size is approximately £384/sqm, which is around £190/sqm more than is typical for properties below 250 sqm in size.

Figure 7-6 Average rent (£ per sqm) for office floorspace in Guildford, by size band (Q2 2025)



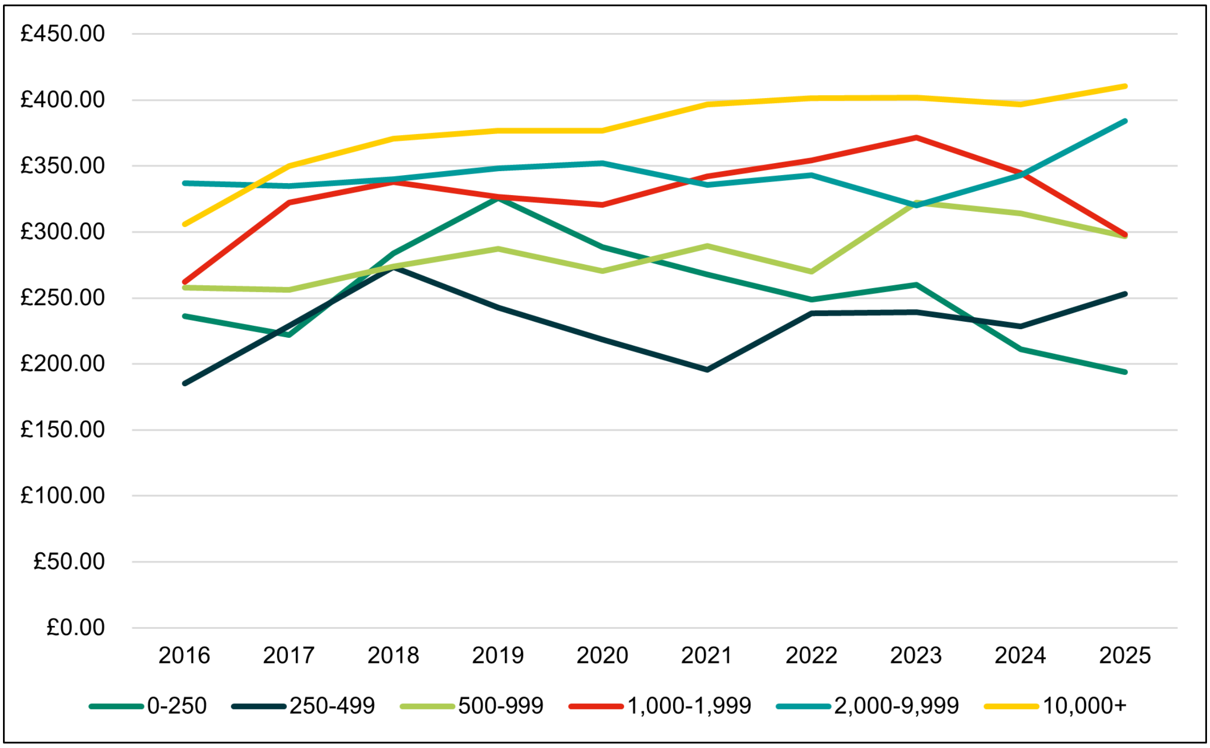
Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.2.21 Over the period between 2016 and Q2 2025, the market rental value of office properties has increased across all size bands except for 0-250 sqm. Since 2016 there has largely been a prominent divergence in rental values across office size bands, driven by increased values associated with larger offices (>1,000 sqm), with more limited growth registered for properties offering less than 500 sqm floorspace. This is shown in Figure 7-7.

7.2.22 It is worth noting that while demand for larger floorspace requirements is limited, and vacancy is high (above 10% for 2,000 sqm and over), average rent for this type of space remains high and has increased over the period 206-2025. This can be explained by several factors:

- Despite a higher vacancy rate (based on total floorspace), there is a limited number of vacant properties offering large office floorplates in Guildford;
- Vacated large office spaces in Guildford tend to be of lower quality; therefore, as these are being removed from the equation, the average rent for larger office space "artificially" goes up.

Figure 7-7 Average rent (£ per sqm) for office floorspace in Guildford by size between 2016 and Q2 2025



Source: CoStar, (2025)

Changing Office Workspace Requirements

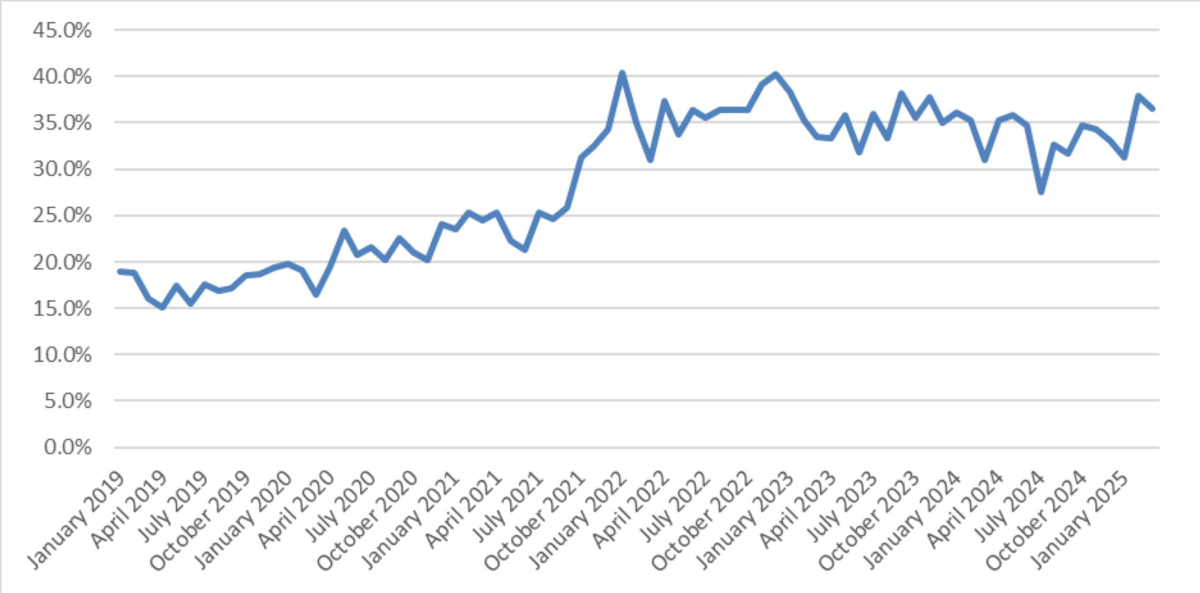
7.2.23 This sub-section delves into the recent evolution of changing space requirements for office and knowledge work.

7.2.24 The work-from-home shift is a key driver of the evolving landscape in the UK. Data published by the Office for National Statistics[65] highlighted that 58% of workers in the South East embrace either "home or hybrid work" in 2023, reshaping models, and foretelling a lasting change, with 75% anticipating transformed in-person work approaches. The latest available data from the ONS, from March 2025[66], shows that the proportion of the workforce in the South East "mainly" working from home[67] has remained high since the end of 2021 and fluctuates in the region of 35%. In March 2025, 36.5% of the workforce in the South East was reported as "mainly" working from home. By way of comparison, Annual

[65] ONS Characteristics of homeworkers, Great Britain February 2023
[66] ONS Home Working by Region and Month, March 2025
[67] 3 days or more

Population Survey data from before the Covid-19 pandemic shows that around 17.6% of working adults reported working from home at some point in the week before the interview.

Figure 7-8 Home Working, South East ("Mainly Work from Home"), January 2019-March 2025



Source: ONS Home Working by Region and Month, March 2025

7.2.25 The future of office spaces is set to be shaped by intricate dynamics involving employee attendance rates and the broader economic landscape. Survey data from May 2024[68] indicated that office occupancy rates across the UK averaged around 33% over the previous 12 months, with a weekly peak of 35.9%. This compares with pre-pandemic occupancy rates estimated at 80%. Further research from 2025[69] indicates that the rate of office utilisation has increase and stabilised at 66%. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays are the busiest days of the week for staff to be at their desks, with Friday remaining the quietest day. Faced with this new reality, employers are confronted with challenges to entice employees back to the office environment, thus influencing decisions related to office expansion, right-sizing office spaces, and delaying real estate investments.

7.2.26 The context within the office market, characterised by extended leases held, suggests that a time lag will occur before a decrease in demand for office space is fully evident. This delay provides a window during which office job numbers might increase, employee attendance rates could experience a partial recovery, and a pursuit of high-quality office environments may persist, collectively contributing to a relatively gradual and controlled transition for office providers. It is worth noting that locations with limited premium office offerings, away from amenities, might experience a more pronounced impact due to the variable nature of the "flight to quality[70]".

7.2.27 This trend of downsizing of requirements by office occupiers is already driving decisions by businesses to reduce their premises size with impacts on vacancy rates. In turn this may potentially result in new office floorspace being of lower average density than has been typical.

Office (E(g(i)) market conclusions

7.2.28 The office market in Guildford accommodates approximately 399,060 sqm of floorspace and comprises 46.5% of the total stock in the FEMA. The majority of premises are small (46% being less than 500 sqm) though these account for only 16% of the total floorspace. The principal concentrations of offices in Guildford are in Guildford city centre, Abbey Mill Business Park, Guildford Business Park and Surrey Research Park employment sites.

[68] https://return.remitconsulting.com/resource-centre/50-news-release-three-years-on-from-the-easing-of-lockdown-restrictions-and-uk-remain-stable-at-around-a-third-of-office-capacity
[69] https://www.bco.org.uk/bco-report-calls-for-new-approach-to-space-planning-as-office-use-reaches-critical-shift
[70] https://www.cbre.co.uk/insights/viewpoints/the-flight-to-quality-quantified

7.2.29 The analysis shows that the demand for office floorspace in Guildford is generally positive. Guildford has a slightly lower vacancy rate than the FEMA (mainly driven by Woking and Waverley's vacant floorspace), but lower than the South East and in line with England averages. While the vacancy rate has increased at a faster rate than the comparators over the past decade, it remains below the optimal frictional vacancy rate of 8% which indicates a balanced market in terms of supply and demand, suggesting slight potential supply constraints within the local market. Net absorption of office floorspace in Guildford has been negative overall. Average rental values in Guildford are notably higher than the FEMA, the South East and England averages. There has been a notable increase in the values associated with larger offices (>1,000 sqm), while smaller properties have registered limited growth in rental values.

7.2.30 However, engagement with local commercial agents have highlighted that whilst there is vacant office space in Guildford, mainly concentrated in out of town locations, for large floorplates, there is currently a lack of suitable small but high-quality office space in Guildford town centre to respond to the demand.

7.3 Industrial market [E(g)(iii); B2 and B8 uses)]

7.3.1 This section presents findings related to the industrial (E(g(iii); B2 and B8 uses) property market in Guildford, along with comparisons to the FEMA, South East and England. Industrial properties, comprising industrial, manufacturing, light industrial, and storage and distribution functions are predominantly located around Guildford Industrial Estate, Henley Business Park, Slyfield Industrial Estate, and North and south of Lysons Avenue.

Buildings and Floorspace

7.3.2 There are 32 light industrial (E(g(iii) use) properties in Guildford, comprising 39,447sqm of floorspace. The light industrial floorspace across Guildford represents approximately 45.7% of the light industrial floorspace in the FEMA. Light industrial uses account for the smallest proportion of floorspace across all industrial use classes.

7.3.3 Guildford is home to 81 general industrial (B2 use) properties, accounting for 36,755 sqm of floorspace. The general industrial floorspace across Guildford represents 20.4% of the general industrial floorspace in the FEMA. Across the FEMA, Woking has fewer general industrial properties (37), but accounts for a significantly higher proportion of floorspace (56.3%).

7.3.4 There are 111 storage and distribution (B8 use) properties in Guildford, comprising 220,998 sqm of floorspace. Storage and distribution floorspace across Guildford represents 52.7% of the storage and distribution floorspace in the FEMA. Across the FEMA, Guildford accounts for the largest share of storage and distribution floorspace.

7.3.5 Table 7-6 presents a profile of properties and floorspace by industrial use class.

Table 7-6 Industrial properties – buildings and floorspace (Q2 2025)

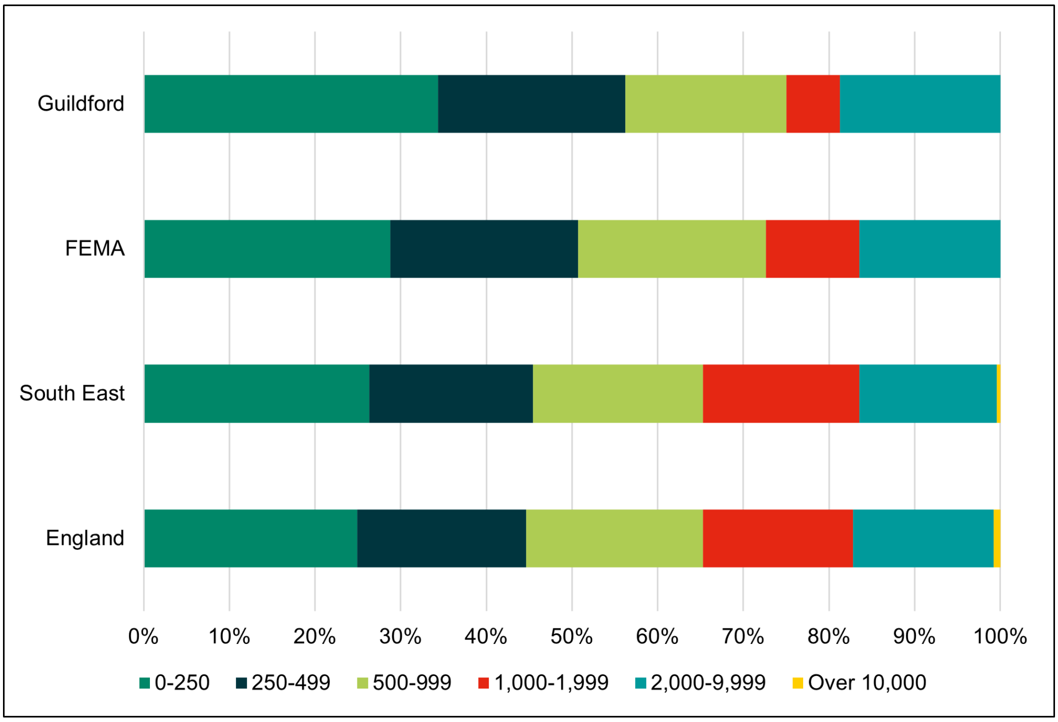
	Guildford	Waverley	Woking	FEMA	South East	England
Light industrial [E(g)(iii)]						
Number of properties	32	26	15	73	2,112	17,827
Floorspace (sqm)	39,447	29,715	17,198	86,360	2,564,234	25,086,904
General industrial [B2]						
Number of properties	81	66	37	184	5,920	45,176
Floorspace	36,755	42,089	101,737	180,580	7,067,276	79,359,059
Storage and Distribution [B8]						
Number of properties	111	46	62	219	8,623	54,234
Floorspace	220,998	63,091	134,988	419,077	24,843,458	197,416,967
Total						
Number of properties	224	138	114	476	16,655	117,237
Floorspace	297,200	134,895	253,923	686,018	34,474,968	301,862,930

Source: CoStar, (2025)

Premises

7.3.6 Light industrial properties in Guildford tend to be relatively small in size, whereby over half of buildings (56.2%) in this use are less than 500 sqm, compared to 50.7% in the FEMA, 45.4% in the South East, and 44.6% in England. There are no properties over 10,000 sqm in Guildford. This is shown in Figure 7-9.

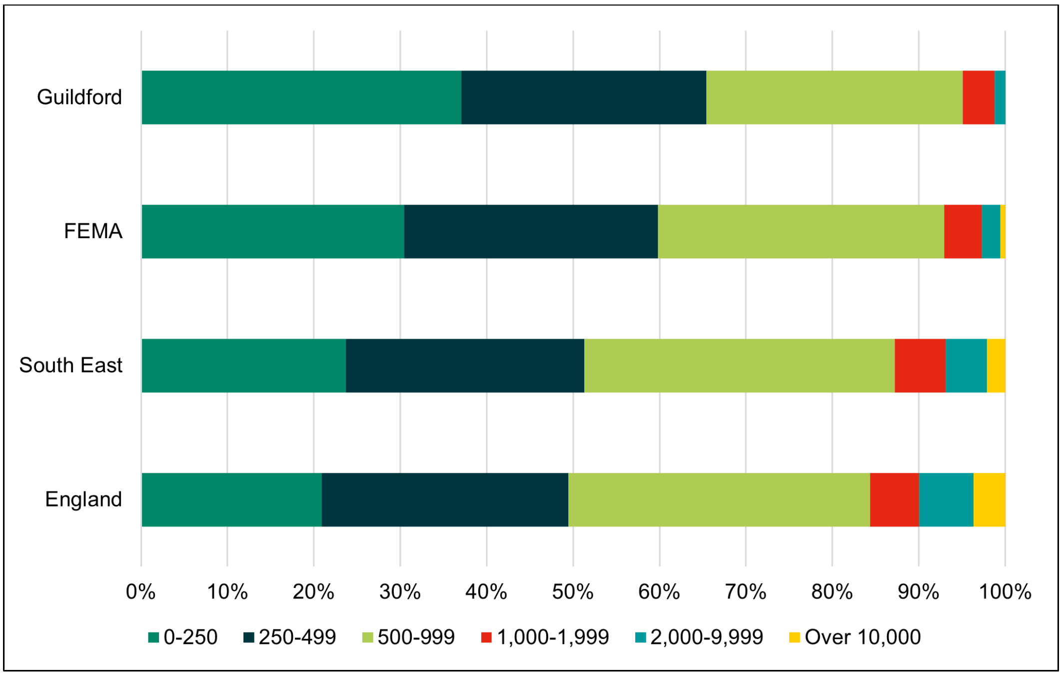
Figure 7-9 Industrial properties - Light industrial [E(g)(iii)] - Stock by premises size (sqm) in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England in Q2 2025 (%)



Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.7 General industrial properties in Guildford are also typically less than 500 sqm in size, accounting for 65.4% of properties, a higher proportion than recorded for the FEMA (59.8%), South East (51.3%) and across England (49.4%). This is shown in Figure 7-10.

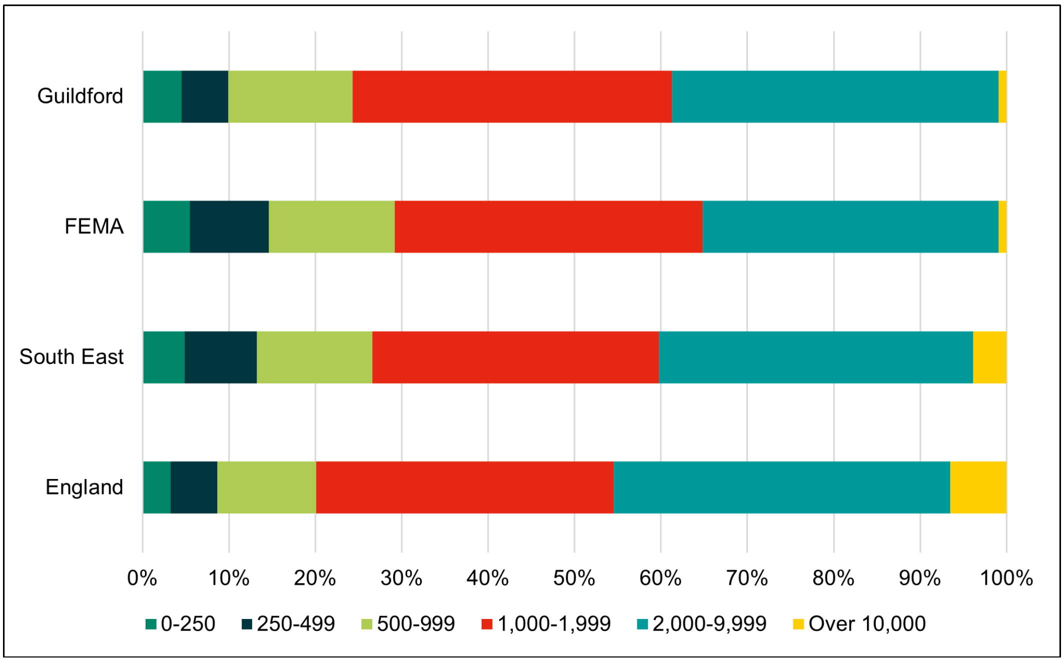
Figure 7-10 Industrial properties - General Industrial [B2] - Stock by premises size (sqm) in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England in Q2 2025 (%)



Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.8 Storage and distribution properties typically have larger floorspaces. In Guildford, the majority of properties (74.8%) sit within the 1,000 – 9,999 sqm size band, higher than the FEMA (69.9%), South East (69.50%) and England (73.4%). Storage and distribution properties in Guildford that have floorspaces over 10,000 sqm (0.9%) represent a proportion which is in line with the FEMA (0.9%), but is notably lower than recorded for the South East (3.9%) and England (6.6%). This is shown in Figure 7-11.

Figure 7-11 Industrial properties - Storage and distribution [B8] - Stock by premises size (sqm) in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England in Q2 2025 (%)



Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.9 Engagement with local commercial agents has highlighted a strong demand for industrial and logistics space in the Borough, across all sizes, but a lack of supply to respond to current demand, particularly for high-tech, clean manufacture, life science, medical and other innovation space. Similarly to office space, demand for high quality space (with facilities such as EV charging stations, parking, yard space and loading bays) constitute the majority of the requirements.

Vacancy and absorption rates

7.3.10 Table 7-7 presents a breakdown of industrial floorspace vacancy (in terms of vacancy rate and vacant floorspace) by type (light industrial, general industrial, and storage and distribution).

7.3.11 The light industrial floorspace vacancy rate in Guildford (2.4%) is lower than the vacancy rate in the FEMA (4.6%), South East (5.4%), and England (4.0%). Across the FEMA, Guildford exhibits the lowest vacancy rate of 2.4% whereas Woking has 6.0% vacant space and Waverley has 6.6% vacant space. The higher vacancy rate in Woking and Waverley is therefore driving the FEMA average up.

7.3.12 General industrial floorspace records a significantly higher vacancy rate in Guildford (14.5%) when compared to the FEMA (10.7%), South East (3.5%) and England (2.3%). The vacancy rate in the FEMA is mainly driven by the vacancy rate in Waverley (17.3%) and Guildford (14.5%), with Woking recording a vacancy rate of 0.4%.

7.3.13 There is a lower vacancy rate for storage and distribution floorspace in Guildford (7.0%) than other industrial uses, both in absolute and proportional terms. The vacancy rate is lower than the South East (8.0%), but slightly higher than the FEMA (5.3%) and England (6.8%).

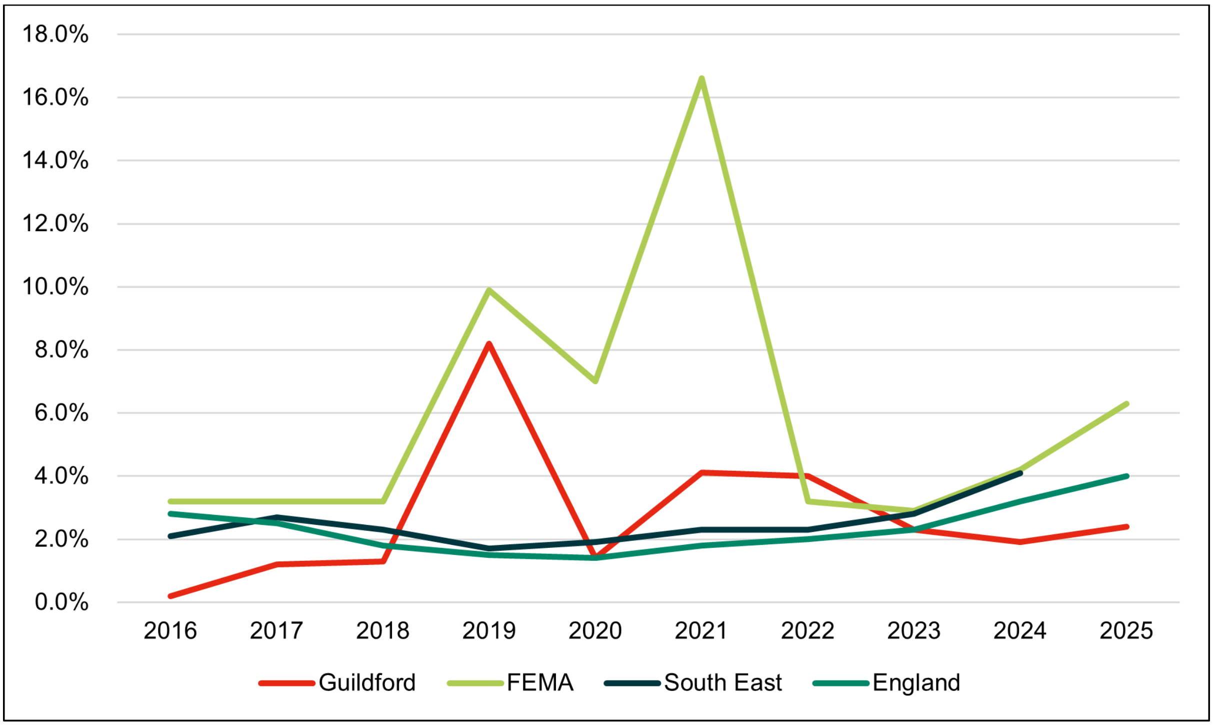
Table 7-7 Industrial properties – Vacancy (2025 Q2)

	Guildford	Waverley	Woking	FEMA	South East	England
Light industrial [E(g)(iii)]						
Vacancy rate (%)	2.4%	6.6%	6.0%	4.6%	5.4%	4.0%
Vacant floorspace (sqm)	956	1,958	1,025	3,943	154,112	745,630
General industrial [B2]						
Vacancy rate (%)	14.5%	17.3%	0.4%	10.7%	3.5%	2.3%
Vacant floorspace (sqm)	5,313	7,300	200	12,813	268,229	1,795,617
Storage and Distribution [B8]						
Vacancy rate (%)	7.0%	6.5%	2.4%	5.3%	8.0%	6.8%
Vacant floorspace (sqm)	15,377	4,080	3,648	22,714	2,234,927	13,502,125
Total						
Vacancy rate (%)	7.8%	9.9%	1.7%	5.8%	7.7%	5.4%
Vacant floorspace (sqm)	21,646	13,338	4,256	44,482	2,657,268	16,164,150

Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.14 When considering the trend in vacancy rate of light industrial use floorspace, the vacancy rate in Guildford has remained below the FEMA from 2016 to 2022. In 2016, the vacancy rate in Guildford was 0.2%, lower than all other comparators. Since 2022, Guildford has experienced a slight decrease in light industrial vacancy rate until reaching 2.4% in Q2 2025 (following a slight increase from the position in 2024 of 2%), higher than all other comparators. This is shown in Figure 7-12.

Figure 7-12 Vacancy rate (%) of Light industrial [E(g)(iii)] floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025

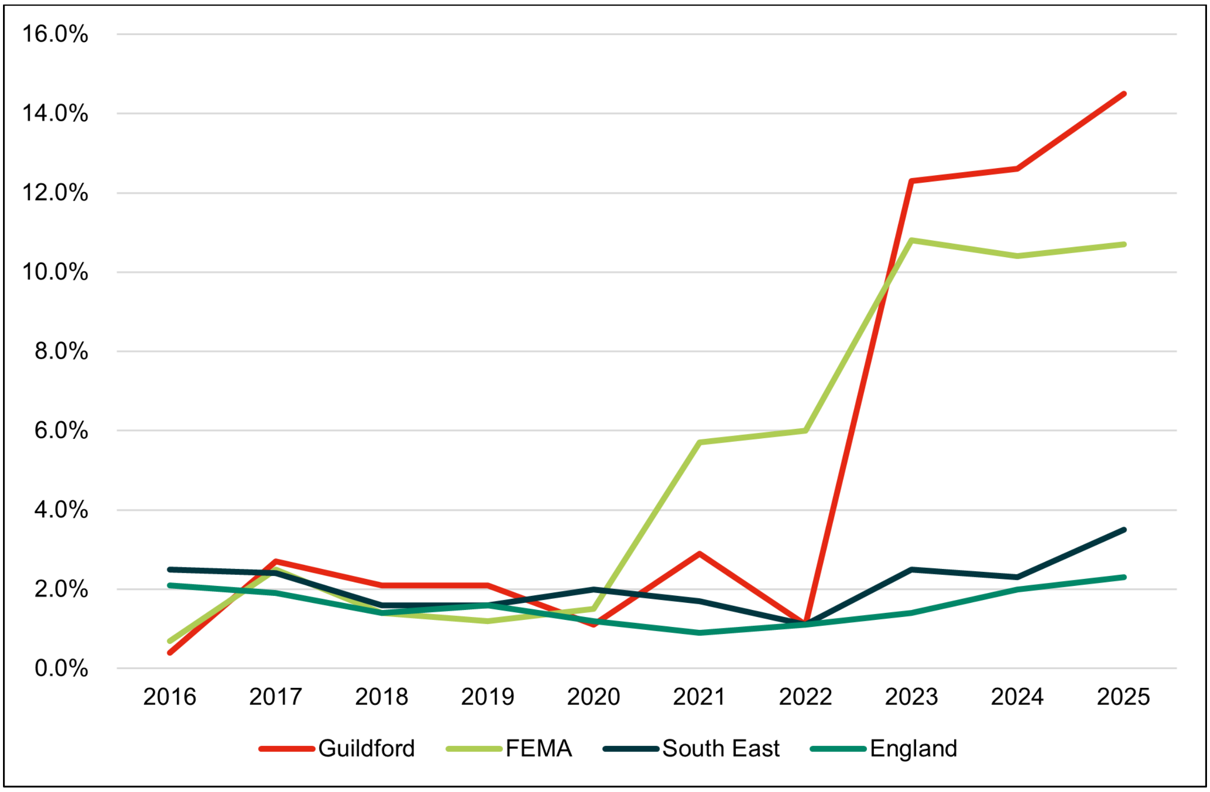


Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.15 The vacancy rate of general industrial properties has fluctuated in Guildford until 2022, after which it experienced a sharp increase. In 2016, the vacancy rate in Guildford was 0.4%, fluctuating until 2022 after sharply rising to 14.5% in Q2 2025. The FEMA experienced a similar trend, with a vacancy rate of 0.7% in 2016, but then a rise to 10.7% in Q2 2025, albeit a less sharp increase than in Guildford.

7.3.16 The 10-year average vacancy rate for the general industrial properties in Guildford (5.2%) is higher than that recorded in the FEMA (5.1%), South East (2.1%) and England (1.6%). This is shown in Figure 7-13.

Figure 7-13 Vacancy rate (%) of General industrial [B2] floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025



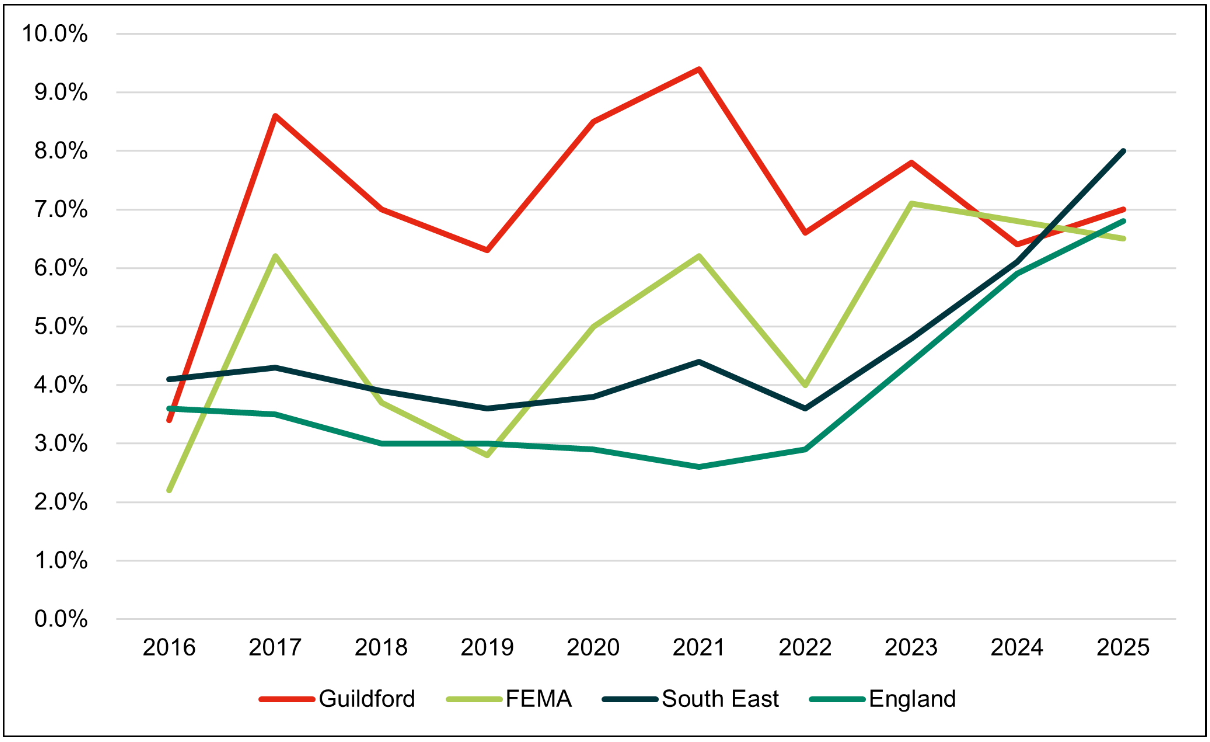
Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.17 The trend in vacancy rates for storage and distribution properties in Guildford and the FEMA over the ten-year period to 2025 have shown large variation to the trend experienced across the South East and England. From 2016 to 2023, Guildford and the FEMA experienced fluctuations with sharp increases and decreases in vacancy rates. Across the South East and England, the change in vacancy rate from 2016 to 2022 remained relatively neutral, and since 2022 to Q2 2025, sharp increases in vacancy rates have been experienced.

7.3.18 The sharp increase in vacancy in Guildford (and the FEMA) is mainly explained by the small size of this market in terms of available stock (less than 37,000 sqm of B2 space in the Borough). Therefore, small movements (a single large occupier moving out, or a small number of smaller occupiers) will have a large impact on vacancy rate, when changes across the whole of the South East and England are smoothed out due to the important size of their market.

7.3.19 The average 10-year vacancy rate in Guildford (7.1%) is the highest when compared to the FEMA (5.1%), South East (4.7%) and England (3.9%). This is shown in Figure 7-14.

Figure 7-14 Vacancy rate (%) of Storage and distribution [B8] floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025

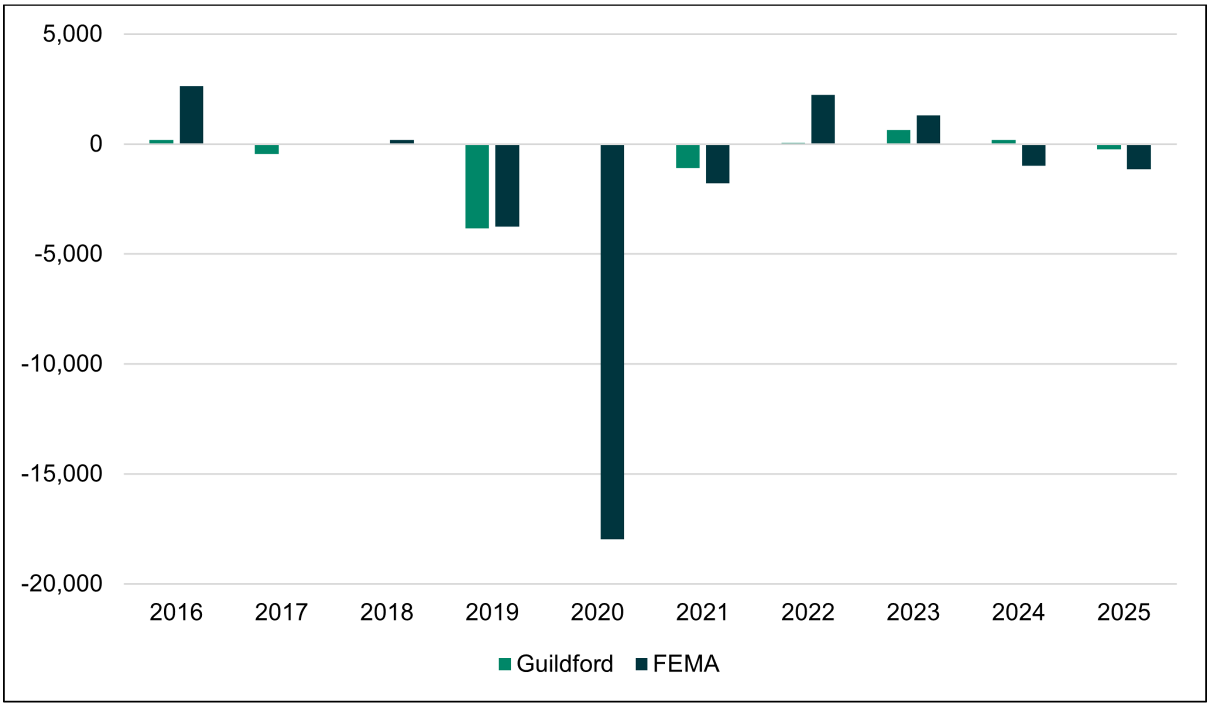


Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.20 As discussed previously in paragraph 7.2.16, net absorption provides another angle on demand. Positive annual net absorption means that a greater amount of space has been occupied from a given year to the next.

7.3.21 With regard to light industrial floorspace, net absorption has fluctuated across Guildford and the FEMA over the past 10 years. Guildford had a positive net absorption in 2016, 2023, and 2024, with negative net absorption in other years (or nil). Across the FEMA, there was a positive net absorption in 2016, 2018, 2022 and 2023 with negative net absorption in other years (or nil) and extreme outliers in 2019 and 2020, with much larger than usual negative net absorption. This can be seen in Figure 7-15.

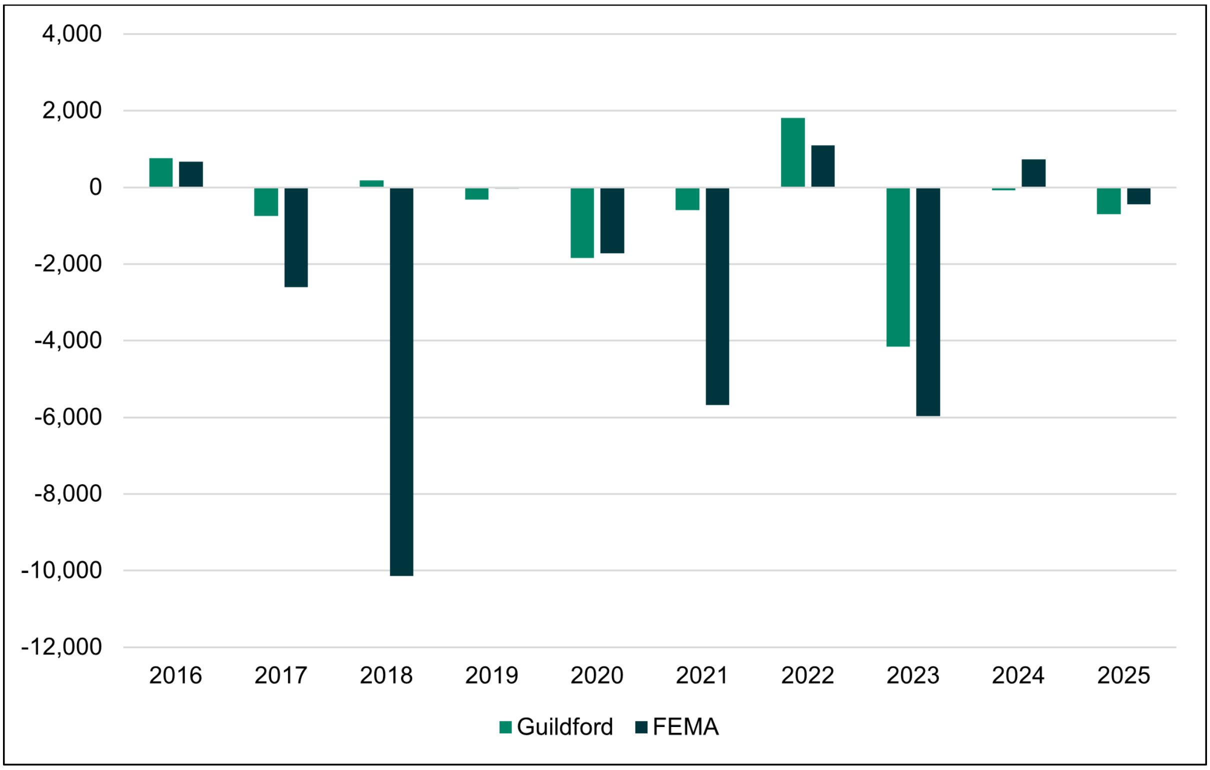
Figure 7-15 Net absorption - Light industrial [E(g)(iii)] floorspace - between 2016 and Q2 2025 in sqm



Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.22 Net absorption of general industrial floorspace has experienced a similar variable pattern over the past ten years in both Guildford and the FEMA. However, with the exception of 2016, 2018, and 2022 net absorption has been negative in Guildford, with limited evidence of positive demand over the past 3 years. This can be seen in Figure 7-16.

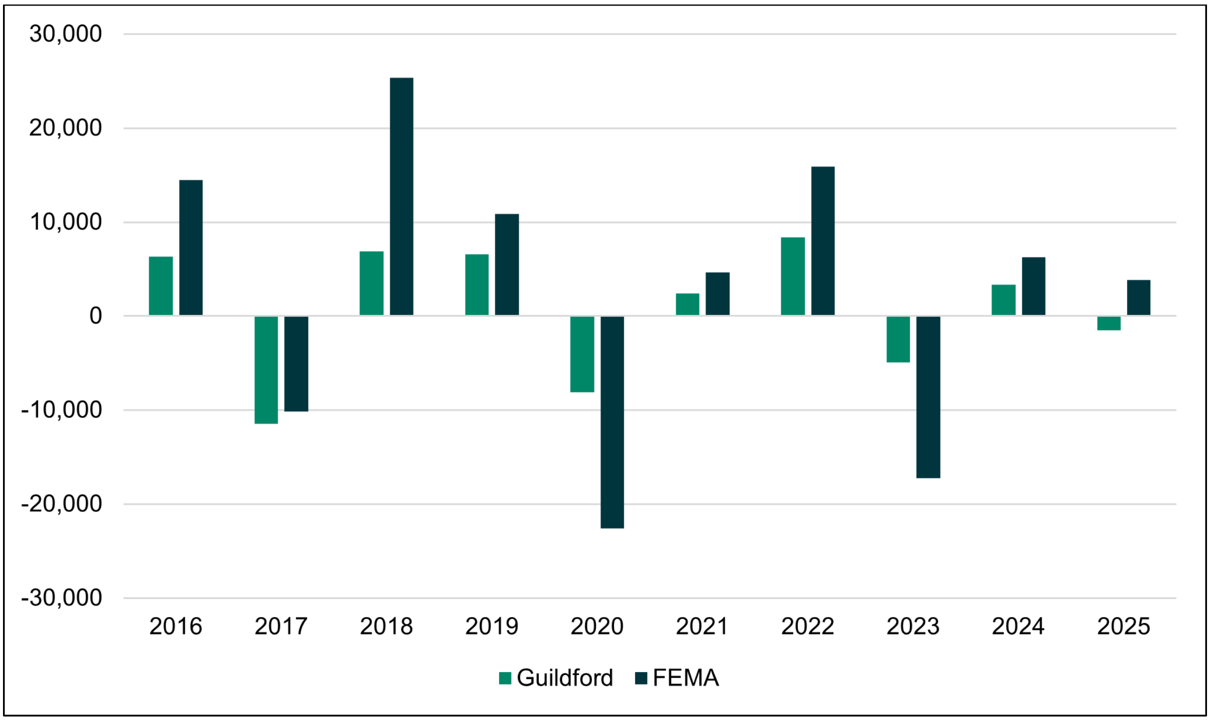
Figure 7-16 Net absorption - General Industrial [B2] - between 2016 and Q2 2025 in sqm



Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.23 Net absorption of storage and distribution floorspace has generally been positive over the past ten years in Guildford and the FEMA, with the exception of 2017, 2020 and 2023, suggesting that the demand for storage and distribution has been positive across Guildford and the FEMA. This is likely linked to strong growth registered across the logistics sector over recent years, driven by various factors such as population growth, increased online shopping, higher freight flows and Brexit. This has driven demand up even further for warehousing and storage floorspace, leading to warehousing becoming a more prime asset class than offices. This is shown in Figure 7-17.

Figure 7-17 Net absorption – Storage and distribution [B8] - between 2016 and Q2 2025 in sqm



Source: CoStar, (2025)

Rental values

7.3.24 Table 7-8 presents a breakdown of industrial properties' market rent by type (light industrial, general industrial, and storage and distribution).

7.3.25 As of Q2 2025, light industrial properties attracted an average market rental value of £275 per sqm in Guildford; higher than the rate for the FEMA (£185 per sqm), South East (£161 per sqm) and England (£122 per sqm).

7.3.26 General industrial properties attracted market rents in Guildford of £145 per sqm. This was lower than the rate for the FEMA (£154 per sqm), but higher than the rate for the South East (£118 per sqm) and England (£88 per sqm).

7.3.27 Storage and distribution properties attracted slightly lower market rental values in Guildford (£166 per sqm) than the recorded market rental value across the FEMA (£167 per sqm). However, the market rental value for Guildford is higher than the South East (£130 per sqm) and England (£101 per sqm).

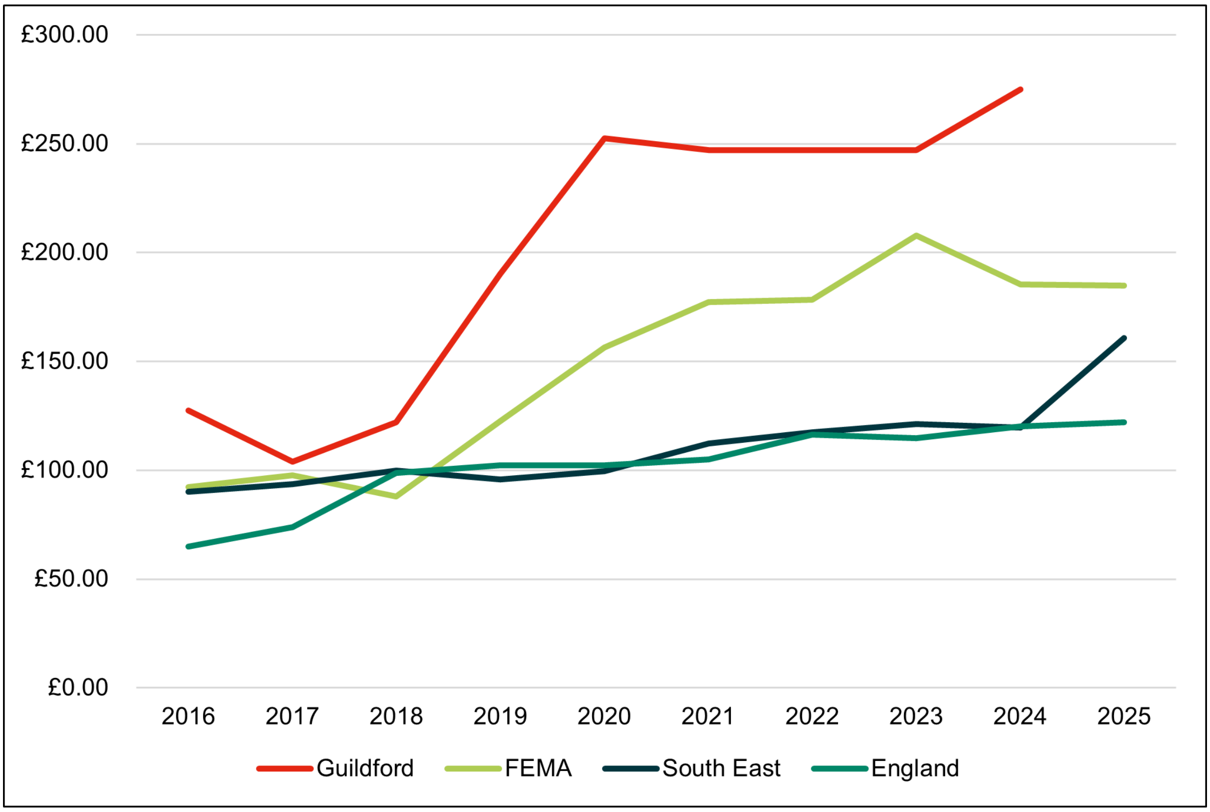
Table 7-8 Average rental values for Industrial properties in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England (£ per sqm) in Q2 2025

	Guildford	Waverley	Woking	FEMA	South East	England
Light industrial [E(g)(iii)]						
Market rent (£/sqm)	£275	£146	£180	£185	£161	£122
General industrial [B2]						
Market rent (£/sqm)	£145	£131	£187	£154	£118	£88
Storage and Distribution [B8]						
Market rent (£/sqm)	£166	£159	£175	£167	£131	£101

Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.28 As shown in Figure 7-18, light industrial market rental values have experienced a generally increasing trend in Guildford, the FEMA and England over the ten-year period to 2025, with some stagnation in Guildford rental values from 2020 to 2023. This differs from the South East which has experienced some minor fluctuation from 2018 to 2020, but broadly increasing rental values since then. The market rental values in Guildford have consistently exceeded the recorded values across all other geographies.

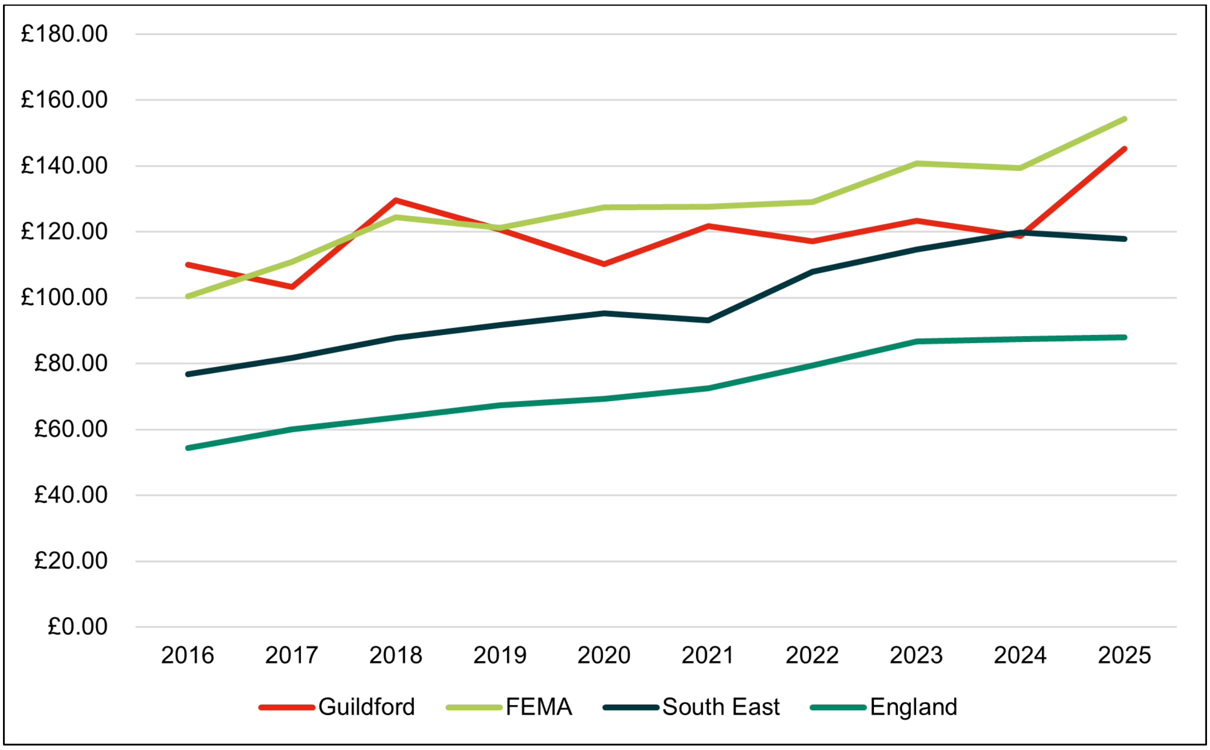
Figure 7-18 Average rent (£ per sqm) for Light industrial [E(g)(iii)] floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025



Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.29 An overall increasing trend in general industrial rental values has been recorded across all geographies between 2016 and 2025, as shown in Figure 7-19. Over the past ten years, Guildford has experienced fluctuations in rental values, with a sharp increase from 2024 to Q2 2025. From 2020 onwards, the recorded general industrial market rental values in the FEMA have exceeded those of Guildford, South East and England as a whole.

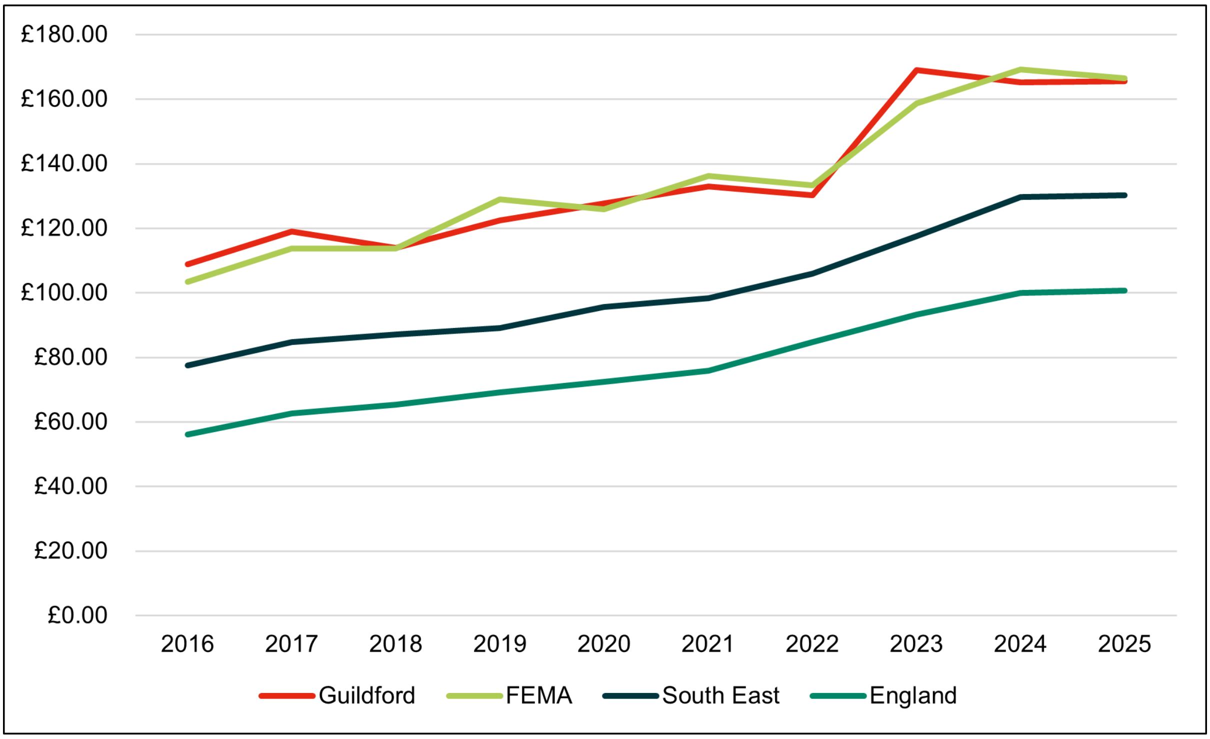
Figure 7-19 Average rent (£ per sqm) for General industrial [B2] floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025



Source: CoStar, (2025)

7.3.30 As shown in Figure 7-20, market rental values for storage and distribution properties have followed an increasing trend from 2016 to 2025 in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England, with average values for Guildford broadly mirroring the FEMA.

Figure 7-20 Average rent (£ per sqm) for Storage and distribution [B8] floorspace in Guildford, the FEMA, South East and England between 2016 and Q2 2025



Source: CoStar, (2025)

Industrial Market Conclusions

7.3.31 In summary, with regard to industrial properties:

- The industrial market in Guildford provides 297,200 sqm of industrial floorspace accounting for 43.3% of total floorspace across the FEMA. The largest concentrations of industrial properties are around Guildford Industrial Estate, Henley Business Park, Slyfield Industrial Estate, and North and south of Lysons Avenue.
- The majority of floorspace is generated by storage and distribution uses (74.3% of floorspace across 111 properties), followed by light industrial (13.3% of floorspace across 32 properties); and general industrial (12.3% of floorspace across 81 properties). This reflects the size profile of the use classes, with storage and distribution properties tending to be over 1,000 sqm in size, whereas the majority of general industrial and light industrial properties are less than 500 sqm.
- The analysis highlights fair spare capacity within the light industrial and storage and distribution use classes, with vacancy rate of 2.4% and 7.0% respectively, and high spare capacity within the general industrial use class (14.5%). Vacancy rates for the B2 use class are notably higher than the FEMA, South East and England.
- Absorption rates for light and general industrial floorspace have largely fluctuated across Guildford and the FEMA, with limited evidence of positive demand over the past 3 years. However, data suggests a generally positive picture in terms of the net absorption of storage and distribution floorspace, consistent with positive demand over the past decade, likely driven by the e-commerce boom, which has resulted in warehousing being a more prime asset class than offices.
- The evidence demonstrates that market rental values for light industrial floorspace in Guildford are generally higher than the FEMA, South East and England. For B2 and B8 floorspace, the market rental value in Guildford is marginally lower than the FEMA, but higher than the South East and England. This suggests that more affordable industrial space is located elsewhere in the FEMA and region.

7.4 Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

7.4.1 The contribution of buildings to greenhouse gas emissions is increasingly recognised. This understanding presents both challenges and opportunities, given the potential for emissions savings to be made. It is estimated that buildings are responsible for between 17% and 31%[71,72] of national emissions.

7.4.2 The energy performance of buildings in the UK is monitored through the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) system. Non-domestic private rented properties are awarded a certificate rating between A+ (most efficient) and G (least efficient). Properties awarded an A+ rating are considered to achieve Net Zero carbon emissions.

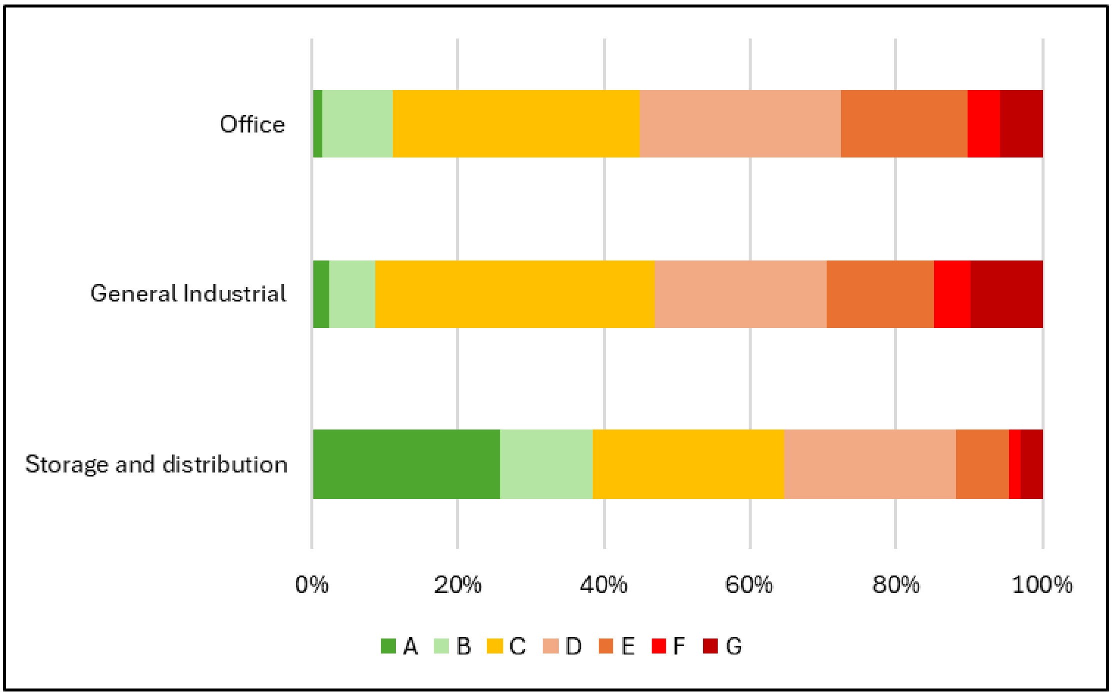
7.4.3 In order to drive the decarbonisation of the UK's non-domestic building stock, commitments have been made to encourage the construction of more energy efficient buildings and upgrading/retrofitting existing buildings through the implementation of restrictions on private lettings based on energy performance. Non-domestic buildings must comply with Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) in order to lawfully be leased. At the time of writing (October 2025), MEES regulations apply to those non-domestic buildings which have been awarded an EPC rating of F or G, whereby these properties cannot enter into new leases until improvements have been made. A number of exemptions apply,[73][74] including that

[71] HM Government, (2021); Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener.
[72] This figure includes only emissions from direct energy use in buildings.
[73] https://www.gov.uk/energy-performance-certificate-commercial-property/exemptions
[74] Additional exemptions to the new regulations are set out by RICS at https://ww3.rics.org/uk/en/journals/property-journal/epc-requirements-commercial-property.html. Exemptions apply to leases less than 6 months or greater than 99 years; to the need to perform upgrading works until a new EPC is triggered; where the costs of works would be greater than the energy saving over seven years; where third-party consent precludes works e.g. planning permission refusal where reasonably sought; where works would devalue property by over 5%; where the landlord has recently become one.

improvements must be 'permissible', 'appropriate' and 'cost effective'[75]. As of 1st April 2023, MEES apply to existing leases, not solely new leases as had been the case previously[76].

7.4.4 A breakdown of the EPC certificates awarded by use type[77] in Guildford is shown in Figure 7-21. The following commentary is based on the application of the relative proportion of EPC certificates, as provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (now the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government), to the age of building stock information derived from CoStar in order to indicate the energy performance of the building stock of Guildford. This approach allows for the indicative characterisation of the entire building stock in the Borough, given that CoStar represents a robust and comprehensive dataset of building stock. However, this commentary does not take into account the stock of non-domestic buildings which are exempt from MEES regulations. Although the Government has consulted on the development of systems to improve data collection on MEES compliance and exemptions, including proposals for a central compliance and exemptions database, a dedicated publicly available database for non-domestic MEES exemptions has not yet been established. The Government's work on related data reforms and responses to earlier MEES consultation has been ongoing for several years, and formal proposals remain under review. Consequently, the scale of current and future exemptions across the non-domestic sector is not currently understood[78][79].

Figure 7-21 EPC Certificates in Guildford by building use type



Source: Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities, (2025); Energy Performance of Buildings Data: England and Wales.

7.4.5 It is anticipated that the minimum standard will be sequentially increased such that building efficiency expectations are raised in line with Government ambitions to deliver against net zero commitments[80], as the minimum EPC rating for non-domestic properties to be leased will be raised to C by 1st April 2027 and to B by April 2030. Figure 7-22 shows the current

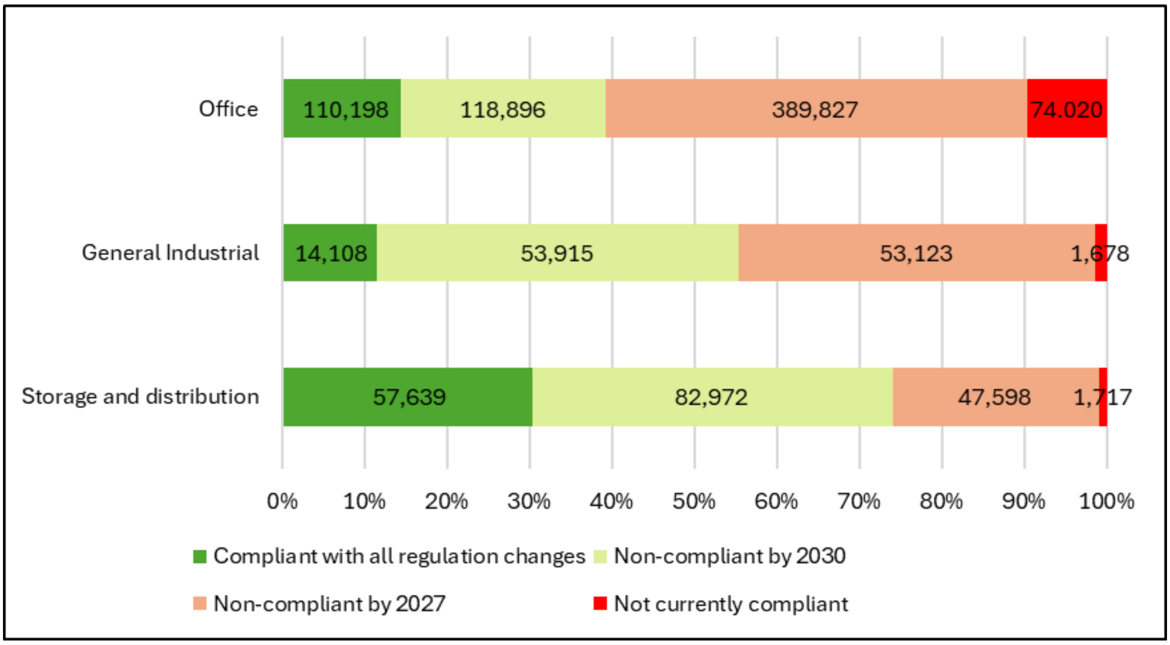
[75] RICS, (2018); Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES): Impact on UK property management and valuation.
[76] https://ww3.rics.org/uk/en/journals/property-journal/epc-requirements-commercial-property.html
[77] It should be noted that the use types employed by MHCLG to categorise buildings do not directly align with those categories applicable to CoStar data presented in the property market analysis section of the report. Data is therefore presented by considering the broad use types shown to comprise buildings categorised by MHCLG as follows:
- Office: 'B1 Office and Workshop Businesses' and 'Office';
- General industrial: 'B2 to B7 General Industrial and Special Industrial Groups'; and
- Storage and distribution: 'B8 Storage or distribution' and 'Warehouse and storage'.

[78] Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2021). The Non-Domestic Private Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards: Implementation of the EPC B Future Target.
[79] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2024). Improving the Energy Performance of Privately Rented Homes: Consultation.
[80] HM Government, (2020); Energy White Paper: Powering our Net Zero Future.

proportion of certificates that will be non-compliant with MEES in relation to these anticipated dates for the raising of the minimum EPC rating. The proportion has been applied to property market floorspace information to indicate the applicable floorspace in these scenarios. It is clearly evident that the scale of upgrading, retrofitting, and replacing building stock such that it will comply with anticipated MEES is considerable. As set out, current and potential future exemptions may apply, nonetheless the significant proportion of buildings which are likely to not meet the correct standard presents challenges, in terms of implementation, enforcement and compliance.

7.4.6 In 2021, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy engaged in consultation on implementation of the EPC B target by 2030 which highlighted the significant implementation issues that would need to be addressed. It is recognised nationally that the proportion of non-domestic rented stock within the scope of the regulations would increase from approximately 10% to 85% (1,000,000 buildings across England and Wales). The building stock of Guildford which falls within the scope of tightening regulations to 2030 is in line with the national average, at 1,189, reflecting 76% of buildings.

Figure 7-22 MEES compliance of present EPC certificates with anticipated regulation changes (sqm)



Source: Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities, (2025); Energy Performance of Buildings Data. England and Wales.

7.5 Summary

Office market

7.5.1 Guildford stands out as a major office centre within its Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA), accounting for nearly half of both the office properties and total office floorspace in the area. The market is characterised by a predominance of small and medium-sized premises, with the majority of office buildings under 500 sqm. It is worth noting that while small and medium size premises represent a large share of the total office stock in Guildford, they represent proportionally a smaller share of the total floorspace in the area.

7.5.2 Vacancy rates in Guildford's office market are broadly in line with the optimal frictional level, indicating a generally balanced market but also highlighting some supply constraints, especially for small to medium, high-quality spaces in the town centre. Offices below 2,000 sqm have an average vacancy rate around 5% (below the healthy frictional vacancy rate of

8%). This reflects a robust demand for flexible, high-quality office space, particularly in central locations where businesses seek modern amenities and accessibility[81].

7.5.3 Rental values for office space are notably higher than both regional and national averages, particularly for larger offices, and have experienced steady growth since 2016. The shift to hybrid working arrangements following the Covid-19 pandemic has further intensified demand for smaller, high-quality offices, while reducing interest in large floorplates and out-of-town locations. Although net absorption has been muted, suggesting limited new demand, the market remains resilient, buoyed by a “flight to quality” as businesses continue to prioritise premium office environments.

7.5.4 The evidence points to a clear need for future employment land allocations in Guildford to focus on delivering small and medium-sized, high-quality office, particularly in locations that offer good accessibility and amenities. There is limited demand for large floorplates and out-of-town offices, suggesting that future allocations should prioritise flexibility, centrality, and quality over quantity.

Industrial market

7.5.5 Guildford provides a significant share of the FEMA’s industrial floorspace, with the majority dedicated to storage and distribution uses, followed by light and general industrial activities. Industrial stock is concentrated in key estates such as Guildford Industrial Estate, Henley Business Park, Slyfield Industrial Estate, and North and south of Lysons Avenue. Most light and general industrial properties are small, typically under 500 sqm, whereas storage and distribution units tend to be larger, often ranging from 1,000 to 9,999 sqm.

7.5.6 Vacancy rates for light industrial and storage/distribution space are slightly lower than regional averages, indicating some spare capacity, while general industrial vacancy is particularly elevated.

7.5.7 Despite this, rental values for industrial space in Guildford generally exceed regional and national comparators, reflecting strong demand, especially in logistics and warehousing sectors driven by the ongoing growth of e-commerce. There is also a clear shortage of high-quality, innovation-focused industrial space, such as facilities suitable for life sciences and clean manufacturing, with strong occupier demand for modern, flexible premises.

7.5.8 Allocations should support the continued growth of logistics, warehousing, and high-tech sectors, with a particular emphasis on providing modern, energy-efficient premises that meet both market demand and evolving regulatory requirements. Addressing the current shortage of high-quality space for innovation sectors, such as life sciences and clean manufacturing, will be critical for supporting Guildford’s economic growth and resilience.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)

7.5.9 A further consideration is the energy efficiency and regulatory environment affecting Guildford’s commercial property stock. A significant proportion of existing premises may require upgrading to comply with potential tightening of MEES requirements. Previous Government proposals have indicated an intention to raise the minimum EPC rating to C by 2027, and B by 2030, although implementation timescales remain subject to confirmation pending the outcome of ongoing policy development and consultation responses. This potential regulatory shift presents both challenges, in terms of compliance and retrofit costs, and opportunities, as it encourages the modernisation and sustainability of the local property market.

[81] CoStar reports 38 office properties (74 spaces) with vacant space up to 2,000 sqm against 28 properties (88 spaces) with vacant space of more than 2,000 sqm. Meanwhile, about 97% of businesses in Guildford are micro (1 to 9 employees) or small (10-49 employees) and will require less than 2,000 sqm of office space.

8. Future Demand

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The approach to assessing future employment floorspace and land requirements is in line with Planning Practice Guidance on Employment Land Reviews. The analysis in this section considers a range of scenarios to test potential future demand, recognising inherent uncertainty in long-term economic forecasting.

8.1.2 Several approaches have been considered to modelling future employment land needs. These approaches are:

- Scenario 1.1 and 2.1: Labour demand scenario

  Based on the floorspace and land required to accommodate expected employment growth in the borough, informed by forecast employment change. This scenario is presented using both Experian (scenario 1.1.) and Oxford Economics (scenario 2.1) employment forecasts to provide a range of potential outcomes.

- Scenario 1.2 and 2.2: Labour supply scenario

  Based on the latest population and housing growth projections, as derived from the Housing Needs Assessment being undertaken by Iceni Projects concurrently to this study. This scenario assesses the future availability of workforce in Guildford to fulfil employment growth in the local authority. Allocation of labour to sectors aligns with growth predicted by both Experian (scenario 1.2.) and Oxford Economics (scenario 2.2) employment forecasts to provide a range of potential outcomes.

- Scenario 3: Past take-up rates

  Trend-based scenario based on the continuation of historical take-up rates, sourced from CoStar. This analyses take-up rates by use class over the last 10 years and extrapolates these trends over the assessment period.

8.1.3 Note that figures presented in this section may not always add up due to rounding.

8.2 Overarching Assumptions

Employment Use Classes

8.2.1 Employment sectors have been mapped to the current core B and E(g) use classes:

Office uses (former B1a, B1b):

- E(g)(i) Offices; and
- E(g)(ii) Research and development.

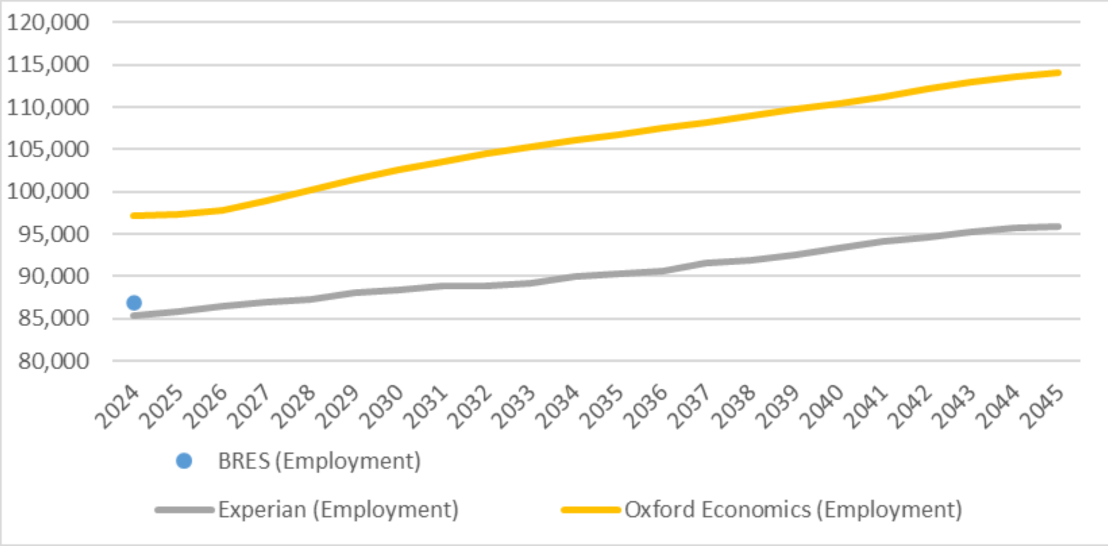
Industrial uses (former B1c, B2, B8):

- E(g)(iii) Light industrial;
- B2 General industrial; and
- B8 Storage or distribution.

Rebasing of Employment Forecast

8.2.2 It is acknowledged that employment forecasts provided by both Experian and Oxford Economics do not align in terms of historical baseline and also do not align with official historical data published by the ONS, as shown in Figure 8-1.

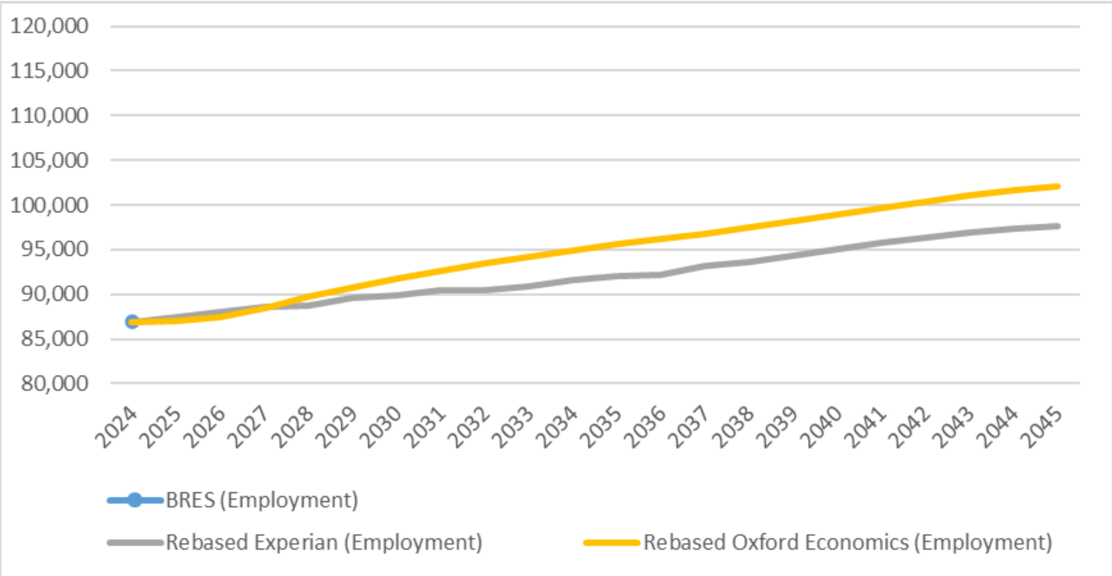
Figure 8-1 Experian / Oxford Economics Raw Employment Forecast



Source: Experian[82], Oxford Economics and ONS BRES

8.2.3 Therefore, to ensure that both Labour Demand scenarios are assessed on a comparable basis, that also aligns with official statistics, the baseline employment figure (year 2024) was rebased for each forecast using the latest BRES data available. Predicted growth was then applied to this baseline figure to for each forecast to establish a 'rebased' employment forecast, as presented in Figure 8-2.

Figure 8-2 Experian / Oxford Economics Rebased Employment Forecast



Source: AECOM calculations, based on Experian[83], Oxford Economics and ONS BRES

Employment to Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)

8.2.4 The conversion of Employment figures (Oxford Economics data) into FTE jobs has been calculated for each sector based on the ratio of full-time and part-time employment jobs for each sector in Guildford using data from BRES 2024.

[82] Forecast data provided by Experian are expressed in Employment Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). Therefore, for the purpose of comparison in this figure, Experian Employment FTEs data has been converted into Employment data, applying similar conversion factors used to translate Oxford Economics Employment forecast into Employment FTEs (see paragraph 8.2.4).
[83] Experian data is converted from Employment FTEs to Employment for comparison purpose.

Employment to Use Class

8.2.5 The proportion of FTE jobs in each sector is disaggregated by the type of employment use class and non-employment use classes. The use class proportions for each sector are based on a detailed assessment of the current breakdown of jobs in the sub-sectors within each sector in Guildford's economy, consideration of local characteristics and AECOM's professional judgment. Each sector has been apportioned between relevant use classes. This is used to calculate the proportional jobs in each sector by use class.

Employment Density and Plot Ratio Assumptions

8.2.6 Job numbers for each use class have been calculated, and these have been converted to floorspace requirements by applying appropriate employment density assumptions. To calculate land requirements for industrial uses, plot ratios have been applied to convert floorspace into land (hectares). The employment densities and plot ratios used draw on the HCA Employment Densities Guide 3rd Edition (2015) and the AECOM' appreciation of prevailing rates/ratios. These are summarised in Table 8-1 below.

Table 8-1 Employment density and plot ratio assumptions

Use class	HCA Employment Density Guide (2015)	Employment density assumption used (sqm per full-time equivalent (FTE) job)	Plot Ratio (% of site area)
E(g)(i)	Offices – 8-13 sqm NIA per FTE job	10	100%
E(g)(ii)	R&D space – 40-60 sqm NIA per FTE job	30	100%
E(g)(iii)	Light industrial – 47 sqm NIA per FTE job	30	45%
B2	Industrial & Manufacturing – 36 sqm GIA per FTE job	36	45%
B8	Storage & Distribution – 70-95 sqm GEA per FTE job	70	45%

Source: HCA Employment Density Guide (2015)

8.2.7 It should be noted that employment ratios can vary significantly depending on location and the exact type of use. The HCA Employment Densities Guide allows for this by providing density ranges against uses. This study has taken a mid-point approach to applying these ranges, and adjusted where it has been deemed appropriate to do so based on the following considerations:

- For E(g(i)), consideration is given to emerging trends regarding the changing utilisation of office floorspace representing the more efficient use of space due to a higher frequency of flexible working and hybrid working. It is acknowledged that the popularity of these working models has increased markedly in the most recent years since this. The British Council of Offices, in its latest guidance on office design advised that 10 sqm per job be designed for in new floorspace planning. Therefore, it is considered that the 10 sqm per job applied in this forecasting exercise reflects the current situation in respect of flexible working and hybrid working.
- For E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii) uses, employment densities have been aligned with those in Oxford to Cambridge: Science, Innovation, and Technology Business Premises Study (2025)[84] reflecting the nature of employment in Guildford as a significant R&D-intensive, knowledge-based economy which demonstrates a strong presence of R&D and high-tech light industrial activity.
- For B8 uses, an average density towards the lower end of the HCA Employment Densities Guide has been applied – reflecting the density ascribed to regional/national hubs that are generally of lower employment density per sqm of space than the final mile distribution uses you might find in cities. This is considered appropriate for

[84] Oxford to Cambridge Pan-regional Partnership / Iceni Projects, Carter Jonas, HDR, (2025); Science, Innovation and Technology Business Premises Study (2025)

Guildford, where most storage and distribution uses are of larger scale rather than just serving a local market.

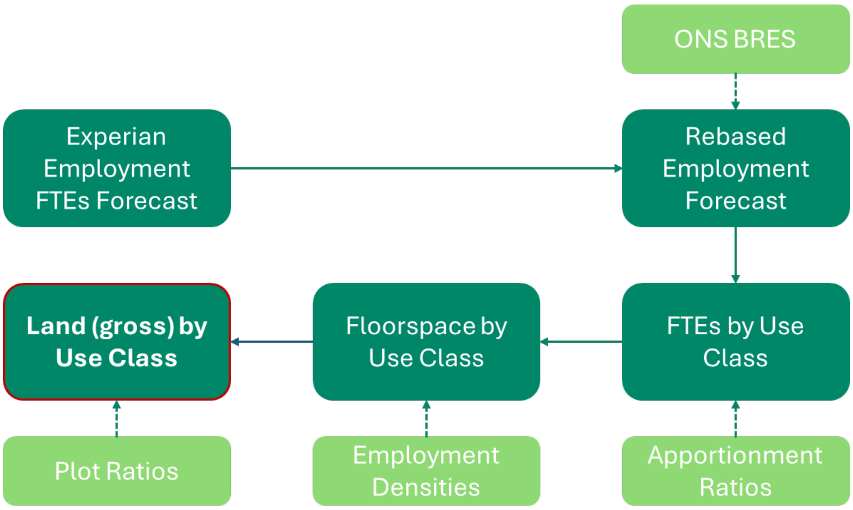
8.2.8 The scenarios discussed in this section should be treated as broadly indicative. Predicting future economic trends and corresponding employment land requirements is not an exact science. The assessment needs to be based on a series of assumptions, including the future performance of individual business sectors, the proportion of employment in each sector that corresponds to each of the B and E(g) use classes, and the future employment densities and plot ratios for each use class. Furthermore, the future economic performance of Guildford's economy is subject to external factors that are hard to predict in the context of this study, such as political and economic changes at the national and international levels[85].

8.2.9 With the above caveat in place, the scenarios presented in this section provide an indication of future economic trends and are a useful tool for informing employment land policy. It should also be noted that figures presented in this section have been rounded and therefore may not completely add up.

8.3 Scenario 1.1: Labour Demand – Experian

8.3.1 The Labour Demand scenario, using the latest available Experian Employment (FTEs) forecast (October 2025) follow a detailed approach to convert employment FTE into gross future demand for office (E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii)) and industrial (E(g)(iii), B2 and B8) floorspace and land. This approach is summarised in Figure 8-3.

Figure 8-3 Labour Demand – Experian – General Approach



Source: AECOM

8.3.2 According to Experian's October 2025 employment forecasts, full time equivalent (FTE) employment across all sectors in Guildford is forecast to increase from 73,700 in 2025 to 82,700 in 2045 (+9,000), an increase of approximately 12.2%. When rebased to ONS BRES 2024 baseline figure, FTEs across all sectors in Guilford is forecast to increase from 72,900 in 2025 to 81,440 in 2045 (+8,540), an increase of approximately 11.7%.

8.3.3 As shown in Table 8-2, the biggest growth sectors in terms of absolute number of FTE employment growth include: Professional Services, Health, Wholesale and Computing & Information Services.

8.3.4 The sectors forecast to decline the most in absolute terms include Retail, Public Administration & Defence and Other Private Services.

[85] Given that the Experian employment data drives the floorspace requirements of the town, it is important to consider how the forecasts consider the increasing role of automation and artificial intelligence. Within the data, labour force size is an independent variable, alongside lagged employment and total hours worked (and lagged total hours worked). Total hours worked is dependent on Gross Domestic Product (reflecting the strength (or not) of the economy), and labour augmenting technical progress. The latter considers the impact of automation and artificial intelligence on hours and shows a negative coefficient.

Table 8-2 Forecast growth or decline by employment category 2025-2045 (Experian)

Employment Sector	FTE change 2025-2045	
	Experian	Rebased Experian
Professional Services	4,800	4,700
Health	1,300	1,190
Wholesale	1,200	1,100
Computing & Information Services	900	1,100
Residential Care & Social Work	800	690
Accommodation & Food Services	600	650
Recreation	700	630
Real Estate	400	300
Computer & Electronic Products (manufacture of)	300	270
Construction of Buildings	200	170
Specialised Construction Activities	100	120
Finance	100	110
Transport Equipment (manufacture of)	300	20
Wood & Paper (manufacture of)	0	0
Textiles & Clothing (manufacture of)	0	0
Telecoms	0	0
Printing and Recorded Media (manufacture of)	0	0
Pharmaceuticals (manufacture of)	0	0
Non-Metallic Products (manufacture of)	0	0
Media Activities	0	0
Machinery & Equipment (manufacture of)	0	0
Insurance & Pensions	0	0
Fuel Refining	0	0
Extraction & Mining	0	0
Civil Engineering	0	0
Chemicals (manufacture of)	0	0
Air & Water Transport	0	0
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	0	0
Administrative & Supportive Services	-100	-40
Food, Drink & Tobacco (manufacture of)	-200	-130
Education	-200	-200
Utilities	-200	-200
Land Transport, Storage & Post	-200	-210
Metal Products (manufacture of)	-500	-240
Other Manufacturing	-100	-250
Other Private Services	-200	-250
Public Administration & Defence	-400	-400

Employment Sector	FTE change 2025-2045	
	Experian	Rebased Experian
Retail	-600	-570
All sectors	9,000	8,540

Source: Experian FTE Employment Forecast (October 2025), AECOM calculations

8.3.5 FTE employment in office and industrial use class sectors makes up approximately 46.1% of all employment in Guildford in 2025 (33,590 out of a total of 72,900 FTE jobs). Experian forecasts FTEs in office and industrial sectors to increase overall by 6,370 jobs over the period 2025-2045, an increase of approximately 19%. By 2045, FTE employment in office and industrial use class sectors is expected to represent approximately 49.1% of all employment in Guildford (39,960 out of a total of 81,440 FTE jobs).

Table 8-3 FTE Jobs forecast by use class, 2025-2045 – Labour demand (Experian)

Use class	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
E(g)(i)	26,500	27,900	29,240	30,920	32,600	23.0%
E(g)(ii)	570	610	650	690	730	29.3%
Total office jobs	27,070	28,660	30,050	30,050	33,330	23.1%
E(g)(iii)	1,240	1,230	1,210	1,230	1,160	-7.0%
B2	830	750	690	670	520	-37.4%
B8	4,450	4,570	4,700	4,870	4,950	11.3%
Total industrial jobs	6,520	6,550	6,600	6,770	6,630	1.6%
Total office and industrial jobs	33,590	35,200	36,650	36,820	39,960	19.0%
Non-Employment Use Class	39,310	39,930	40,290	41,040	41,480	5.5%

Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Experian Forecast

8.3.6 Based on the above employment forecasts and the employment density assumptions summarised in Table 8-1, Guildford employment floorspace requirement forecasts over the period 2025-2045 is expected to increase by 87,500 sqm (+13.2%), including 66,000 sqm of office space and 21,500 of industrial space, as presented in Table 8-4 below.

Table 8-4 FTE Guildford floorspace need (sqm), 2025-2045 - Labour demand (Experian)

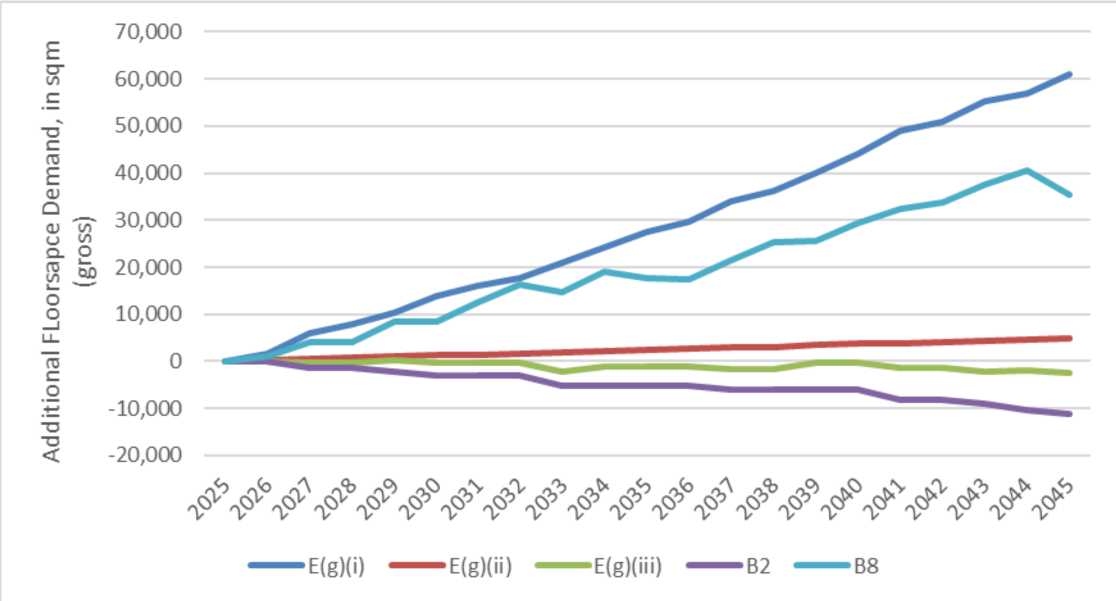
Use class	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
E(g)(i)	265,000	279,000	292,400	309,200	326,000	23.0%
E(g)(ii)	17,000	18,300	19,500	20,700	22,000	29.4%
Total office floorspace need	282,000	297,300	311,900	329,900	348,000	23.4%
E(g)(iii)	37,300	36,900	36,300	37,000	34,700	-7.0%
B2	30,000	27,000	24,800	24,000	18,800	-37.3%
B8	311,300	319,700	329,000	340,800	346,600	11.3%
Total industrial floorspace need	378,600	383,600	390,100	401,800	400,100	5.7%
Total office and industrial floorspace need	660,600	680,900	702,000	731,700	748,100	13.2%

Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Experian Forecast

8.3.7 Figure 8-4 shows the evolution of employment floorspace requirements in Guildford between 2025 and 2045. This shows that based on employment forecasts, by 2045 there would be a gross requirement for:

- +61,000 sqm of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +5,000 sqm of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -2,600 sqm of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -11,200 sqm of B2 floorspace; and
- +35,300 sqm of B8 floorspace

Figure 8-4 Evolution of gross additional floorspace gross requirements, 2025-2045 - Labour demand (Experian)



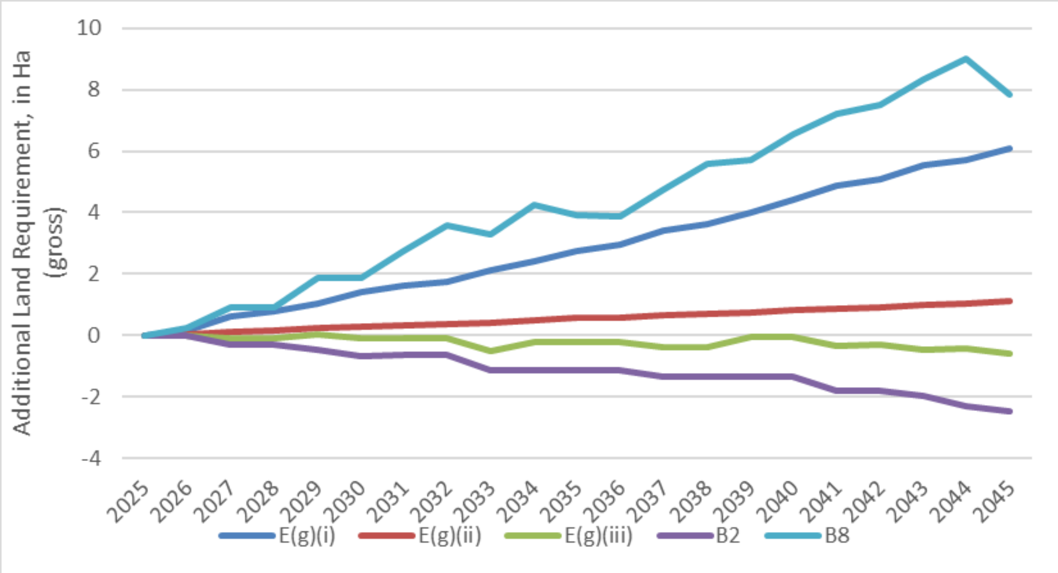
Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Experian Forecast

8.3.8 Finally, applying relevant plot ratios based on assumptions summarised in Table 8-1, floorspace gross requirements can be converted into land gross requirements (presented in hectares).

8.3.9 Based on this, the evolution of land requirements in Guildford to 2045 indicates a requirement for +12.0 ha of employment land, comprising the following:

- +6.1 ha of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +1.1 ha of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -0.6 ha of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -2.5 ha of B2 floorspace; and
- +7.8 ha of B8 floorspace

Figure 8-5 Evolution of gross additional land requirements, 2025-2045 - Labour demand (Experian)



Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Experian Forecast

8.4 Scenario 1.2: Labour Supply – Experian

8.4.1 To forecast labour supply, AECOM used the latest population and housing growth projections as per the Housing Needs Assessment (2026) being undertaken by Iceni Projects on behalf of Guildford Borough Council to derive the working-age population in the borough (i.e. population aged 16-64).

8.4.2 The population forecast was converted into local labour supply through the following process:

- The working age population (16-64 years old) is taken from the Housing Need Assessment forecasts as the base for the forecast of the local labour supply.
- The working age population is then converted into an economically active population by applying the rate of economic activity as reported by the ONS Annual Population Survey. This rate is 88.4%[86].
- The economically active population is converted into local labour supply by applying the rate of self-containment (% of population which remains in the same district for work). This rate is 39.2%[87].

8.4.3 The conversion from working age population to local labour supply is presented in Table 8-5 for 2025 and 2045. The local labour supply for Guildford, from local residents alone, is expected to increase by 9,820 workers between 2025 and 2045.

[86] Labour Market Profile, Guildford (2025) NOMIS
[87] ONS Census 2011 and West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2017) Guildford Borough Council. The rate of self-containment diverges from the assumption made in the Guildford Housing Needs Assessment (2026), produced by Iceni, which used the ONS Census 2021 data to estimate this rate. However, this rate of self-containment in 2021 is heavily skewed by the impact of Covid-19 and the repetitive lockdowns, which forced a large number of people to work from home. Therefore, the self-containment rate of over 70% derived from the ONS Census 2021 is not deemed reasonable of reflective of current commuting patterns. In the absence of alternative (more recent data), the ONS Census 2011 data was used in the Labour Supply scenario.

Table 8-5 Conversion of population forecasts into local labour supply

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
Working age population	99,800	109,520	116,510	122,140	128,120	28,320
Economically active population	88,220	96,820	102,990	107,970	113,260	25,040
Local labour supply	34,580	37,950	40,370	42,320	44,400	9,820

Source: AECOM calculations, based on Iceni Housing Needs Assessment (2026) population forecast

8.4.4 This increase in labour supply is then distributed between the different planning use classes following the growth forecasted by Experian in terms of labour demand, such that declining industries follow the loss predicted in the forecast and growing industries accommodate all of the additional labour supply accordingly.

8.4.5 In terms of the biggest relative growth in employment, this scenario shows that the ***fastest*** growth is expected to be in E(g)(ii) jobs with +33.3% FTE jobs expected to be created in Guildford between 2025 and 2045. However, given the small number of jobs in this use class, this represents only a small increase of 190 FTEs. In absolute terms, the ***largest*** growth is expected to be in E(g)(i) jobs with an additional 7,050 FTE jobs (+26.6%). B8 is also expected to see an increase of 540 FTEs (+12.1%), while E(g)(iii) and B2 will see a decrease in jobs of -100 FTEs and -310 FTEs respectively.

Table 8-6 FTE Jobs forecast by use class, 2025-2045 - Labour supply (Experian)

Use class	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
E(g)(i)	26,500	28,830	30,560	31,830	33,550	26.6%
E(g)(ii)	570	630	680	710	760	33.3%
Total office jobs	27,070	29,460	31,240	32,540	34,310	26.7%
E(g)(iii)	1,240	1,230	1,200	1,210	1,140	-8.1%
B2	830	750	690	670	520	-37.3%
B8	4,450	4,590	4,800	4,920	4,990	12.1%
Total industrial jobs	6,520	6,570	6,690	6,800	6,650	2.0%
Total office and industrial jobs	33,590	36,030	37,920	39,340	40,960	21.9%
Non-Employment Use Class	39,310	40,240	40,770	41,300	41,540	5.7%

Source: AECOM calculations, based on Iceni Housing Needs Assessment (2026) population forecast and rebased Experian Forecast

8.4.6 Based on the above employment forecasts and the employment density assumptions summarised in Table 8-1, Guildford floorspace requirement forecasts over the period 2025-2045 is expected to increase by 100,000 sqm (+15.1%), including 76,200 sqm of office space and 23,800 sqm of industrial space, as presented in Table 8-7 below.

Table 8-7 FTE Guildford floorspace need (sqm), 2025-2045 – Labour supply (Experian)

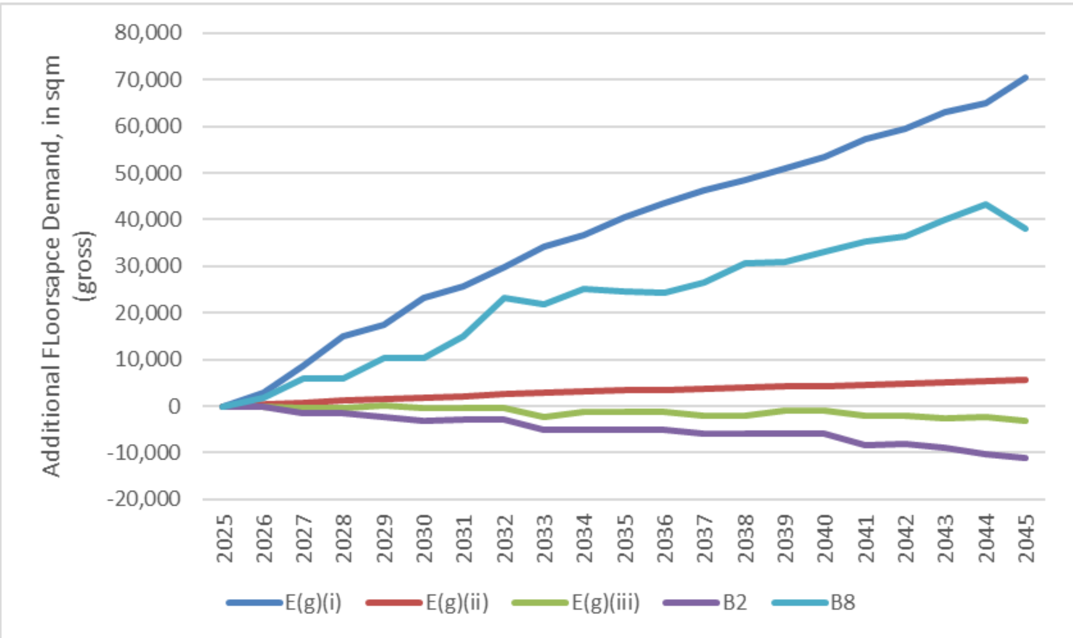
Use class	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
E(g)(i)	265,000	288,300	305,600	318,300	335,500	26.6%
E(g)(ii)	17,000	18,900	20,400	21,400	22,700	33.5%
Total office floorspace need	282,000	307,200	326,000	339,700	358,200	27.0%
E(g)(iii)	37,300	36,900	36,000	36,300	34,200	-8.3%
B2	30,000	27,000	24,800	24,000	18,800	-37.3%
B8	311,300	321,600	335,800	344,300	349,400	12.2%
Total industrial floorspace need	378,600	385,500	396,600	404,600	402,400	6.3%
Total office and industrial floorspace need	660,600	692,700	722,600	744,300	760,600	15.1%

Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Experian Forecast

8.4.7 Figure 8-6 shows the evolution of gross employment floorspace requirements in Guildford between 2025 and 2045. This shows that based on employment forecasts, by 2045 there would be a gross requirement for:

- +70,500 sqm of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +5,700 sqm of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -3,100 sqm of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -11,200 sqm of B2 floorspace; and
- +38,100 sqm of B8 floorspace

Figure 8-6 Evolution of gross additional employment floorspace requirements, 2025-2045 – Labour supply (Experian)



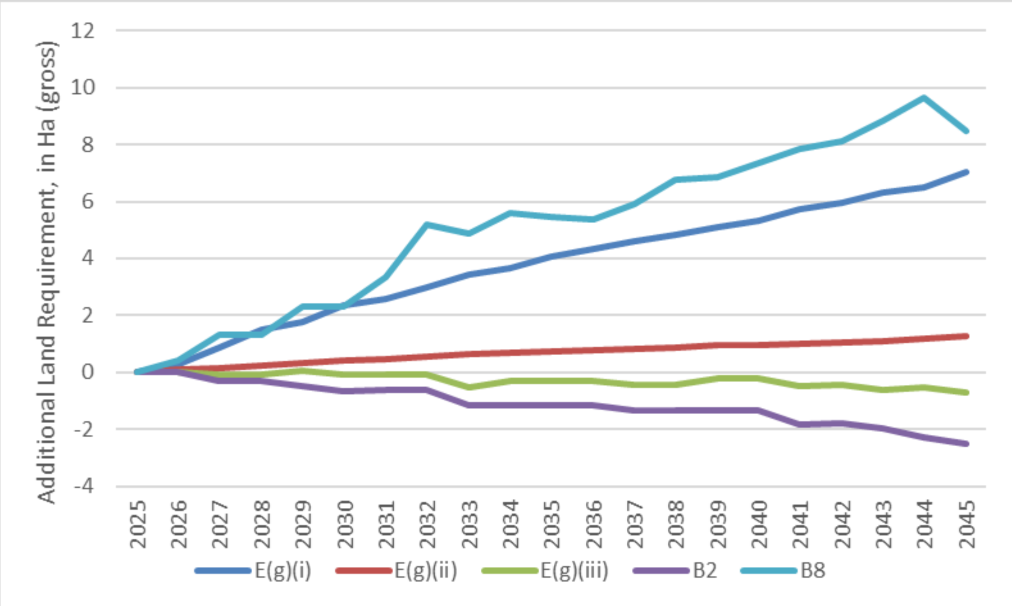
Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Experian Forecast

8.4.8 Finally, applying relevant plot ratios based on assumptions summarised in Table 8-1, floorspace gross requirements can be converted into land gross requirements (presented in hectares).

8.4.9 Based on this, the evolution of gross employment land requirements in Guildford to 2045 indicates a requirement for +13.6 ha[88] of employment land, comprising the following:

- +7.1 ha of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +1.3 ha of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -0.7 ha of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -2.5 ha of B2 floorspace; and
- +8.5 ha of B8 floorspace.

Figure 8-7 Evolution of gross additional employment land requirements, 2025-2045 – Labour supply (Experian)



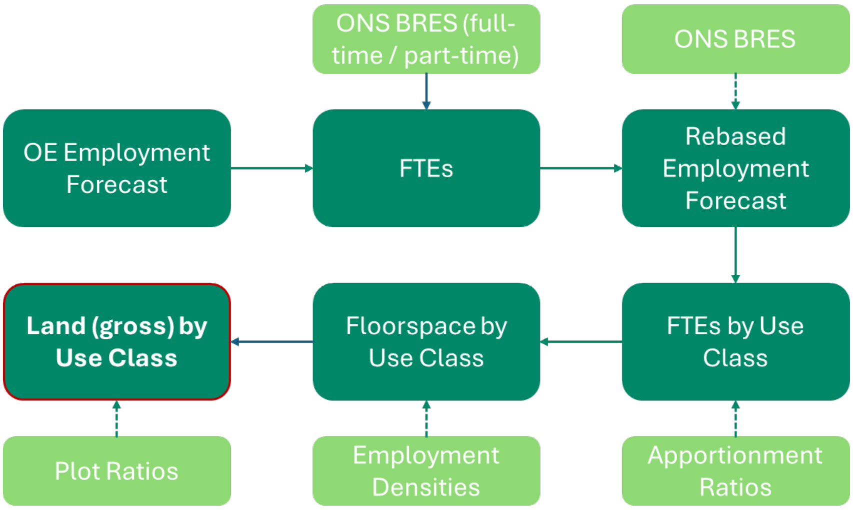
Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Experian Forecast

8.5 Scenario 2.1: Labour Demand – Oxford Economics

8.5.1 The Labour Demand scenario, using the latest Oxford Economics (Employment) forecast (January 2026) follow a detailed approach to convert employment into gross future demand for office (E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii)) and industrial (E(g)(iii), B2 and B8) floorspace and land. The approach is similar to the approach applied to the Experian forecast, with the added step that employment forecast provided by Oxford Economics has been converted into FTEs. This approach and summarised in Figure 8-8.

[88] Note that the sum of land requirements by individual use classes below does not equate to 13.6 ha (but 13.7 ha). The difference is due to rounding.

Figure 8-8 Labour Demand – Oxford Economics – General Approach



Source: AECOM

8.5.2 The first step is to convert the Oxford Economics employment forecast data into FTE jobs. To do so, each sector is converted based on the ratio of full-time and part-time employment jobs in Guildford, using data from ONS BRES 2024.

Table 8-8 Employment to FTE Jobs (2025)

Employment Sector	Employment	FTEs
A : Agriculture, forestry and fishing	400	360
B : Mining and quarrying	31	31
C : Manufacturing	2,841	2,630
D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	266	257
E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	332	321
F : Construction	5,190	4,866
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	10,874	8,897
H : Transportation and storage	1,475	1,352
I : Accommodation and food service activities	6,350	4,641
J : Information and communication	6,937	6,459
K : Financial and insurance activities	3,596	3,454
L : Real estate activities	1,333	1,146
M : Professional, scientific and technical activities	13,032	11,847
N : Administrative and support service activities	4,562	3,802
O : Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	6,673	6,238
P : Education	12,979	10,029
Q : Human health and social work activities	13,729	11,258
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	4,037	3,028
S : Other service activities	2,607	2,173

Source: AECOM calculations, based on ONS BRES 2024 and Oxford Economics Employment Forecast

8.5.3 According to adjusted Oxford Economics' employment forecasts, full time equivalent (FTE) employment across all sectors in Guildford is forecast to increase from 82,790 in 2025 to 97,080 in 2045 (+14,290), an increase of approximately 17.3%. When rebased to ONS BRES 2024 baseline figure, FTEs across all sectors in Guilford is forecast to increase from 73,770 in 2025 to 86,630 in 2045 (+12,860), an increase of approximately 17.4%.

8.5.4 As shown in Table 8-9, the biggest growth sectors in terms of absolute number of FTE employment growth include: Professional, scientific and technical activities; Human health and social work activities; Education; and Information and communication.

8.5.5 The sectors forecast to decline the most in absolute terms include Manufacturing; Agriculture, forestry and fishing; and Public administration and defence.

8.5.6 It can be noted that whilst varying in magnitude in comparison to the Experian forecast, the predicted growth and declining sectors roughly align between the two sets of forecasts.

Table 8-9 Forecast growth or decline by employment category 2025-2045 (Oxford Economics)

Employment Sector	FTE change 2025-2045	
	OE	Rebased OE
M : Professional, scientific and technical activities	3,950	3,340
Q : Human health and social work activities	2,980	2,900
P : Education	1,470	1,270
J : Information and communication	1,580	1,230
F : Construction	1,390	1,190
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	1,190	1,170
N : Administrative and support service activities	820	810
I : Accommodation and food service activities	620	670
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	600	450
K : Financial and insurance activities	280	270
H : Transportation and storage	270	360
S : Other service activities	230	140
L : Real estate activities	130	120
E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	10	10
B : Mining and quarrying	-10	-10
D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	-40	-30
O : Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	-70	-100
A : Agriculture, forestry and fishing	-200	-130
C : Manufacturing	-910	-790
All Sectors	**14,290**	**12,850**

Source: AECOM calculations, based on Oxford Economics Employment Forecast

8.5.7 FTE employment in office and industrial use class sectors makes up approximately 47.2% of all employment in Guildford in 2025 (34,810 out of a total of 73,770 FTE jobs). Oxford Economics forecasts FTEs in office and industrial sectors to increase overall by 5,640 FTE jobs over the period 2025-2045, an increase of approximately 16.2%. By 2045, FTE employment in office and industrial use class sectors is expected to represent approximately 46.7% of all employment in Guildford (40,450 out of a total of 86,630 FTE jobs).

Table 8-10 FTE Jobs forecast by use class, 2025-2045 – Labour demand (Oxford Economics)

Use class	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
E(g)(i)	26,950	28,560	29,960	31,170	32,400	20.2%
E(g)(ii)	580	610	640	670	710	21.3%
Total office jobs	27,530	28,660	30,050	30,050	33,110	20.3%
E(g)(iii)	1,110	1,040	960	880	800	-27.5%
B2	1,120	1,040	950	870	780	-30.5%
B8	5,050	5,300	5,480	5,620	5,760	14.0%
Total industrial jobs	7,280	7,370	7,390	7,370	7,340	0.9%
Total office and industrial jobs	34,810	36,030	37,440	37,420	40,450	16.2%
Non-Employment Use Class	38,960	41,220	43,020	44,620	46,180	18.5%

Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Oxford Economics Forecast

8.5.8 Based on the above employment forecasts and the employment density assumptions summarised in Table 8-1, Guildford employment floorspace requirement forecasts over the period 2025-2045 is expected to increase by 86,300 sqm (+12.1%), including 58,200 sqm of office space and 28,100 sqm of industrial space, as presented in Table 8-11 below.

Table 8-11 FTE Guildford floorspace need (sqm), 2025-2045 - Labour demand (Oxford Economics)

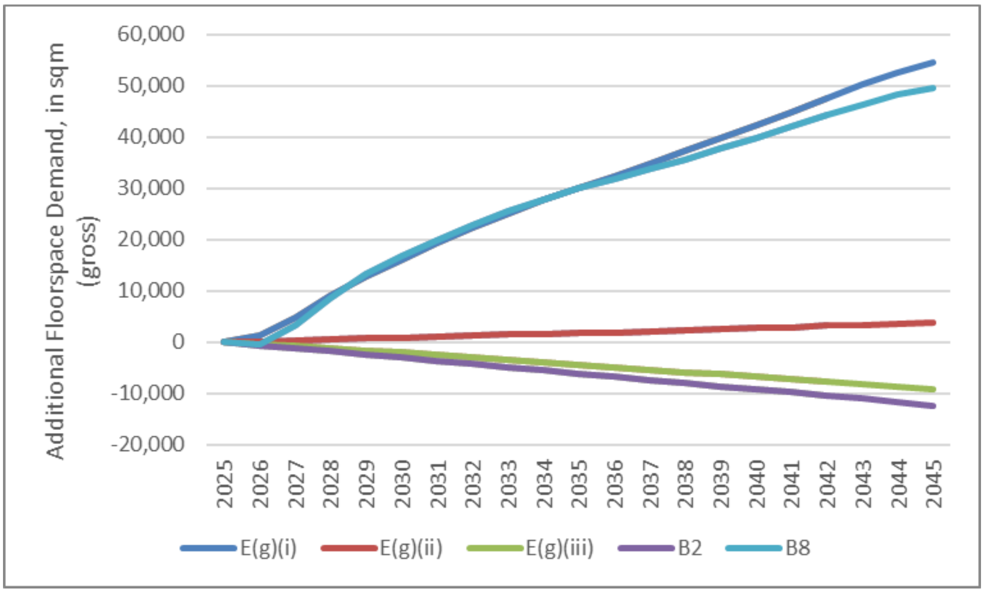
Use class	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
E(g)(i)	269,500	285,600	299,600	311,700	324,000	20.2%
E(g)(ii)	17,500	18,400	19,300	20,200	21,200	21.1%
Total office floorspace need	287,000	304,000	318,900	331,900	345,200	20.3%
E(g)(iii)	33,200	31,200	28,700	26,400	24,100	-27.4%
B2	40,400	37,400	34,200	31,200	28,000	-30.7%
B8	353,800	370,700	383,800	393,600	403,400	14.0%
Total industrial floorspace need	427,400	439,300	446,700	451,200	455,500	6.6%
Total office and industrial floorspace need	714,400	743,300	765,600	783,100	800,700	12.1%

Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Oxford Economics Forecast

8.5.9 Figure 8-9 shows the evolution of employment floorspace requirements in Guildford between 2025 and 2045. This shows that based on employment forecasts, by 2045 there would be a gross requirement for:

- +54,500 sqm of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +3,700 sqm of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -9,100 sqm of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -12,400 sqm of B2 floorspace; and
- +49,600 sqm of B8 floorspace.

Figure 8-9 Evolution of gross additional floorspace gross requirements, 2025-2045 - Labour demand (Oxford Economics)



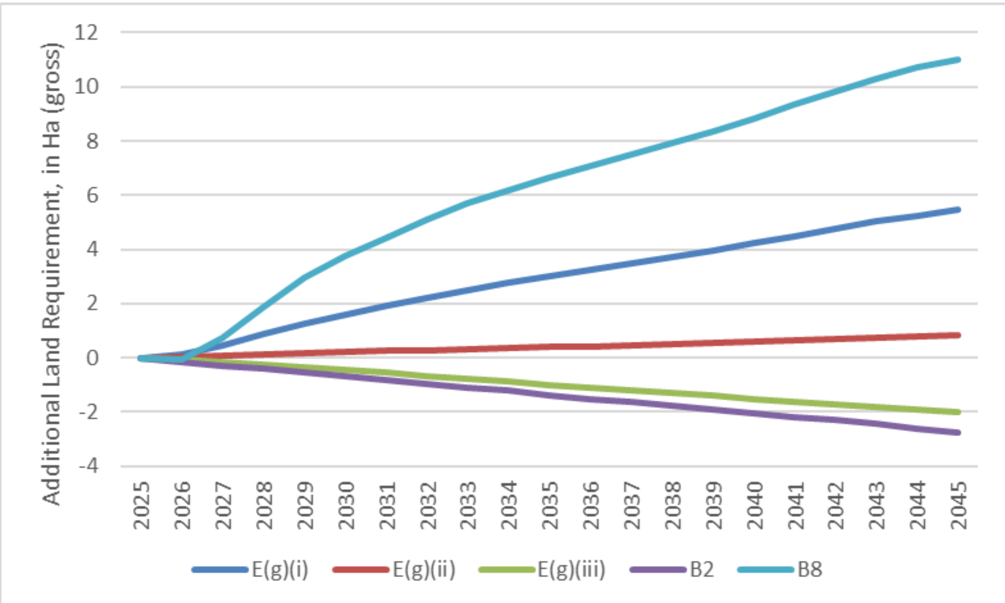
Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Oxford Economics Forecast

8.5.10 Finally, applying relevant plot ratios based on assumptions summarised in Table 8-1, floorspace gross requirements can be converted into land gross requirements (presented in hectares).

8.5.11 Based on this, the evolution of land requirements in Guildford to 2045 indicates a requirement for +12.5 ha of employment land, comprising the following:

- +5.5 ha of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +0.8 ha of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -2.0 ha of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -2.8 ha of B2 floorspace; and
- +11.0 ha of B8 floorspace.

Figure 8-10 Evolution of gross additional land requirements, 2025-2045 - Labour demand (Oxford Economics)



Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Oxford Economics Forecast

8.6 Scenario 2.2: Labour Supply – Oxford Economics

8.6.1 The approach to calculating the labour supply forecast was the same here as for the scenario which was used in Scenario 1.2. The population was first converted into local labour supply.

8.6.2 The conversion from working age population to local labour supply is presented in Table 8-5 for 2025 and 2045. The local labour supply for Guildford, from local residents alone, is expected to increase by 9,820 workers between 2025 and 2045.

Table 8-12 Conversion of population forecasts into local labour supply

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
Working age population	99,800	109,520	116,510	122,140	124,480	24,680
Economically active population	88,220	96,820	102,990	107,970	110,040	21,820
Local labour supply	34,580	37,950	40,370	42,320	44,400	9,820

Source: AECOM calculations, based on Iceni Housing Needs Assessment (2026) population forecast

8.6.3 This increase in labour supply is then distributed between the different planning use classes following the growth forecasted by Oxford Economics in terms of labour demand, such that declining industries follow the loss predicted in the forecast and growing industries accommodate all of the additional labour supply accordingly.

8.6.4 The growth in E(g)(ii) jobs is the ***fastest*** (relative growth) with +17.2%. However, the ***largest*** growth (absolute terms) is in E(g)(i) jobs, with an increase of 4,180 FTE jobs expected to be created in Guildford between 2025 and 2045. E(g(ii)) and B8 are expected to see an increase of 100 (+17.2%) and 520 FTEs (+10.3%) respectively, while E(g)(iii) and B2 will see a decrease in jobs of -310 FTEs and -340 FTEs respectively.

Table 8-13 FTE Jobs forecast by use class, 2025-2045 - Labour supply (Oxford Economics)

Use class	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
E(g)(i)	26,950	28,280	29,340	30,200	31,130	15.5%
E(g)(ii)	580	610	630	650	680	17.2%
Total office jobs	27,530	28,890	29,970	30,850	31,810	15.5%
E(g)(iii)	1,110	1,040	950	880	800	-27.9%
B2	1,120	1,040	950	870	780	-30.4%
B8	5,050	5,230	5,370	5,460	5,570	10.3%
Total industrial jobs	7,280	7,310	7,270	7,210	7,140	-1.9%
Total office and industrial jobs	34,810	36,190	37,250	38,060	38,950	11.9%
Non-Employment Use Class	38,960	40,950	42,320	43,450	43,930	12.8%

Source: AECOM calculations, based on Iceni Housing Needs Assessment (2026) population forecast and rebased Oxford Economics Forecast

8.6.5 Based on the above employment forecasts and the employment density assumptions summarised in Table 8-1, Guildford floorspace requirement forecasts over the period 2025-2045 is expected to increase by 58,700 sqm (+8.2%), including 44,600 sqm of office space and 14,100 sqm of industrial space, as presented in Table 8-14 below.

Table 8-14 FTE Guildford floorspace need (sqm), 2025-2045 – Labour supply (Oxford Economics)

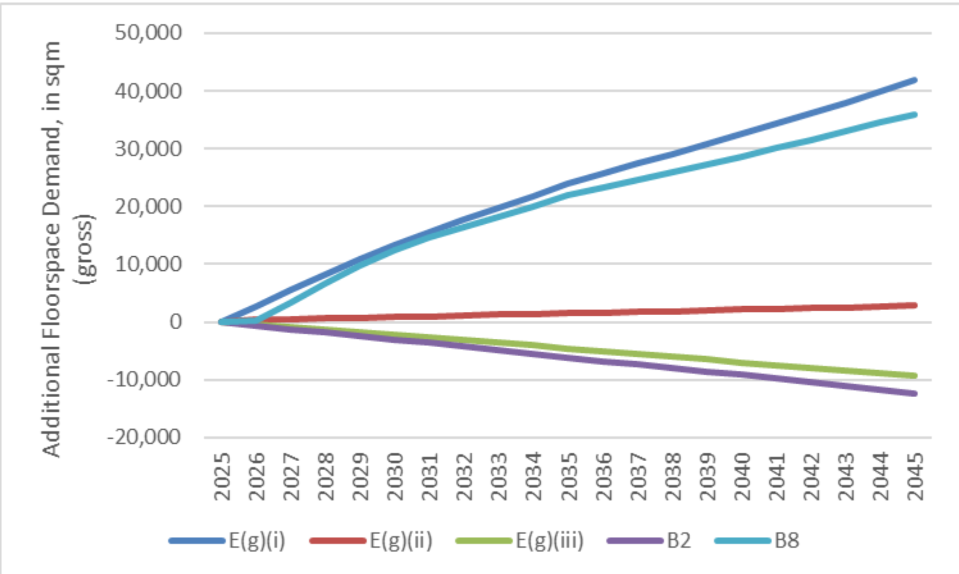
Use class	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2025-2045
E(g)(i)	269,500	282,800	293,400	302,000	311,300	15.5%
E(g)(ii)	17,500	18,300	19,000	19,600	20,300	16.0%
Total office floorspace need	287,000	301,100	312,400	321,600	331,600	15.5%
E(g)(iii)	33,200	31,100	28,600	26,300	23,900	-28.0%
B2	40,400	37,400	34,200	31,200	28,000	-30.7%
B8	353,800	366,100	375,700	382,400	389,600	10.1%
Total industrial floorspace need	427,400	434,600	438,500	439,900	441,500	3.3%
Total office and industrial floorspace need	714,400	735,700	750,900	761,500	773,100	8.2%

Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Oxford Economics Forecast

8.6.6 Figure 8-11 shows the evolution of gross employment floorspace requirements in Guildford between 2025 and 2045. This shows that based on employment forecasts, by 2045 there would be a gross requirement for:

- +41,800 sqm of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +2,900 sqm of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -9,300 sqm of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -12,300 sqm of B2 floorspace; and
- +35,900 sqm of B8 floorspace.

Figure 8-11 Evolution of gross additional employment floorspace requirements, 2025-2045 – Labour supply (Oxford Economics)



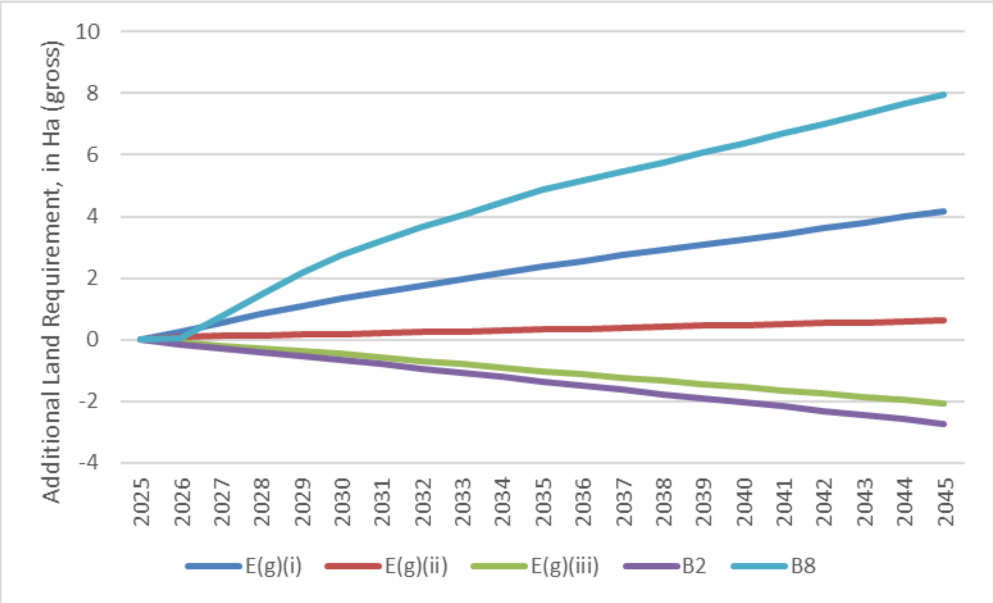
Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Oxford Economics Forecast

8.6.7 Finally, applying relevant plot ratios based on assumptions summarised in Table 8-1, floorspace gross requirements can be converted into land gross requirements (presented in hectares).

8.6.8 Based on this, the evolution of gross employment land requirements in Guildford to 2045 indicates a requirement for +8.0 ha of employment land, comprising the following:

- +4.2 ha of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +0.6 ha of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -2.1 ha of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -2.7 ha of B2 floorspace; and
- +8.0 ha of B8 floorspace.

Figure 8-12 Evolution of gross additional employment land requirements, 2025-2045 – Labour supply (Oxford Economics)



Source: AECOM calculations, based on rebased Oxford Economics Forecast

8.7 Scenario 3: Past Take-Up

8.7.1 To determine the needs arising from a scenario of change based on ‘past take-up’, AECOM used data from CoStar on net absorption of employment floorspace by planning use class for Guildford. CoStar provides data from 2009.

8.7.2 The historical net absorption (annual average), by planning use class, is projected forwards to inform the future demand for employment floorspace. As part of this exercise, several historical periods were considered (past 5 years, past 10 years, past 16 years). It was considered that the past 10-year average was the most robust, as it was not overly impacted by the 2008 financial crisis and was long enough to smooth the impact of Covid-19 (unlike the past 5-year average).

8.7.3 The average historical annual absorption of employment floorspace was projected forward to 2045 from the 2025 baseline position.

8.7.4 Table 8-15 provides a summary of the average net absorption of employment floorspace by planning use class over the past 5, 10 and 16 years.

Table 8-15 Average Annual Net Absorption of Floorspace (sqm)

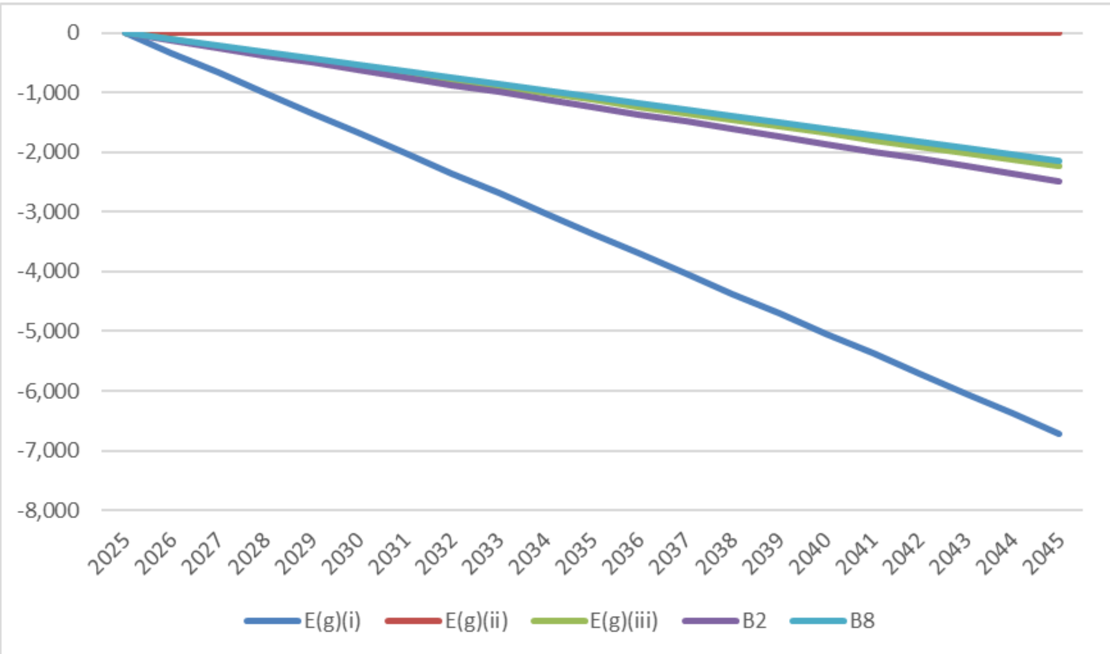
	5-Year	10-Year	16-Year
Office (E(g)(i))	-496	-336	-279
R&D (E(g)(ii))	0	0	0
Light Industrial (E(g)(iii))	18	-112	-46
Industrial (B2)	-238	-124	-49
Warehouse (B8)	-561-	-107	-47

Source: AECOM 2025, based on CoStar

8.7.5 Figure 8-13 shows the projected evolution of gross employment floorspace requirements in Guildford between 2025 and 2045 is expected to decline by 13,600 sqm based on the continuation of past 10-year trends. This decline is expected across all use classes, as follows:

- -6,700 sqm of E(g)(i) floorspace;
- +0 sqm of E(g)(ii) floorspace;
- -2,2000 sqm of E(g)(iii) floorspace;
- -2,500 sqm of B2 floorspace; and
- -2,100 sqm of B8 floorspace.

Figure 8-13 Evolution of gross additional employment floorspace requirements, 2025-2045 – Past take-up (10-year average)



Source: AECOM calculations, based on CoStar data (October 2025)

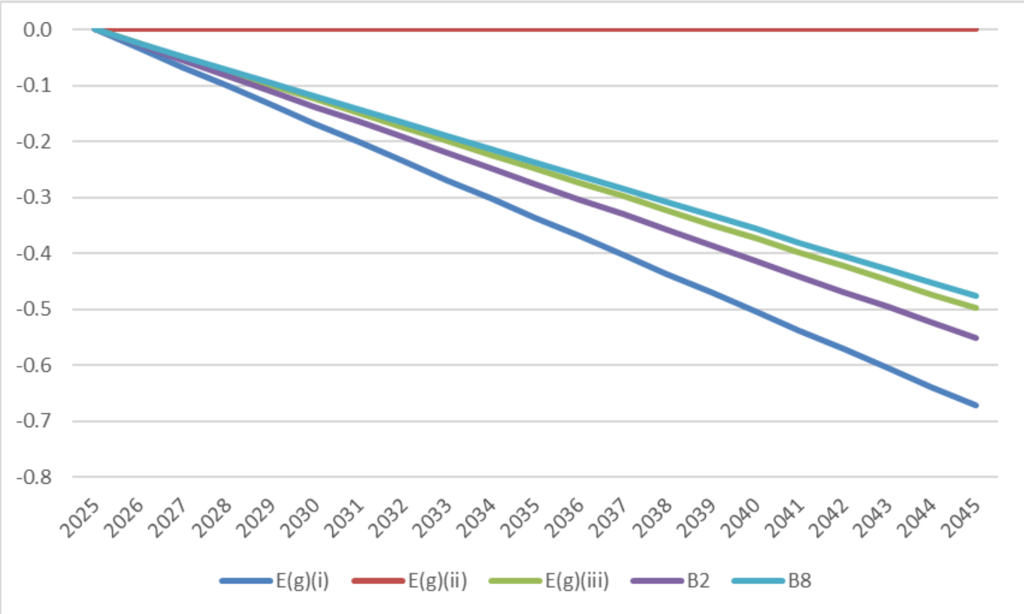
8.7.6 Finally, applying relevant plot ratios, gross employment floorspace requirements can be converted into gross employment land requirements (presented in hectares).

8.7.7 Based on this, the evolution of land requirements in Guildford to 2045 indicates a loss of 2.2ha of employment land, comprising the following:

- -0.7 ha of land for E(g)(i) use;
- -0.0 ha of land for E(g)(ii) use;

- -0.5 ha of land for E(g)(iii) use;
- -0.6 ha of land for B2 use; and
- -0.5 ha of land for B8 use.

Figure 8-14 Evolution of gross additional employment land requirements, 2025-2045 – Past take-up (10-year average)



Source: AECOM calculations, based on CoStar data (October 2025)

8.8 Replacement of Losses

8.8.1 The forecasting exercise has also taken into account replacement of losses. Evidently some redevelopment will take place on existing employment sites. However, there can be losses of employment floorspace and land to other uses.

8.8.2 In order to estimate the replacement rate of losses of floorspace required each year, assumptions have been applied to the annual average loss based on CoStar data on demolitions from 2020 to 2024 as follows:

- 25% of office floorspace [E(g)(i), E(g)(ii) uses) losses will be replaced each year; and
- 50% of industrial floorspace [E(g)(iii), B2, B8 uses] losses will be replaced each year.

8.8.3 This is set out in Table 8-16 below:

Table 8-16 Allowance for Replacement of Losses 2025-45 (sqm)

Type of Space/Use Class	Average Annual Loss (sqm)	Allowance for Losses 2025-45 (sqm)
E(g)(i) / E(g)(ii)	876	4,380
E(g)(iii) / B2 / B8	441	4,410
Total	1,317	8,790

Source: AECOM calculations, based on CoStar data (October 2025)

8.8.4 The data and assumptions set out above have been applied to the labour demand, labour supply and past take-up scenarios.

8.9 Net Requirement for Floorspace and Land

Net Requirement for Office Floorspace and Land

8.9.1 The forecast net requirement for office space (E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii) uses) and land equivalent under all scenarios is set out in Table 8-17. The table identifies all the parameters which are used to inform the supply / demand balance. The existing supply position is informed by CoStar data on supply of office floorspace (in sqm) and vacancy of floorspace (% of total stock available).

8.9.2 To recognise the need for surplus floorspace to be available (to allow churn of businesses), an optimum frictional vacancy rate (assumed to be 8% of occupied supply and gross floorspace demand to 2045 for office floorspace) is considered, alongside an allowance for the replacement of future losses.

Table 8-17 Net Requirement for Office Floorspace and Land by Scenario 2024 to 2045

Parameters	Scenario 1.1 Labour Demand – Experian	Scenario 1.2 Labour Supply – Experian	Scenario 2.1 Labour Demand – Oxford Economics	Scenario 2.2 Labour Supply – Oxford Economics	Scenario 3 (Past Take-Up)
	Floorspace (sqm)				
A. Supply of occupied floorspace/land (2025)	367,996	367,996	367,996	367,996	367,996
B. Current vacant floorspace/land	31,064	31,064	31,064	31,064	31,064
C. Total stock of floorspace/land [A+B]	399,060	399,060	399,060	399,060	399,060
Forecast					
D. Gross floorspace/land demand to 2045	65,966	76,280	58,252	44,701	-6,720
E. Optimum frictional vacancy to 2045 [8% of A+D for office][89]	34,717	35,542	34,100	33,016	28,902
F. Surplus/deficit of vacant floorspace/land in 2045 [E-B]	3,653	4,478	3,036	1,952	-2,162
G. Replacement of Losses (25% for office)	4,380	4,380	4,380	4,380	4,380
H. Gross requirement for floorspace/land 2025-2045 [C+D+F+G]	473,059	484,198	464,728	450,093	394,558
I. Net additional requirement for floorspace/land 2025-2045 [H-C]	73,999	85,138	65,668	51,033	-4,502
Net Additional Land Requirement (ha)	8.1	9.3	7.1	5.5	-0.5

Source: AECOM

8.9.3 This shows that up to 2045 there is a projected (net) requirement for between approximately -4,500 sqm and +85,100 of office floorspace in Guildford. This would translate to a land requirement for office uses of between -0.5 ha and +9.3 ha.

[89] An allowance for frictional floorspace has been included in our assessment. To operate efficiently a property market requires a small proportion of total floorspace to be readily available for take-up to allow businesses expanding or contracting to more to suitable premises. This available space is called frictional floorspace, the optimal rate of which we assume to be currently around 8% for office uses and 5% for industrial uses.

Net Requirement for Industrial Floorspace and Land

8.9.4 The forecast net requirement for industrial floorspace and land under all scenarios is set out below in Table 8-18. The table identifies all the parameters which are used to inform the supply/demand balance. The existing supply position is informed by CoStar data. The current supply of available floorspace is factored into the assessment after it is netted off against the optimum frictional vacancy rate, following the same approach taken for office space requirements.

Table 8-18 Net Requirement for Industrial Floorspace and Land by Scenario 2024 to 2045

Parameters	Scenario 1.1 Labour Demand – Experian	Scenario 1.2 Labour Supply – Experian	Scenario 2.1 Labour Demand – Oxford Economics	Scenario 2.2 Labour Supply – Oxford Economics	Scenario 3 (Past Take-Up)
	Floorspace (sqm)				
A. Supply of occupied floorspace/land (2025)	270,465	270,465	270,465	270,465	270,465
B. Current vacant floorspace/land	26,735	26,735	26,735	26,735	26,735
C. Total stock of floorspace/land [A+B]	297,200	297,200	297,200	297,200	297,200
Forecast					
D. Gross floorspace/land demand to 2045	21,438	23,777	28,168	14,221	-6,860
E. Optimum frictional vacancy to 2045 [5% of A+D for industrial][90]	14,595	14,712	14,932	14,234	13,180
F. Surplus/deficit of vacant floorspace/land in 2045 [E-B]	-12,140	-12,023	-11,803	-12,501	-13,555
G. Replacement of Losses (25% for office)	4,410	4,410	4,410	4,410	4,410
H. Gross requirement for floorspace/land 2025-2045 [C+D+F+G]	310,908	313,364	317,975	303,330	281,195
I. Net additional requirement for floorspace/land 2025-2045 [H-C]	13,708	16,164	20,775	6,130	-16,005
Net Additional Land Requirement (ha)	3.0	3.6	4.6	1.4	-3.6

Source: AECOM

8.9.5 This shows that up to 2045 there is a projected (net) requirement for between approximately -16,000 sqm and +20,800 of industrial floorspace in Guildford. This would translate to a land requirement for industrial uses of between -3.6 ha and +4.6 ha.

8.10 Preferred Scenario

8.10.1 The scenarios set out within this section forecast varying changes in floorspace in Guildford across the Local Plan period; with varying growth outlooks forecast under Scenario 1.1 (Labour Demand – Experian); Scenario 2.1 (Labour Demand – Oxford Economics);

[90] An allowance for frictional floorspace has been included in our assessment. To operate efficiently a property market requires a small proportion of total floorspace to be readily available for take-up to allow businesses expanding or contracting to more to suitable premises. This available space is called frictional floorspace, the optimal rate of which we assume to be currently around 8% for office uses and 5% for industrial uses.

Scenario 1.2 (Labour Supply – Experian); Scenario 2.2 (Labour Supply – Oxford Economics); and Scenario 3 (Past Take-Up).

8.10.2 For the office use classes, the floorspace requirements forecasted through Scenario 2.1 (Labour Demand – Oxford Economics) and Scenario 2.2 (Labour Supply – Oxford Economics) indicate that there will be growth requirement of between 51,000 sqm and 65,700 sqm (equivalent to an average of 58,400 sqm) to 2045. This represents an expansion of Guildford office stock of 12.8% to 16.5%. Guildford is a key economic centre in the FEMA and the wider region and is expected to capitalise on the existing concentration of high-growth sectors, such as professional services, in places such as Surrey Research Park, Cathedral Hill and Guildford Business Park to attract further office-based employment.

8.10.3 However, engagement with key stakeholders has confirmed that whilst Guildford remains an attractive and high-demand location for office-based activities, market trends indicate that businesses are increasingly opting for smaller, better quality, spaces, predominantly in or around town centres. There is a risk that in the long-term, the full extent of home-working practices will impact on the level of demand for office space in Guildford (as businesses eventually downsize to adjust to their needs when reaching the end of their current lease). This may therefore impact (negatively) on the future level of demand for office space in the Borough.

8.10.4 Based on the above observations, growth requirement for 58,400 sqm of net additional office floorspace to 2045, equivalent to circa 6.3 ha, is considered to be a reasonable projection and represent roughly a mid-point between all the scenarios tested (therefore considering both projections and past-trends).

8.10.5 For industrial use classes, the floorspace requirements forecasted through Scenario 1.1 (Labour Demand – Experian); Scenario 2.1 (Labour Demand – Oxford Economics); and Scenario 1.2 (Labour Supply – Experian) all lead to a comparable requirement ranging from 13,700 to 20,800 sqm of net additional industrial floorspace, driven by requirement for B8 space specifically. Scenario 2.2 (Labour Supply – Oxford Economics) suggest a lower requirement of 6,100 sqm (1.4 ha).

8.10.6 Whilst the past take-up scenario offers a pessimistic outlook on future demand for industrial space (-16,000 sqm; or -3.6 ha), property market intelligence highlights a robust, competitive performance in market rents over the past decade despite vacancy rates slightly above regional and national comparators.

8.10.7 As such, a large increase in floorspace to 2045 would represent a divergence from recent activity, and a small increase (or reduction) in floorspace to 2045 would ignore the performance and attractiveness of the local area for industrial occupiers, as well as the continued requirements for B8 space observed across the whole country. The current demand for high-quality industrial space and the lack of suitable stock in the local area was confirmed by local commercial agents.

8.10.8 Based on the above observations, growth requirement for 20,800 sqm of net additional industrial floorspace to 2045, equivalent to circa 4.6 ha, is considered to be a reasonable projection.

8.11 Qualitative Considerations

8.11.1 The following qualitative considerations in regard to future demand are informed be the baseline assessments presented in Section 5, 6 and 7, and stakeholder engagement carried out with landowners, businesses and organisations, as well as local commercial property agents.

Office

8.11.2 Based on stakeholder engagement activities carried out with landowners, businesses and organisations, as well as local commercial property agents, it was confirmed that demand for high-quality and flexible office space in accessible locations, such as the town centre, close to amenities, is currently high.

8.11.3 Commercial agents have confirmed a shift in the type of demand they have been receiving following the Covid-19 pandemic, with a clear trend towards downsizing (most requirements being below 1,000 sqm) and a preference for higher quality and flexible space (i.e. high level of demand for Grade A, modern fit-outs, sustainability credentials, energy efficiency, wellness features). This is particularly true from small and medium size companies (SMEs), looking for space ranging 100 sqm to 500 sqm. This requirement is supported by the evidence presented in Section 5, which indicates that 97% of businesses in Guildford have less than 50 employees. With an average employment density of 10 sqm per employee, assuming all employees are office-based, these businesses would not require more than 500 sqm of floorspace.

8.11.4 Flexible floorspace in the town centre and business parks near transport links are most sought after. However, as a large share of office employees still rely on private transport (mainly private cars) to access their place of work, good provision of car parking remains a very important criteria for prospective occupiers.

8.11.5 Provision of cycle facilities (i.e. covered and secured parking, changing rooms) is also increasingly valued by occupiers to provide an alternative to driving and support commute via public transport (through cycling for the last mile).

8.11.6 Investments have been committed to deliver / upgrade office space in the town centre, including Bottle Works (Site Ref. 24 – 31 Chertsey Street and 1-7 Stoke Road) and Bell Court (Site Ref. 26 – Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court) which both provide high quality, flexible and serviced, office space. This type of floorspace should be particularly in demand over the Plan period, considering that office-based employment is expected to be driven by Professional, scientific and technical activities and Information and Communication (+4,570 FTEs in total between 2025 and 2045, based on rebased OE forecast) – as knowledge intensive sectors are major consumers of high-quality, flexible office solutions.

8.11.7 Property agents confirmed that there is currently a low level of available supply of properties matching those criteria in the borough to respond to the level of demand. Inversely, there is currently sufficient supply of larger office floorplates (particularly in business parks on the edge of towns).

Industrial

8.11.8 Industrial occupiers in Guildford are looking for modern, high-quality premises that can accommodate a range of activities, from logistics and warehousing to high-tech manufacturing and life sciences. Demand for logistics and warehousing space, ranging from 1,000 to 10,000 sqm is particularly strong at the moment, with prospective occupiers showing a clear preference for accessible locations along the A3.

8.11.9 Commercial agents have confirmed an increasingly important demand by occupiers for energy-efficient buildings that meet or exceed current environmental standards. This is driven in part by tightening regulations, such as the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) and the requirement for higher EPC ratings (B or C) by 2027 and 2030, but also by businesses' commitments to environmental targets. Industrial space at Henley Business Park is particularly sought after for those reasons.

8.11.10 Location is a critical factor for occupiers. The most sought-after sites are established industrial estates such as Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate, Midleton Industrial Estate, Woodbridge Meadows, and Burnt Common, all of which offer direct access to strategic road networks like the A3 (connecting to the M25). Accessibility is further enhanced by the availability of adequate parking, servicing yards, and loading bays, which are considered essential for efficient operations.

8.11.11 While on-site amenities are generally less important than for office occupiers, proximity to cafés, shops, and other services (such as a gym) is increasingly valued as a means of supporting workforce satisfaction and retention.

9. Comparison Between Supply and Demand

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 This section compares the projected future demand for office and industrial floorspace and land between 2025 and 2045, as earlier described in Section 8, with the existing supply conditions in the borough, as earlier described in Section 6. It factors in the presence of vacant land, or land with potential for intensification/redevelopment as identified in the supply assessment, as well as considering the pipeline for development of office and industrial land, to inform a position of how supply may change over the planning period, and how that influences the overall supply and demand balance.

9.1.2 Broadly, supply in excess of demand suggests a demand constrained position; and where demand is in excess of supply, a supply constrained position with the requirement to identify additional floorspace/land for employment use activities and ensure growth is adequately supported.

9.1.3 Further consideration of the balance of supply and demand in terms of quantitative and quality requirements is given in the conclusions and recommendations section.

9.2 Available Supply

9.2.1 As set out in the supply assessment, a number of existing employment sites across the Borough represent potential pipeline for future development. This includes records of consented planning permissions for employment use that have not yet been built out and indicate additional potential pipeline supply, a number of vacant sites within existing designated employment sites, and sites currently in low density use that could be suitable for future intensification. It is important to note that this section of the report does not consider several Local Plan site allocations for employment floorspace not yet permitted.

Planning Pipeline

9.2.2 Planning applications going back to January 2023 were reviewed to assess the impact of the existing planning pipeline on future supply of employment space in Guildford. Depending on the status of applications, this pipeline may have been considered in existing stock (where the floorspace is being delivered or has been completed and is already accounted for in the existing stock reported by CoStar), under planning pipeline (in this section) – with a differentiation made between “under construction” and “not yet started”[91] – or vacant land (where implementation of the planning approval is considered to have stalled). Accounting for these impacts under those categories ensure that the land and floorspace is not double counted and that certainty of impact on future supply is considered.

9.2.3 Future net change to employment floorspace has been summarised in Table 9-1. This is informed by planning permissions presented in Appendix B. The status of these applications was correct as of 31st March 2025.

[91] Under construction are considered certain; whilst applications not yet started still carry some uncertainty.

Table 9-1 Planning Pipeline

	Under-construction		Not Started		Total Pipeline	
	Floorspace (sqm)	Land (ha)	Floorspace (sqm)	Land (ha)	Floorspace (sqm)	Land (ha)
E(g)(i)	-14,059	-1.4	-186	0.0	-14,245	-1.4
E(g)(ii)	1,390	0.3	164	0.0	1,554	0.3
Total Office	-12,669	-1.1	-22	0.0	-12,692	-1.1
E(g)(iii)	353	0.1	2,394	0.5	2,747	0.6
B2	1,390	0.3	1,785	0.4	3,175	0.7
B8	1,815	0.4	5,930	1.3	7,745	1.7
Total Industrial	3,558	0.8	10,109	2.2	13,668	3.0

9.2.4 Table 9-1 shows that a net total of -12,669 sqm of office space (E(g)(i), E(g)(ii)) will be lost in Guildford, and a further net total of -22 sqm also has planning permission which has not yet been implemented. Overall, the entire planning pipeline for office space if delivered could lead to a net loss of -12,691 sqm of office space.

9.2.5 Inversely, a net total of +3,558 sqm of industrial space (E(g)(iii), B2, B8) is currently under construction and will deliver additional floorspace in Guildford, as well as +10,109 which has planning consent but is yet to be constructed. Overall, the entire planning pipeline for industrial space if delivered could lead to a net gain of +13,667 sqm of industrial space.

9.2.6 Overall, the planning pipeline (office and industrial) could deliver a small net increase in employment floorspace, and contribute to a reduction of 1.9ha in the overall land requirements.

Vacant land within designated employment sites

9.2.7 A total of 8.2 ha of undeveloped land, located across five Strategic Employment Sites has been identified in Guildford, which could address a large proportion of future demand, particularly for industrial use. Maps identifying vacant land are provided in Appendix A.

Table 9-2 Employment Sites, Vacant Land

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Vacant Land (ha)	% total	Suitable uses
4	Woodbridge Meadows	10.4	0.5	5%	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B2; B8
12	Burnt Common - London Road[92]	10.5	5.3	50%	E(g)(iii); B2; B8
16	Surrey Research Park	27.9	1.4	5%	E(g)(i); E(g)(ii)
17	Guildford Business Park	1.3	0.3	20%	E(g)(i)
18	Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios Tannery Lane, Send	2.5	0.7	30%	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii)

Sites suitable for intensification

9.2.8 Intensification opportunities are generally limited and highly uncertain due barriers such as potential viability considerations (particularly where existing premises need to be cleared prior to redevelopment), existing leases, and land ownership. However, a small amount of designated employment land could be subject to redevelopment / intensification on the basis

[92] Note that the remainder of the site at Burnt Common that is still considered vacant (i.e. not captured under existing floorspace or under planning pipeline) – the eastern part of the site – is "allocated" in the Local Plan. The land will be "designated" once employment floorspace is delivered. This part of the site, considered as vacant land, correspond to Phase 3 of development (planning application 24/P/01125 – rejected in)

of high demand and current provision of under-developed or old/poor quality buildings on parcels of land within those sites. The potential for intensification is estimated at up to 1.9 ha of additional supply, principally for industrial activities.

Table 9-3 Employment Sites, Potential for Intensification/Redevelopment

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Intensification Potential (ha)	% total	Comment	Suitable Uses
1	Slyfield Industrial Estate	37.6	0.9	2.5%	Small number of smaller sites and vacant properties could be redeveloped to higher density, to make best use of land.	E(g)(iii), B2, B8
2	North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale	10.1	0.5	5%	Small number of very old and/or under-used buildings could be redeveloped, delivering better quality industrial or storage space.	E(g)(iii), B2, B8
11	Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field	1.9	0.4	20%	Conversion of excess car parking and redevelopment of some units in poor condition.	E(g)(i), B8
30	Home Farm, Loseley Park	0.4	0.1	25%	Conversion of excess car parking and yard space	E(g)(iii)

9.3 Gap Analysis

9.3.1 The outcome of the comparison between employment land demand and available supply, based on the current portfolio of sites / allocations across the Borough, is set out in Table 9-4. This table provides a gap analysis of total employment land, as well as office and industrial separately. For the purpose of allocating supply between office and industrial activities where this is still uncertain (i.e. vacant land, intensification/redevelopment), land has been allocated to all suitable uses equally.

9.3.2 This table shows that there is a future requirement for 11 ha of employment land (preferred scenario), of which 6.3 ha for office space (58,400 sqm) and 4.7 ha for industrial space (29,800 sqm). As well as future requirements, the assessment of the planning pipeline shows that when considering planning applications that are currently being implemented (i.e. under construction), a further 0.3 ha of employment land will be lost and will need to be replaced. This is driven by a loss of 1.1 ha of office (-12,669 sqm), whilst 0.8 ha of industrial land is being delivered (+3,558 sqm).

9.3.3 Considering all potential future supply, this gap could be reduced and fully addressed – with a surplus of 1.1 ha of land identified. However, looking at the gap for office and industrial space separately, the assessment shows that office space would still be in under-supply (5 ha, or 51,191 sqm), whilst industrial space would be in over-supply (6.1 ha, or 27,630 sqm). Therefore, even if all identified potential supply could be delivered over the Plan period, adjustments would need to be made to ensure that sufficient office space is delivered.

Table 9-4 Summary of Demand vs Supply (preferred scenario)

	Office		Industrial		Total	
	Floorspace (sqm)	Land (ha)	Floorspace (sqm)	Land (ha)	Floorspace (sqm)	Land (ha)
Demand						
A) Net Demand	**58,400**	**6.3**	**20,800**	**4.7**	**79,200**	**11.0**
Supply						
B) Planning Pipeline – Under construction	-12,669	-1.1	3,558	0.8	-9,111	-0.3
C) Planning Pipeline – Not yet started	-22	0.0	10,109	2.2	10,087	2.3
D) Vacant Land	17,900	2.2	27,113	6.0	45,013	8.2
E) Intensification / Redevelopment	2,000	0.2	7,650	1.7	9,650	1.9
F) Total Supply [B+C+D+E]	**10,959**	**1.7**	**46,742**	**10.4**	**57,701**	**12.1**
Gap						
G) Gap: [B-A]	**-71,069**	**-7.4**	**-17,242**	**-3.9**	**-88,311**	**-11.3**
H) Gap, including uncertain future supply: [F-A]	**-51,191**	**-5.0**	**27,630**	**6.1**	**-23,562**	**1.1**

9.4 Other Considerations

9.4.1 Given the level of uncertainty associated with the delivery of employment space through intensification/redevelopment, on vacant land or through consented developments that are yet to be delivered (not yet started), and the identified under-supply of office space (albeit there could be a surplus of industrial space if the full supply is delivered), additional considerations could be given to the current supply and organisation of employment sites, ensuring that future demand can be fully addressed.

9.4.2 For example, industrial floorspace located on designated employment sites near the town centre could be considered for relocation on alternative sites, releasing employment land for redevelopment and the delivery of new office space in desirable locations for future occupiers. Based on the overall assessment of sites (presented in Section 6.3), and the locational context of the sites, sites that could be considered for release or partial release (and relocation) include:

- Woodbridge Meadows: industrial stock, north of the railway and along the central spine, is of poor quality and low density. Northern edge of the site has already been redeveloped, with the presence of a Travelodge hotel (and gym), and the recent development of a Porsche car dealership. Further redevelopment could be considered, particularly on the western edge of the site which is made of smaller, low quality units, either through the relocation of industrial activities to alternative locations to re-provide the land for other uses, or the delivery of mixed-use developments. Redevelopment on the eastern part of the site could be considered but is likely to take substantially longer and/or be limited given the majority of land is occupied by Royal Mail and Thames Water.

- Woodbridge Meadows: land south of the railway line which is still in employment use (i.e. Riverview) and vacant land – north of Walnut Tree Close – could be considered for redevelopment and partial release to alternative uses (particularly mixed-use which would ensure no net loss of office space);

- Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road: office space in the south of the site is of low density. Proximity to the town centre (10-15min walk) could make this part of the site suitable for long-term intensification, as the current stock is of good quality and fully occupied. Evidence of proposed redevelopment on the northern part of the site (i.e. redevelopment of former car showroom) shows market demand for land in the area. Opportunities for mixed-use development could be considered for the area, responding to the demand for housing and office space, whilst industrial space could be re-provided on alternative sites (particularly along the A3 corridor).

- Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field: this site is currently under-performing with limited employment activities taking place on site. In addition, the surplus of car parking provides an opportunity for redevelopment of the whole site through masterplanning.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

10.1.1 This section concludes our assessment by reviewing the balance of projected demand and existing supply and, drawing on the findings from preceding sections, and provides options for the policy direction regarding employment land in Guildford over the Local Plan period to 2045.

10.1.2 When forming employment land policies, the Council should follow a balanced approach such that the employment activities of all business sizes, from start-ups to headquarters, are supported and encouraged. The Council should also recognise that demand will vary by type of space and will therefore be geographically varied.

10.1.3 This is one of a number of evidence base documents the Council will be considering that will feed into and inform its Local Plan. These are AECOM's independent recommendations and the Council will subsequently consider these before drafting its own Local Plan policies.

10.2 Conclusions

Office Space (E(g)(i), E(g)(ii))

10.2.1 Guildford's office market is a defining feature of its local economy, with an estimated 399,000 sqm of office floorspace distributed primarily within and around the town centre. The stock encompasses a broad spectrum of premises, ranging from modern headquarters buildings and business parks to smaller, flexible office suites that cater to start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises. The majority of high-quality office space is located on the edge of the town centre (i.e. London Square; Guildford Business Park; 1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill). However, evidence gathered through stakeholder engagement suggests that the focal point of demand for office space is the town centre, where office premises benefit from excellent rail and road connectivity, proximity to retail and leisure amenities, and a vibrant business environment that attracts a range of occupiers, including those in professional services, technology, and creative industries.

10.2.2 In recent years, demand for office space in Guildford has remained resilient, with businesses demonstrating a clear preference for well-located, high-quality, and adaptable premises. The market has seen a gradual shift towards more flexible and collaborative workspace solutions, reflecting changing working practices and the growing importance of the digital and knowledge economies. While vacancy rates have remained broadly in line with regional averages, there is evidence of a shortage of modern, Grade A space, particularly in the most accessible and desirable locations. This has placed upward pressure on rents and increased competition for the best quality stock.

10.2.3 Site assessments revealed that the best-performing office locations are in or near the town centre or have direct access to the A3. However, there is a limited quantum of stock in the town centre itself, which creates tensions with demand.

10.2.4 Looking ahead, the preferred scenario for employment land in Guildford projects a net additional requirement of approximately 58,400 sqm of office floorspace by 2045 (6.3 ha). This growth is expected to be driven by continued expansion in office-based sectors, underpinned by Guildford's strong economic fundamentals, its highly skilled workforce, and its reputation as a centre for innovation. The ability to provide a diverse range of high-quality, flexible workspace will be critical to supporting business growth, attracting new investment, and maintaining Guildford's competitive edge within the wider region. The gap analysis identifies a shortfall of 71,100 sqm of office space once floorspace currently under construction is delivered (7.4 ha). The gap analysis confirms that office supply will remain in deficit (5 ha, or 51,200 sqm) even if all pipeline (currently not implemented) and intensification opportunities are realised, highlighting the need for targeted interventions and the identification of sufficient employment land dedicated to office space to address supply gaps.

Industrial Space (E(g)(iii), B2, B8)

10.2.5 The industrial property market in Guildford is characterised by a more limited but strategically important supply of floorspace, with key concentrations located along the A3 corridor and within established employment areas on the edge of Guildford town centre. The latest published CoStar data shows there is approximately 297,000 sqm of industrial space across Guildford, of which 75% is used for storage and distribution (B8 use).

10.2.6 The current stock comprises a mix of light industrial units, general manufacturing premises, and distribution warehouses, serving a diverse range of occupiers from local service businesses to regional logistics operators. While some of the industrial stock is modern and well-maintained, a significant proportion consists of older units that may not fully meet the requirements of contemporary occupiers, particularly in terms of size, configuration, and access.

10.2.7 The assessment of designated employment sites indicates that the most successful industrial locations are those with good access to the strategic road network and capacity for intensification. New sites, like Burnt Common, present a great opportunity for Guildford to deliver new industrial floorspace in a highly desirable location, as well as an opportunity to release employment land, currently in industrial use, for alternative uses such as office activities (or mixed-use redevelopment).

10.2.8 Demand for industrial space in Guildford has remained robust, with consistently low vacancy rates and rising rents reflecting the constrained supply of available premises. The borough's strategic location, with excellent road links to London and the wider South East, has made it an attractive location for logistics, distribution, and high-value manufacturing activities. In particular, there has been strong interest in modern, well-located units that can support the needs of growing sectors such as advanced manufacturing, clean technologies, and e-commerce-related logistics.

10.2.9 Under the preferred scenario, Guildford is projected to require a net increase in industrial floorspace by 2045 of 20,800 sqm (or 4.6 ha), with the requirement anticipated to be driven by the demand for high-quality and flexible distribution units. The gap analysis identifies a shortfall of 17,200 sqm of industrial space (3.9 ha) once all floorspace under construction is delivered. The gap analysis suggests a potential over-supply (6.1 ha, or 27,600 sqm) if all pipeline (currently not implemented) and intensification opportunities are realised due to a decline in industrial (manufacturing) employment in Guildford. However, qualitative evidence points to ongoing shortages of suitable modern space, particularly in established locations with direct road access, and a need for continued investment in site quality and infrastructure.

Recommendations for Existing Employment Sites

10.2.10 Having assessed the condition of all designated employment sites in Guildford and having assessed the future demand for employment land, both quantitatively and qualitatively, Table 10-1 provides a summary of recommendations for those sites and whether they should be retained (as performing well in employment use), have their boundary adjusted (to reflect changes of use), considered for release or partial release and reprovision (if under-performing; or lost to alternative uses), or considered for colocation.

Table 10-1 Recommendations Employment Sites

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Current Use	Recommendation	Comment
1	Slyfield Industrial Estate	37.6	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B2; B8; Sui Generis	Retain and Intensify	Small number of poor quality and vacant properties suitable for redevelopment

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Current Use	Recommendation	Comment
2	North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale	10.1	E(g(iii); B2; B8; Sui Generis	Retain and Intensify	Small number of poor quality and under-used properties suitable for redevelopment
3	Riverway Industrial Estate etc at Peasmarsh	8.5	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B8	Retain with Adjustment of boundary to reflect partial loss to alternative uses	Presence of a care home on the employment site.
4	Woodbridge Meadows	10.4	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B2; B8; Sui Generis	Retain with Adjustment of boundary to reflect partial loss to alternative uses, Intensify through infill development and colocation	Partial loss to residential, presence of vacant land, potential for intensification and colocation
5	Merrow Lane	6.9	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B8; Sui Generis	Retain and Intensify	N/A
6	Quadram Park, Peasmarsh	2.6	E(g)(iii); B8	Retain	N/A
7	Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road	5.7	E(g)(i); Sui Generis	Retain with Adjustment of boundary to reflect partial loss to alternative uses	Presence of residential (to the south)
8	Henley Business Park, Normandy	7.9	E(g)(iii); B8	Retain	N/A
9	Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate	2.2	B8	Retain, intensify through infill development	Small opportunity to develop under-used car park
10	Midleton Road Industrial Estate	2.4	E(g)(iii); Sui Generis	Retain	N/A
11	Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field	1.9	B8	Retain and Intensify (or Relocate and Release)[93]	Under-used and low density industrial estate (excess car park and vacant properties) with low quality stock.
12	Burnt Common – London Road	10.5	B2; B8; Vacant Land	Retain and Intensify	Presence of vacant land available for development
13	57 and Liongate Ladymead	2.1	N/A	Release	Lost to residential
14	London Square, Cross Lane	1.8	E(g)(i)	Retain	N/A
15	The Pirbright Institute	15.8	E(g)(ii); Vacant Land	Retain	N/A
16	Surrey Research Park	27.9	E(g)(i); E(g)(ii); Vacant Land	Retain and Intensify	Presence of vacant land available for development, potential for redevelopment and intensification of dating stock in the longer term
17	Guildford Business Park	5.5	E(g)(i); Sui Generis; Vacant Land	Retain and Intensify	Presence of vacant land available for development
18	Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios Tannery Lane, Send	2.5	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B8; Vacant Land	Retain and Intensify	Presence of vacant land available for development

[93] Suitability of this site for alternative uses (relocate and release) will be limited by its location in a cul-de-sac, at the back of other employment sites.

Ref	Name	Size (ha)	Current Use	Recommendation	Comment
19	1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill	2.5	E(g)(i)	Retain	N/A
20	The Guildway, Portsmouth Road	3.9	E(g)(i)	Retain	N/A
21	The Courtyard, Wisley	0.2	N/A	Release	Lost to residential
22	Grange Court, Tongham	0.7	E(g)(i)	Retain	N/A
23	The Pines Trading Estate, Broad Street	1.7	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii); B8	Retain	N/A
24	31 Chertsey Street and 1-7 Stoke Road	0.4	E(g)(i)	Retain	N/A
25	65 Woodbridge Road	0.2	E(g)(i)	Retain with Adjustment of boundary to reflect partial loss to alternative uses	Partial loss to residential
26	Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court	0.4	E(g)(i), Sui Generis	Retain with Adjustment of boundary to reflect partial loss to alternative uses	Partial loss to residential
27	Broadford Business Park, Shalford	1.6	E(g)(i)	Retain	N/A
28	Home Farm, Loseley Park (east)	0.9	E(g)(i); E(g)(iii)	Retain	N/A
29	Home Farm, Loseley Park (west)	0.4	E(g)(iii)	Retain	N/A
30	Abbey Business Park, Eashing	0.9	E(g)(i)	Retain[94]	N/A

10.3 Policy Direction

10.3.1 A balanced and flexible approach to employment land management is recommended for Guildford. The Council should maintain a robust evidence base and monitoring framework, track changes in supply, demand, and permissions. Policy should avoid both over-protection and under-protection of sites, enabling the release or repurposing of land where justified by evidence, while safeguarding Strategic and Locally Significant Employment Sites unless relocated.

10.3.2 The Council should closely monitor losses of employment land to alternative uses, including residential and student accommodation, and ensure that such changes are justified by robust evidence. When no evidence to support the release of land (i.e. demand is substantially lower than assessed in this study; or higher density will enable delivery of additional floorspace on less land), the release of land should be prevented (i.e. no net loss). On sites where office developments are at risk from permitted development rights, the Council should consider the use of Article 4 Directions or other policy tools to retain employment capacity where justified – particularly in Guilford town centre.

10.3.3 Employment land policies should be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, including transport, digital connectivity, and utilities, to unlock growth and enhance the attractiveness of sites to occupiers. In appropriate locations, the Council should support mixed-use development that integrates employment, housing, and amenities, contributing to the creation of vibrant, sustainable communities.

[94] Site is under-used and could be considered for release (but conversion to residential is limited by flooding risk).

Office Space (E(g)(i), E(g)(ii))

10.3.4 For office uses, the Council should focus on protecting and enhancing core office clusters in and around Guildford town centre, recognising their role in supporting high-value employment and sustainable travel. Given the identified future requirement for further office floorspace in Guildford, it will be essential to identify sufficient land to accommodate this type of space and employment in the most suitable locations (i.e. close to public transport and amenities, such as in and around Guildford town centre).

10.3.5 Policy should encourage the refurbishment and retrofitting of existing office stock to meet MEES and market expectations, with an emphasis on sustainability, digital infrastructure, and adaptability for hybrid working. The provision of flexible, collaborative, and affordable workspace should be supported, particularly for SMEs and the creative and digital sectors. The Council should also facilitate the timely delivery of extant permissions and pipeline developments, and regularly monitor allocated sites to ensure they remain deliverable and aligned with market needs. Priority should also be given to the delivery of energy-efficient, flexible, and sustainable office space, especially in central locations and established business parks.

10.3.6 Stakeholder engagement and market baseline research have indicated a concentration of current demand on small and medium-sized units (100 – 1,000 sqm), collaborative and serviced spaces, and adaptable layouts to meet the needs of SMEs and knowledge-based occupiers. This type of property is currently under-supplied in Guildford.

10.3.7 Strategic sites such as Surrey Research Park, Guildford Business Park, and London Square are recommended for retention and intensification due to their strong market performance, accessibility, and capacity for further development. Some sites, such as Woodbridge Meadows and Guildford Industrial Estate, offer potential for redevelopment, if the current industrial uses can be relocated on alternative sites, with opportunities to deliver mixed-use developments integrating employment, housing, and amenities. This could support the provision of additional office space near the town centre whilst creating vibrant, sustainable communities.

10.3.8 Core key office clusters, particularly in and around Guildford town centre, should be protected against redevelopment for alternative uses, to guarantee no net loss.

Industrial Space (E(g)(iii), B2, B8)

10.3.9 For industrial uses, it is recommended that the Council safeguards its strategic industrial sites, particularly those with good access to the strategic road network and potential for intensification. Given the strong demand for logistics space, the Council should ensure sufficient supply of land for B8 uses, focusing on locations with direct access to the A3 and other key corridors.

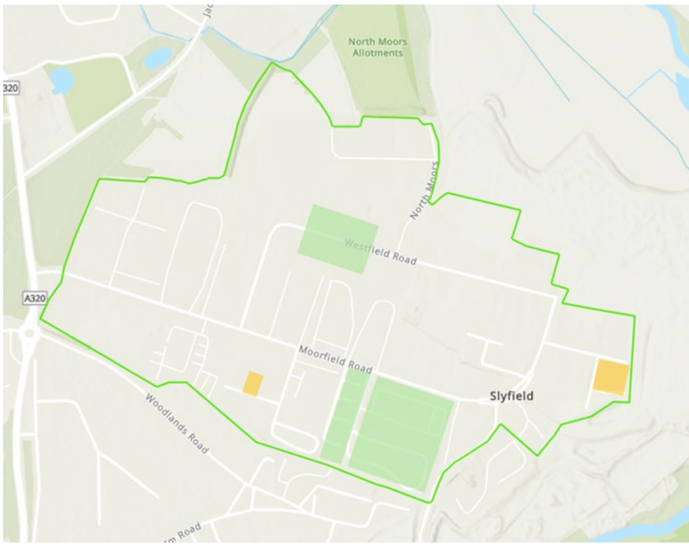
10.3.10 Stakeholder engagement and market baseline research have indicated a strong demand for Grade A specification (high-quality materials, good natural light, secure yards, and parking) in modern and flexible units, including hybrid units (light industrial/distribution and office mix). The majority of the demand is for small to medium units (100 – 1,000 sqm) with some demand for slightly larger units (up to 5,000 sqm) to support regional distribution activities. The provision of solar PV, EV charging, and low-carbon heating/cooling as well as on-site management security and shared facilities (i.e. meeting rooms, canteen) are also becoming increasingly important, particularly for larger businesses.

10.3.11 New industrial developments should ensure that sites provide adequate parking, servicing, and operational flexibility (including 24-hour use) to meet occupier needs – which are key considerations for warehousing and logistics occupiers (driving future employment growth in the industrial sector in Guildford). Qualitative assessment has confirmed that demand for modern developments, energy-efficient premises, is central to future occupiers' requirements. Similarly to office space, policy should support the retrofitting of industrial stock to meet MEES and consider and encourage new developments to achieve higher EPC ratings. Policy should support the development of modern, energy-efficient industrial and manufacturing premises, with a focus on clean growth sectors such as life sciences and advanced manufacturing.

10.3.12 Policy should encourage the repurposing of industrial stock on strategic sites, from B2 to B8 use, in order to respond to the shift in industrial employment forecasted in Guildford i.e. growth in logistics alongside a decline in manufacturing activities. Where existing industrial sites are underperforming or subject to high pressure for alternative uses, the Council should plan for the managed relocation of businesses to new or expanded sites, enabling the release of land for housing or mixed-use redevelopment where appropriate. These sites include parts of Woodbridge Meadows, parts of Woodbridge Park (Woodbridge Road) and Guildford Industrial Estate.

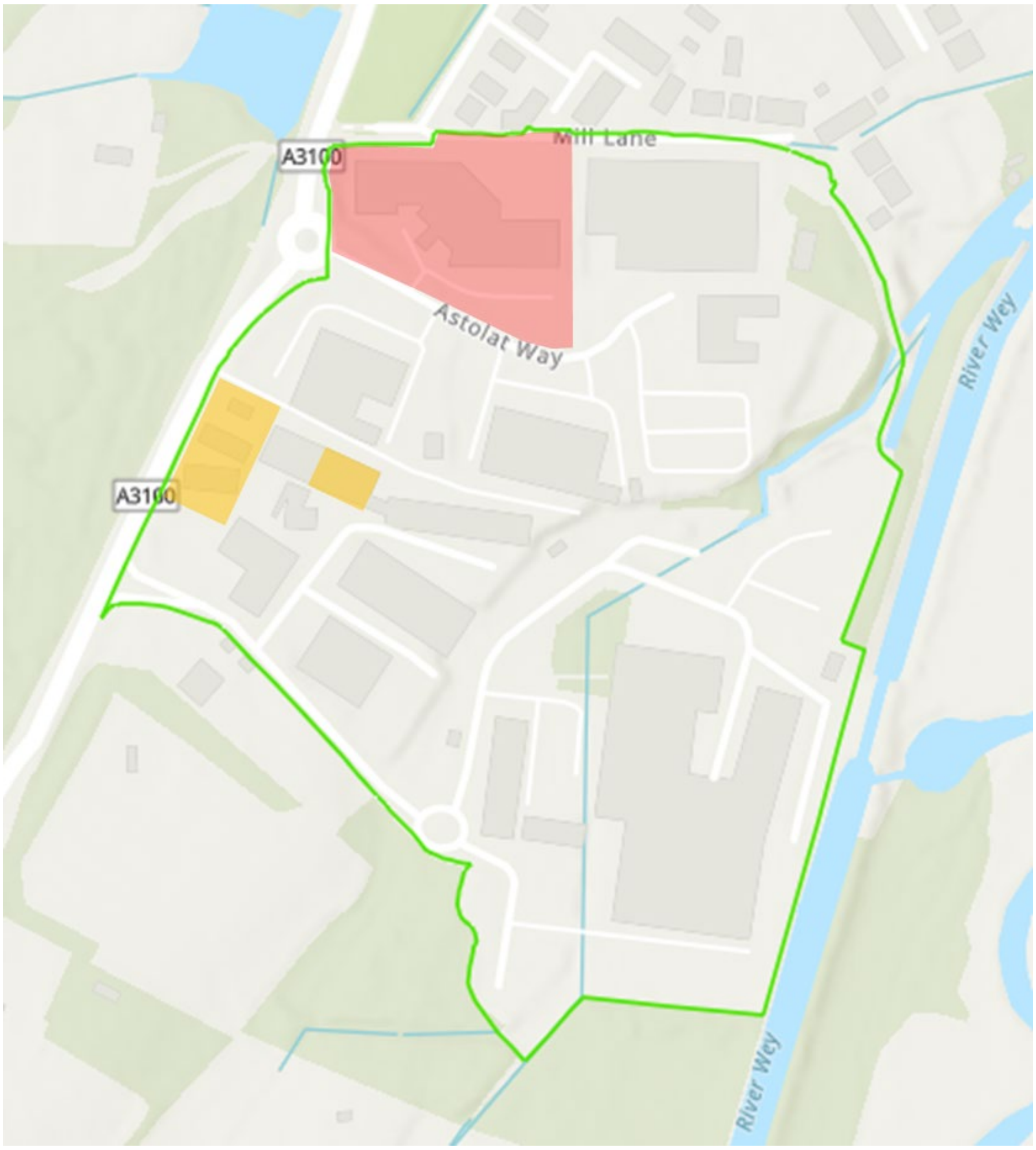
Appendix A – Mapping Site Assessment

1	Slyfield Industrial Estate			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

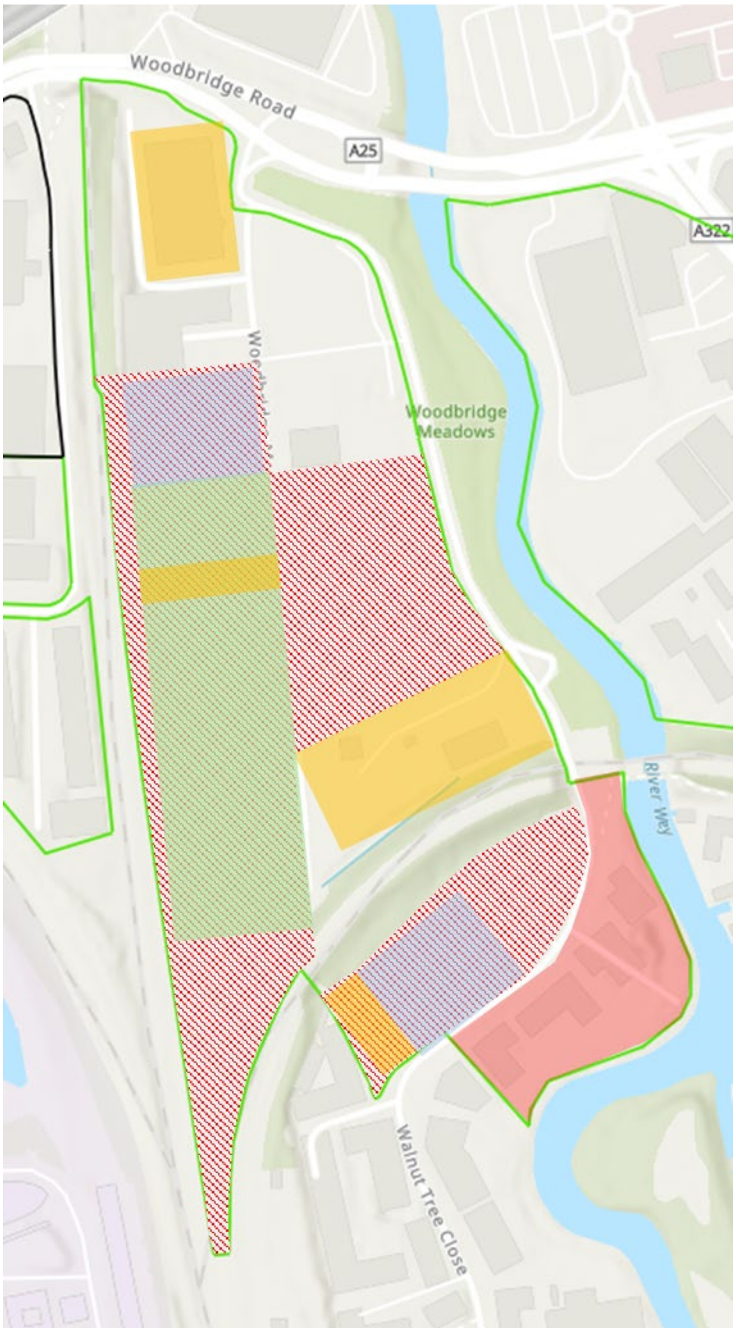


2	North and South of Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

3	Riverway Industrial Estate etc at Peasmarsh			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



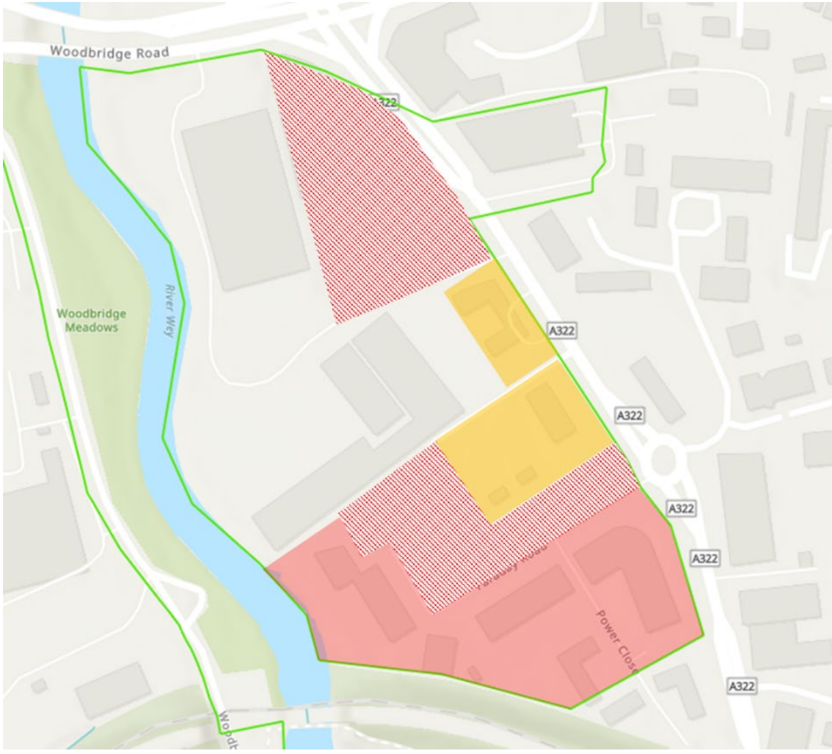
4	Woodbridge Meadows			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



5	Merrow Lane			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

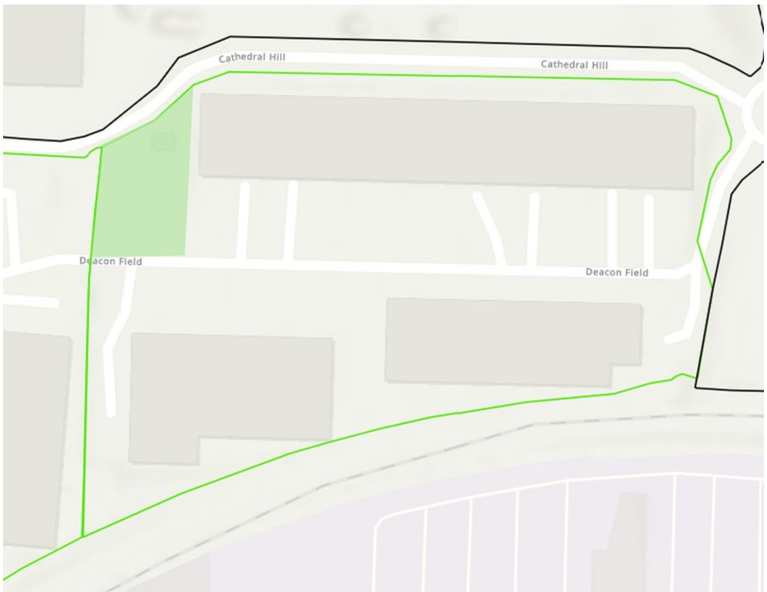
6	Quadram Park, Peasmarsh			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

7	Woodbridge Park, Woodbridge Road			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



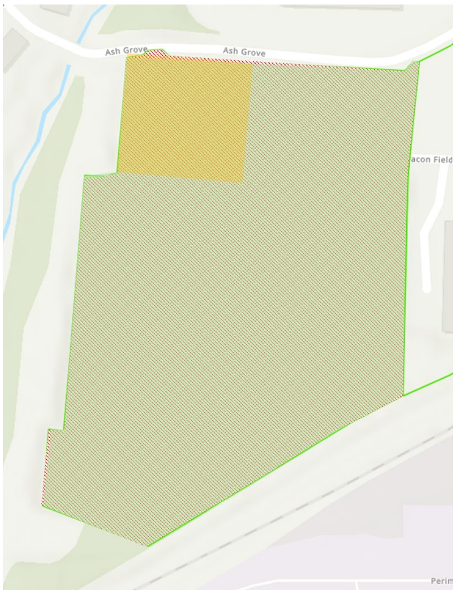
8	Henley Business Park, Normandy			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

9	Cathedral Hill Industrial Estate			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



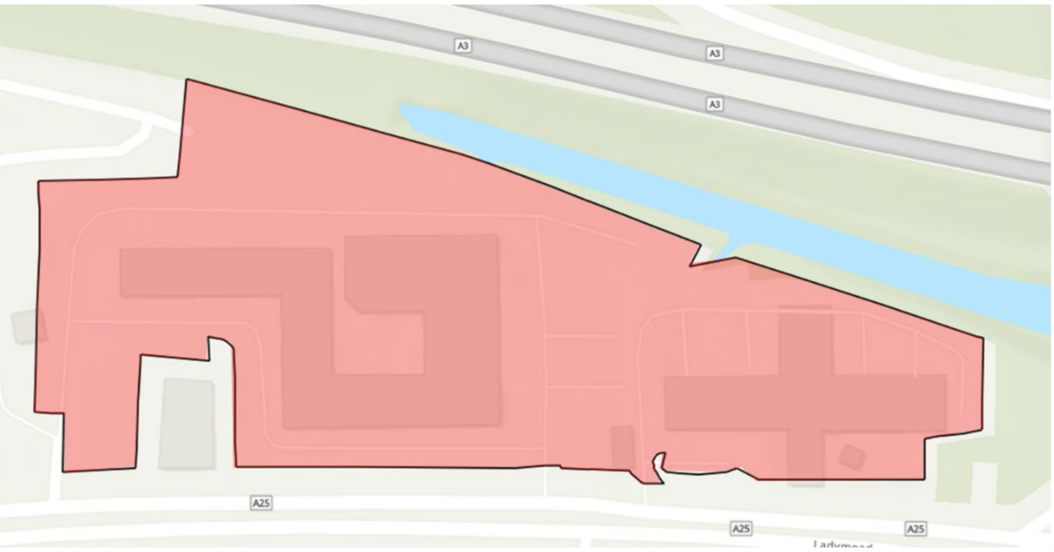
10	Midleton Road Industrial Estate			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

11	Guildford Industrial Estate, Deacon Field			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

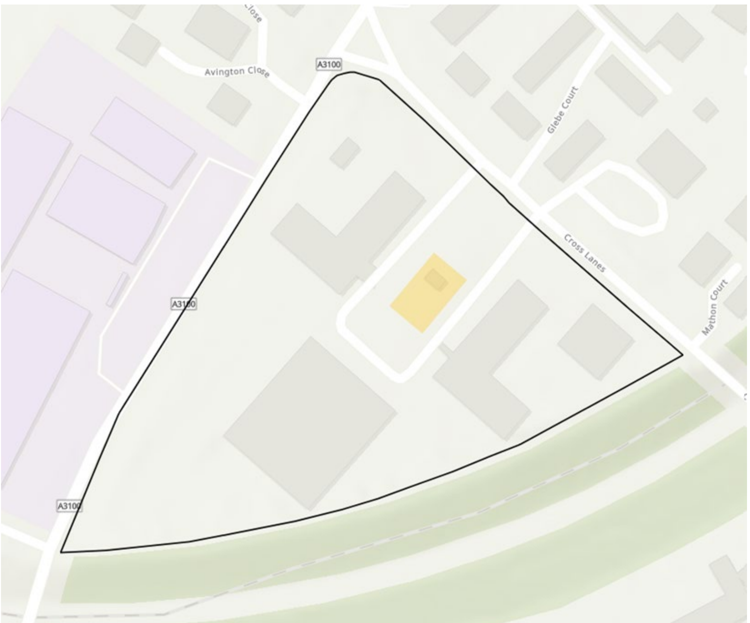


12	Burnt Common – London Road			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

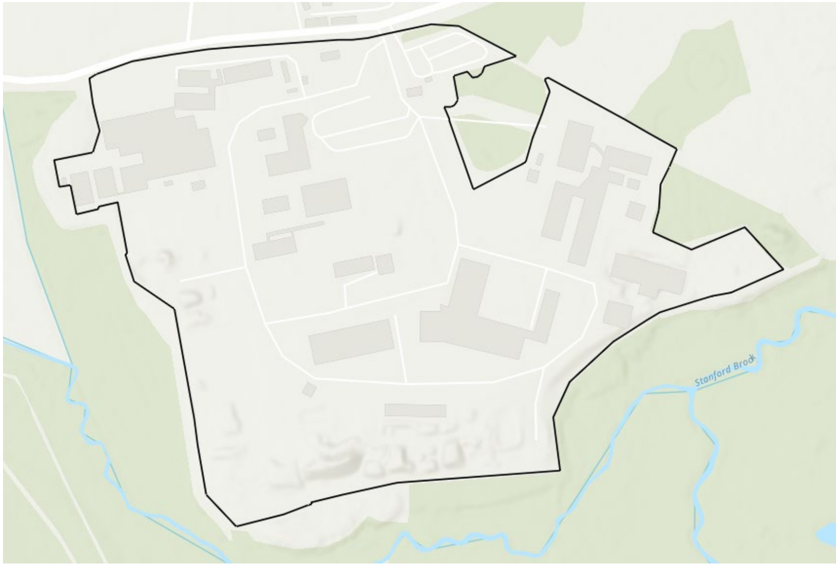
13	**57 and Liongate Ladymead**			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



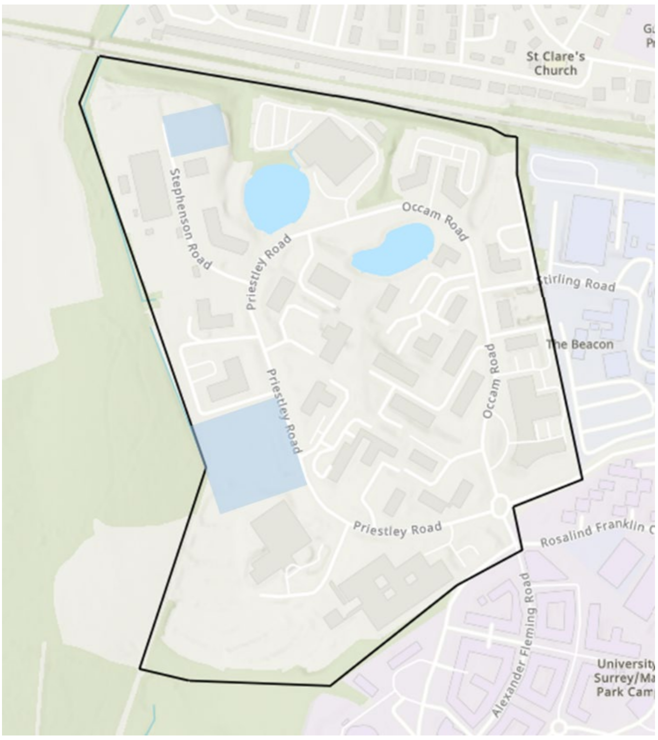
14	**London Square, Cross Lane**			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



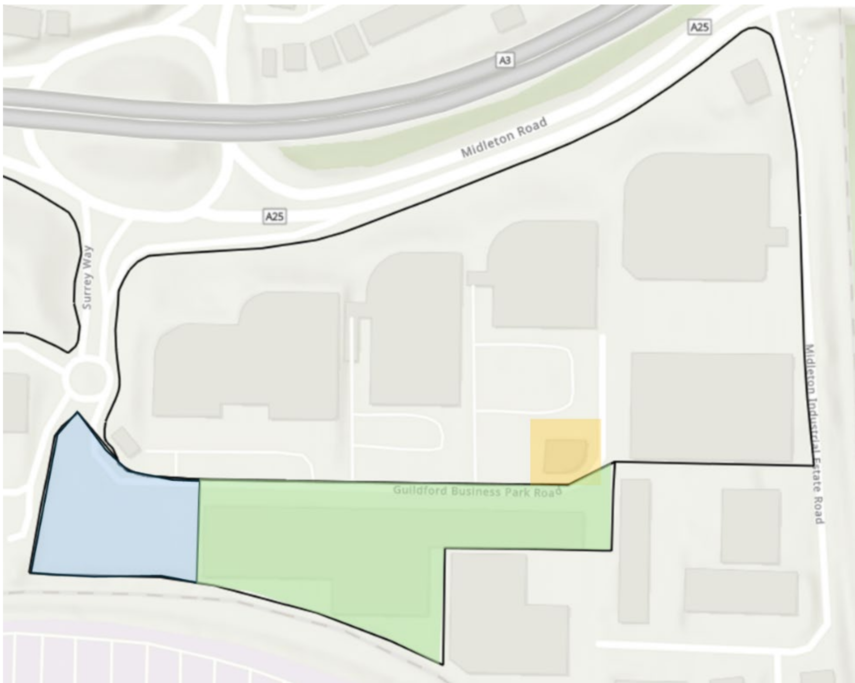
15	The Pirbright Institute			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



16	Surrey Research Park			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

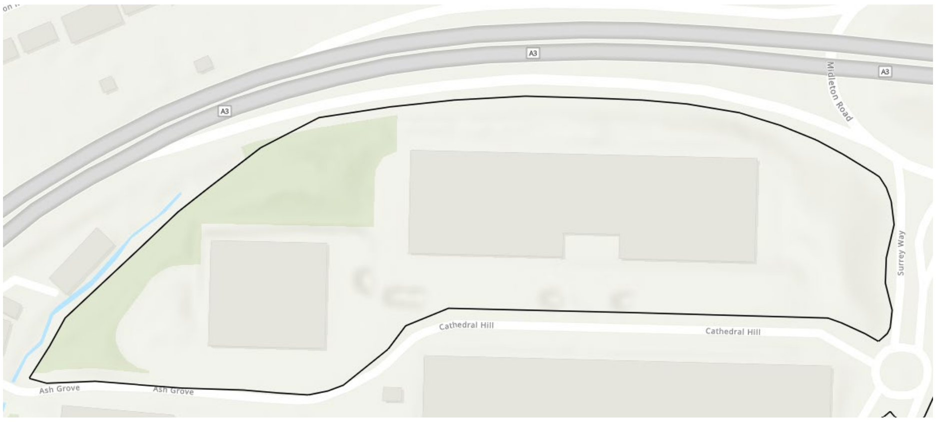


17	Guildford Business Park			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



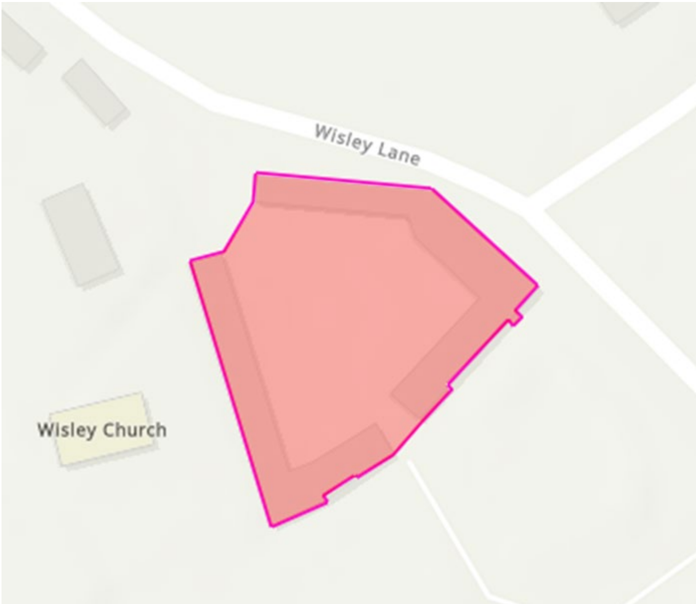
18	Send Business Centre/Tannery Studios Tannery Lane, Send			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

19	**1000, 2000 and 3000 Cathedral Hill**			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

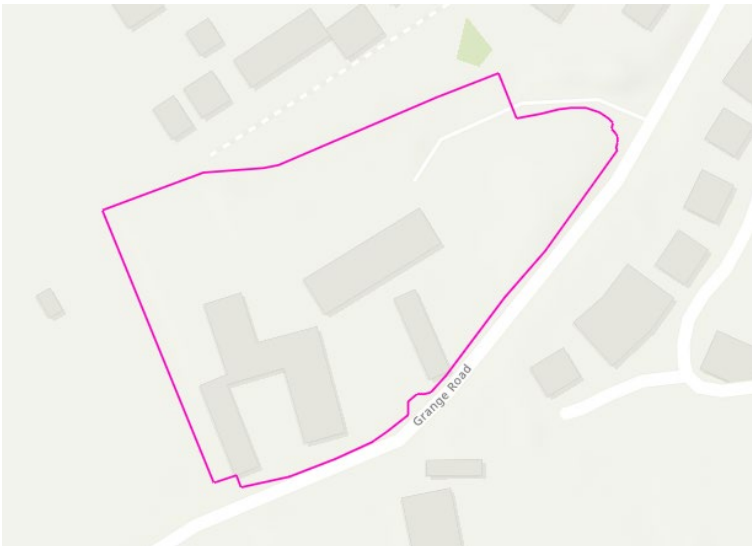


20	**The Guildway, Portsmouth Road**			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

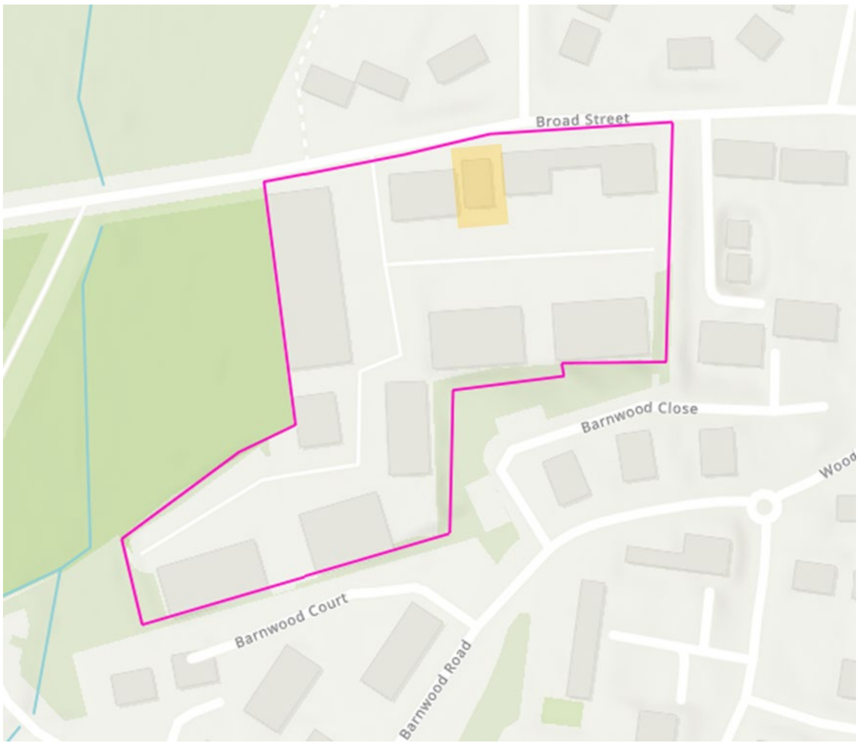
21	The Courtyard, Wisley			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



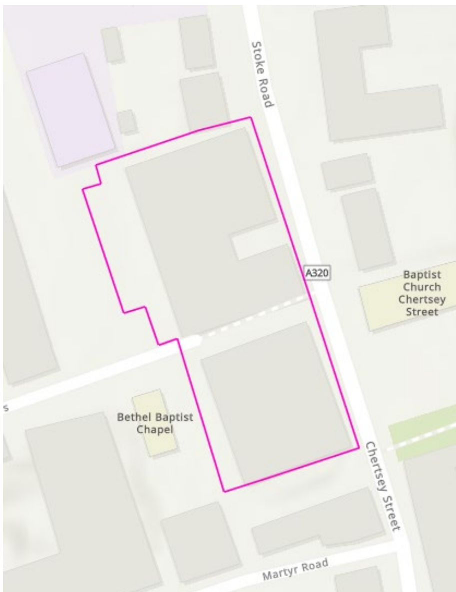
22	Grange Court, Tongham			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



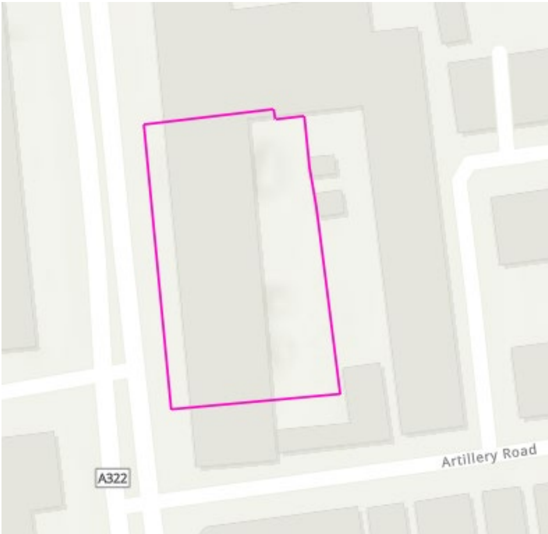
23	The Pines Trading Estate, Broad Street			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



24	31 Chertsey Street and 1-7 Stoke Road			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



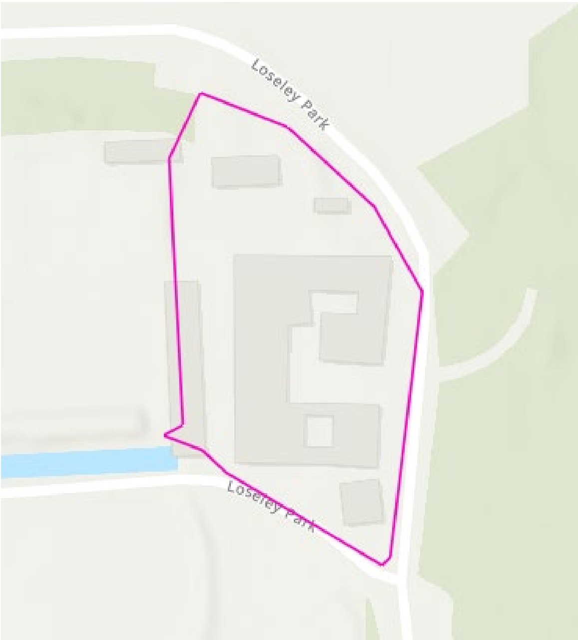
25	65 Woodbridge Road			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



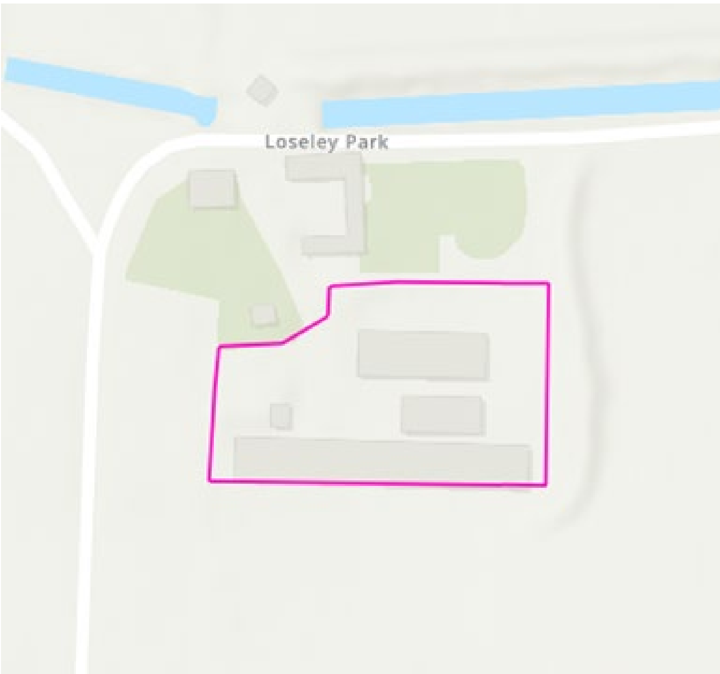
26	Andrew House, College House, Stoke House, Leapale House, Bell Court			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

27	Broadford Business Park, Shalford			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

28	Home Farm, Loseley Park (east)			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



29	Home Farm, Loseley Park (west)			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use



30	Abbey Business Park, Eashing			
Vacant land	Opportunity for redevelopment / colocation / intensification	Opportunity for redevelopment / release / mixed use	Loss to alternative uses (adjustment to employment site boundary)	Presence of non-employment use

Appendix B – Planning Pipeline

Sites with planning permission or prior approval incl. net gain or loss of Use Class B2, B8, or E(g)(i, ii, or iii) employment floorspace (as of 31 March 2025).

Applications identified in orange have been discarded as already accounted for under a different category (i.e. existing stock; vacant land). Justifications for those are provided below the table.

Permission Reference	Address	Description	Granted Date	Initially Started Date	Lapses Date	U/C E(g)(i)/B1a	N/S E(g)(i)/B1a	U/C E(g)(ii)/B1b	N/S E(g)(ii)/B1b	U/C E(g)(iii)/B1(	N/S E(g)(iii)/B1(	U/C B2 Flsp	N/S B2 Flsp	U/C B8 Flsp	N/S B8 Flsp
20/P/00816	Burnt Common Nurseries, London Road, Send, Woking, GU23 7LN	Proposed commercial development comprising of 3,303sqm floorspace for research and development (Class E(g) (ii)), light industrial (Use Class E(g)(iii)), general industrial (B2) and storage and distribution (B8) uses, internal access road, 110 parking spaces and overflow parking/external storage, 18 delivery vehicle bays, bicycle parking, bin stores and landscaping including attenuation ponds	10/06/2022		10/06/2025	0	0	0	825	0	825	0	825	0	825
20/P/01057	White Horse Yard, High Street, Ripley, GU23 6BB	Erection of 26 houses and flats, associated landscaping, open space, access and parking following demolition of buildings including the partial demolition of the listed curtilage wall.	21/02/2023		21/02/2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-253	0	0
21/P/00216	Birmingham Farm, Blackheath Lane, Albury, Guildford, GU59AT	Change of use and conversion of existing agricultural barns to new workshop (Use Class E) and storage space (Use Class B8) together with new car parking and all ancillary following the demolition of one existing agricultural barn.	02/07/2021	01/07/2024	02/07/2024	0	0	0	0	353	0	0	0	425	0
21/P/00956	Lantern House & Carriage House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4TX	Redevelopment for a mixed-use scheme comprising a part 5, 6 and 7 storey building including purpose-built student accommodation bedrooms (Use Class Sui Generis) and 683.75 m2 of commercial office space (Use Class E) at the Ground floor identified to be provided as incubator space. Alongside the provision of, a landscaped courtyard area, and provision of 4 no. disabled parking spaces and cycle parking for both the student and commercial use following demolition of the existing buildings (as amended by plans and information received on 05/08/2021 and 25/10/2021).	09/03/2022	01/06/2023	09/03/2025	-1189	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Permission Reference	Address	Description	Granted Date	Initially Started Date	Lapses Date	U/C E(g)(i)/B1a	N/S E(g)(i)/B1a	U/C E(g)(ii)/B1b	N/S E(g)(ii)/B1b	U/C E(g)(iii)/B1(	N/S E(g)(iii)/B1(	U/C B2 Flsp	N/S B2 Flsp	U/C B8 Flsp	N/S B8 Flsp
21/W/00094	57, Ladymead, Guildford, GU1 1BZ	Prior approval for the proposed change of use from office to residential providing 108 units	27/04/2023	14/03/2025	27/04/2026	-13846	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
22/P/01079	Land to the south end of Burnt Common Nurseries, London Road, Send, GU23 7JX	Proposed commercial development comprising of 4,170sqm floorspace for light industrial and research and development (Use Class E(g)), general industrial (B2) and storage and distribution (B8) uses, internal access road, 55 car parking spaces, 6 HGV delivery vehicle bays, bicycle parking, bin stores and landscaping.	25/09/2023	28/02/2024	25/09/2023	0	0	1390	0	0	0	1390	0	1390	0
22/P/01175	Land at Wisley Airfield, Hatch Lane, Ockham, GU23 6NU	Outline Planning Application (all matters reserved) for the phased development of part of a residential-led, new settlement comprising up to 1,730 dwellings (Class C3 use), 8 gypsy and travellers pitches, up to 100 units of housing for older people (Class C2 use)), a mixed-use commercial local centre with public square, community hub and employment area alongside other commercial mixed-use neighbourhood centres located throughout and an employment area, (Classes E, F2(b), B2/B8, and sui-generis uses subject to specific planning permissions), a secondary school, a primary school, (Class F1(a)), up to 2 nurseries,(Class E (f)), also incorporating green infrastructure (including parks, neighbourhood greens and sports pitches (Class F2(c) and associated pavilion (Classes E(b) and (d), F2(b)), SANG other infrastructure, (Class E(b)), part of Wisley Lane Diversion between Ockham Interchange roundabout and realigned section of Wisley Lane Diversion, a vehicular / cycle / pedestrian sustainable transport corridor (linking the proposed Wisley Lane Diversion roundabout to Old Lane) and associated infrastructure and earthworks at land at the former Wisley Airfield (with construction	28/05/2024	08/07/2025	28/05/2027	0	2300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2500

Permission Reference	Address	Description	Granted Date	Initially Started Date	Lapses Date	U/C E(g)(i)/B1a	N/S E(g)(i)/B1a	U/C E(g)(ii)/B1b	N/S E(g)(ii)/B1b	U/C E(g)(iii)/B1(	N/S E(g)(iii)/B1(	U/C B2 Flsp	N/S B2 Flsp	U/C B8 Flsp	N/S B8 Flsp
		access from Ockham Interchange and Elm Corner).													
22/P/01236	Ladymead Retail Park, Europa Park Road, Guildford, GU1 1AJ	Proposed erection of 1no. building for parcel collection and drop-off facility (use class B8) and associated works.	26/01/2023		26/01/2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	123
22/P/01768	68, High Street, Guildford, GU1 3ES	Erection of roof extension and conversion of first and second floors from office storage space (Class E) to five flats (Class C3), reconfiguration of rear courtyard and provision of ancillary refuse and cycle storage at ground level	18/04/2023		18/04/2026	0	-411	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
22/P/01982	3-5, Woodbridge Meadows, Guildford	Erection of office/ light industrial/ warehouse space within Class E(g) and Class B8 as flexible enterprise/ business units with associated plant, car and cycle parking, landscaping, access and associated works.	12/04/2024		12/04/2027	0	1209	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1209
22/W/00085	Quarry Court, Lime Quarry Mews, Guildford, GU1 2RD	Prior notification under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for a proposed change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to install two flats into the existing bungalow-style building.	20/12/2022		20/12/2025	0	-596	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23/P/00038	Surrey Hills Storage, The Barn, Albury Sandpit, Shere Road, Albury, Guildford, GU5 9BW	Erection of a lean-to extension to existing building for storage (Use Class B8) (amended plans received 23/02/23 and 10/03/23)	03/07/2023		03/07/2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	175
23/P/00046	Tangley House, Postford Mill, Mill Lane, Chilworth, Guildford, GU4 8RT	Change of use of existing Class E Business unit to four 2 bedroom Class C3 residential units.	19/02/2024		19/02/2027	0	-425	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23/P/00452	White Lyon House, Perry Hill, Worplesdon,	Change of use of public house (Sui Generis) and conversion to form an office (Use Class E(g)(i)) and 5no. apartments (3 x 1 bed, 1 x 2 bed and 1 x 3 bed) (Class C3), erection of first floor rear	14/02/2025		14/02/2028	0	552	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Permission Reference	Address	Description	Granted Date	Initially Started Date	Lapses Date	U/C E(g)(i)/B1a	N/S E(g)(i)/B1a	U/C E(g)(ii)/B1b	N/S E(g)(ii)/B1b	U/C E(g)(iii)/B1(	N/S E(g)(iii)/B1(	U/C B2 Flsp	N/S B2 Flsp	U/C B8 Flsp	N/S B8 Flsp
	Guildford, GU3 3RE	extension and bin store following demolition of existing detached double garage, removal of existing extraction system, and associated works (amended plans received 08/08/2024; description of development amended 08/08/2024).													
23/P/00473	Unit 3a, Kings Court, Burrows Lane, Gomshall, Guildford, GU5 9QE	Change of use of part of building (Use Class E) to two x 1 bedroom flats (C3) including minor fenestration changes and associated minor external alterations.	17/08/2023	04/07/2024	17/08/2025	-213	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23/P/00744	Weston Yard, Weston Yard, Albury, Guildford, GU5 9AF	Extension of office building	20/07/2023		20/07/2026	0	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23/P/00976	4 Guildford Business Park, Guildford Business Park Road, Guildford, GU2 8SG	Demolition of Building 4 and associated decked car park and the erection of two buildings, subdivided into three units for flexible light industrial (Use Class E), general industrial (Use Class B2) and storage and distribution (Use Class B8) uses together with ancillary offices and associated car parking and landscaping.	11/10/2024		11/10/2027	0	-1345	0	0	0	2230	0	2230	0	2230
23/P/00984	19, North Street, Guildford, GU1 4AF	Proposed alterations to existing building to include the subdivision of the ground floor into two class E uses (bank and retail / food / beverage), the addition of a new second floor (existing first and new second floors to be in Class E office use), together with fenestration and external and internal changes.	28/07/2023		28/07/2026	0	366	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23/P/02015	Hepworth Garage, Horsham Road, Shalford, Guildford, GU3 8DQ	Erection of pair of two bedroom semi-detached units and a row of three bedroom x three terrace properties (Revised plans received 4th June 2024 - Amended description)	20/08/2024		20/08/2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-455	0	0
23/P/02138	Bus Depot, Leas Road, Guildford, GU1 4QT	Outline planning permission for demolition of existing building, erection of an office building (Use Class E), with a maximum height of 14.1 metres and lift overrun, including car and cycle parking, with access, layout and scale to be determined and appearance and landscape reserved for future consideration.	04/03/2025		04/03/2028	0	947	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Permission Reference	Address	Description	Granted Date	Initially Started Date	Lapses Date	U/C E(g)(i)/B1a	N/S E(g)(i)/B1a	U/C E(g)(ii)/B1b	N/S E(g)(ii)/B1b	U/C E(g)(iii)/B1(	N/S E(g)(iii)/B1(	U/C B2 Flsp	N/S B2 Flsp	U/C B8 Flsp	N/S B8 Flsp
23/W/00023	Riverworks, Mary Road, Guildford, GU1 4QU	Prior notification under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class T of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) for change of use from an office to a state funded 16 - 19 year old specialist maths school	26/05/2023		26/05/2026	0	-3271	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24/P/00542	Land adjacent to Vale Croft, Lysons Avenue, Ash Vale, GU12 5QF	Extension of Buildings A and B including raising of roofs and associated works for retained use as mechanical workshop for vehicle services and repairs. Widening of dropped kerb. Erection of fencing and gates along Lysons Avenue, alterations to surface finishes, and retrospective consent for detached reception building for use as reception to facilitate sales & acquisition of motor vehicles (Building C) and metal posts along boundaries and associated works. Use Classes to be as existing consisting of two independent use classes sharing a main site access point.	11/03/2025		11/03/2028	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0
24/P/00845	60, Chertsey Street, Guildford, GU1 4HL	Change of use of office building (Class E) to residential dwellinghouse (Class C3)	14/02/2025		14/02/2028	0	-96	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24/P/01250	Eashing Farm, Eashing Lane, Godalming, GU7 2QB	Erection of steel framed outbuilding for business use [Class E] following the partial demolition of existing outbuilding.	26/03/2025		26/03/2028	0	777	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24/P/01323	Warehouse Building adjoining, 285, Stoughton Road, Guildford, GU2 9PR	Demolition of existing B8 industrial unit and construction of new flexible class E use falling within G (i)(ii)(iii). (amended plans received 10 January 2025)	31/01/2025		31/01/2028	0	164	0	164	0	164	0	0	0	-307
24/P/01390	3 and 4, Station Approach, Ash Vale, Guildford, GU12 5LP	Change of use from retail to office at 3 Station Approach and from flats to HMO at 3 & 4 Station Approach, alterations to elevations, new dormers, removal of chimney stacks, erection of a double garage and all associated landscaping works plus formation of a new access off Chart House Road.	27/02/2025		27/02/2028	0	-86	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24/W/00037	71-72, North Street, Guildford, GU1 4AW	Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as	06/06/2024		06/06/2027	0	-272	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Permission Reference	Address	Description	Granted Date	Initially Started Date	Lapses Date	U/C E(g)(i)/B1a	N/S E(g)(i)/B1a	U/C E(g)(ii)/B1b	N/S E(g)(ii)/B1b	U/C E(g)(iii)/B1(	N/S E(g)(iii)/B1(	U/C B2 Flsp	N/S B2 Flsp	U/C B8 Flsp	N/S B8 Flsp
		amended) - Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA for change of use of the first floor of the property to three flats - 2no. one bed and 1no. two bed.													
24/W/00071	Duncan House, High Street, Ripley, Woking, GU23 6AY	Prior notification under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for a proposed change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to convert the first floor to 2 x 1 bedroom residential flats.	13/09/2024	31/10/2024	13/09/2027	-110	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24/W/00084	Norwich House, 14, North Street, Guildford, GU1 4AF	Prior notification under Part 3, Schedule 2, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for the change of use of the third floor of building from Class E (Business) to Class C3 (5 residential dwellings).	28/10/2024		28/10/2027	0	-302	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24/W/00105	Oxto Energy Limited, First Floor Rear, 173A, High Street, Guildford, GU1 3AJ	Prior notification under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for a proposed change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to convert the first floor to 2 x 1 bedroom residential flats.	17/01/2025		17/01/2028	0	-149	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25/W/00007	First Floor Front, 173a, High Street, Guildford, GU1 3AJ	Prior Approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for a proposed change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to convert the existing space to form 4 apartments.	31/03/2025		31/03/2028	0	-158	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25/W/00008	171a, High Street, Guildford, GU1 3AJ	Prior approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for a proposed change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to convert the existing space to form 6 apartments.	31/03/2025		31/03/2028	0	-277	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25/W/00009	Second Floor, 173a, High Street, Guildford, GU1 3AJ	Prior approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for a proposed change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E)	31/03/2025		31/03/2028	0	-151	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Permission Reference	Address	Description	Granted Date	Initially Started Date	Lapses Date	U/C E(g)(i)/B1a	N/S E(g)(i)/B1a	U/C E(g)(ii)/B1b	N/S E(g)(ii)/B1b	U/C E(g)(iii)/B1(	N/S E(g)(iii)/B1(c)	U/C B2 Flsp	N/S B2 Flsp	U/C B8 Flsp	N/S B8 Flsp
		to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) to convert the existing space to form 3 apartments.													

Application discarded from the Planning Pipeline and justification:

Application Number	Justification
20/P/00816	Site to the west of existing B8 space (Burnt Common Distribution Centre / Realize). This site is under construction (at the time of visit). Units have already been marketed and their floorspace is accounted for under existing supply (current vacant floorspace).
21/P/00956	The office floorspace on this site has already been discounted from the existing floorspace. Whilst this application is reported as being “under construction”, the site is currently vacant and marketed as development opportunity for mixed use (including office space). This site has been included under Vacant Site.
22/P/01768	Reported as retail space in CoStar, therefore office space is not included in the existing floorspace. Implementation of this planning application will not impact figures presented in this study.
22/W/00085	Whilst conversion has not started yet, the office floorspace is no longer reported on CoStar and therefore has already been discarded from the existing floorspace.
24/W/00071	The office floorspace has already been discarded from the existing floorspace in CoStar (reported in this study).

aecom.com