GL Hearn
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Economic Development Need Assessment Part 3: Economic growth from a Garden Village development

Bassetlaw District Council

Final Report

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Prepared by

GL Hearn
65 Gresham Street
London EC2V 7NQ

T +44 (0)20 7851 4900
glhearn.com

Public

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DATE	ORIGINATORS	APPROVED
14 December 2018	Matt Kinghan Planning Director	Hannah McDonald Senior Planner

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Bassetlaw District Council commissioned GL Hearn to produce an Economic Development Needs Assessment for the District. This Part 3 report considers the potential economic growth associated with a garden village development in the district. It complements the Part 1 (Needs Assessment) and Part 2 (Growth Assessment) reports.

1.2 Bassetlaw District Council is exploring the scope to deliver a new garden village in excess of 1,000 homes, suitably located to generate the maximum benefit for the district. The district's vision for garden villages advocates transformational long-term housing growth, ensuring that real benefits are secured from the outset, including quality design with cutting-edge technology, local employment opportunities, accessible green space near homes and a high quality public realm.

1.3 This part of the Needs Assessment explores the degree of employment land associated with a garden village and whether such a village could act as a driver to attract new inward investment, capable of providing employment and business growth in sectors currently under-represented in Bassetlaw and its wider FEMA (including higher end technologies, business parks, office space and rural enterprise).

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2 ECONOMIC GROWTH FROM A GARDEN VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

Typical Requirements

2.1 Significant residential growth such as a new garden village will inevitably require a component of employment land in order to provide local employment and services as well as capturing latent or potential wider demand. Given the nature of the site and the local economy this will predominantly be in the form of industrial and warehouse / distribution uses as the need for office space will generally look towards the established town centre locations, albeit reference is made to offices in isolation.

2.2 Existing evidence from around the UK (Central Bedfordshire[1] and Tandridge[2]) suggests that settlements of around 5,000 dwellings will average an employment land provision of 50-60 sq m (total land take) per dwelling whereas smaller settlements of around 2,000 dwellings average around 20 sqm per dwelling. The relationship tends to be convex as the range will increase in response to the settlement size as greater levels of critical mass are achieved. Conversely, smaller settlements will likely have a smaller ratio.

2.3 In order to assess the applicability of the ratios assessed in other locations to Bassetlaw, a number of smaller settlements in the district have been identified and analysed in terms of the dwelling and employment provision (within a close proximity).

2.4 The table below sets out the quantum of employment land in settlements in Bassetlaw with dwelling count of at least 1,000 and a population of 2,500 persons or more. Examples are also drawn from other parts of the country in order to test the local dynamic.

2.5 Carlton in Lindrick, Tuxford, and Harworth / Bircotes all have dwellings of 1,000 or more (according to 2011 Census data). These smaller settlements in Bassetlaw all show an employment land – dwelling ratio provision higher than other areas compared in the UK. This is assumed to represent the industrial heritage and economic make up of Bassetlaw.

2.6 It suggests that future settlements are also likely to achieve a strong ratio of employment land to dwellings, particularly in those locations with a proximity to the A1.

[1] 'Development Gain and Economic Benefit from East West Rail in Central Bedfordshire', GL Hearn 2017
[2] 'Tandridge Economic Needs Assessment Update', GL Hearn 2017

Table 1: Settlement / Employment Land Relationship

Settlement	District	Dwellings	Population	Employment Land (ha)	Employment Land / Dwelling	Comment
Carlton in Lindrick	Bassetlaw	2,500	5,600	10.5 (Lawn Road)	42 sqm	
Tuxford	Bassetlaw	1,200	2,600	30.6 (Ollerton Rd, Ashvale Rd, Lodge Lane)	255 sqm	A number of employment areas with A1 proximity
Harworth / Bircotes	Bassetlaw	3,500	8,000	42.4 (Blyth Road West / South / East)	121 sqm	A number of employment areas with A1 proximity
Copthorne, Godstone, Westerham, Edenbridge	Tandridge	1,900 – 3,300	4,500 – 8,900	3.9 – 18	27 sqm (av.)	Average of 20 sqm for smaller settlements
Sandy, Biggleswade	Central Bed-fordshire	4,900 – 6,900	11,700 – 16,500	29 - 45	59 – 65 sqm	A1(M) proximity, larger settlements

Source: GL Hearn / Census 2011

2.7 Taking an average of the total dwellings and employment land considered in the Bassetlaw analysis above, suggests around 100 sqm of employment land per dwelling might be reasonable to plan for, and that along the A1 this could be exceeded.

2.8 For a settlement of 1,000 dwellings this would result in a minimum of 10 ha of employment land but a positive growth strategy could reasonably expect up to 20 ha of land – as in the case of Tuxford. Consideration will need to be given to the phasing of development, competition, growth of agglomeration and any clustering, as well as workforce population.

2.9 These requirements need to be balanced with the existing localised employment market as well as wider competing locations. The new settlement is likely to be in proximity to some existing areas – for example if it were near to Tuxford then it would already have a high level of hinterland employment land. This might temper future growth towards the lower end of the range.

2.10 If a new settlement were of a greater scale than 1,000 homes, for example 4,000 – 5,000, I would not necessarily follow the logic of a factored employment land increase in any initial land allocation. The localised population and labour could support up a ratio of 100sqm of employment land per dwelling *in the long term* balancing overall demand in the district. As the A1 proximity itself is in part a driver of demand then alternative locations already exist (ie Harworth). As a result 10ha of employment land is considered appropriate for a new settlement of up to 5,000 dwellings with potential future growth subject to monitoring.

Extraordinary Requirements

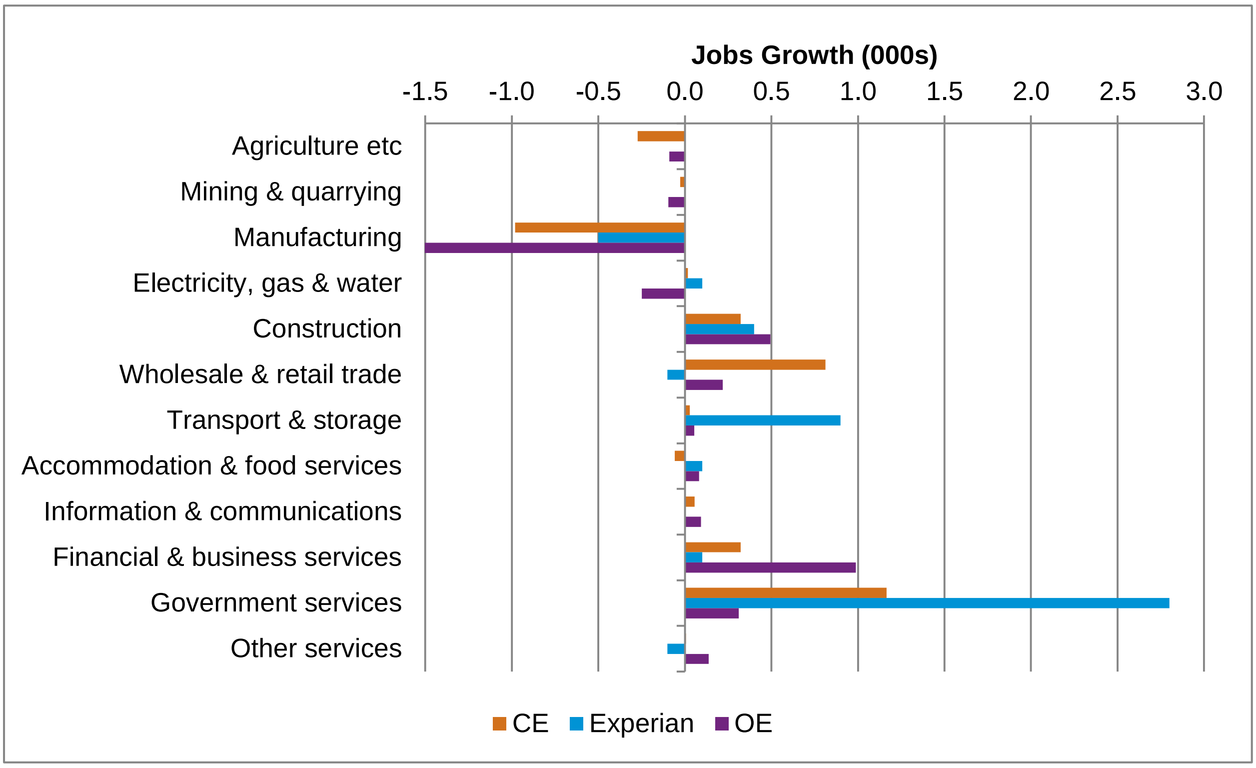
2.11 In considering employment land for a new settlement we review the ability of whether this could attract new inward investment, capable of providing employment and business growth *in sectors currently under-represented in Bassetlaw and its wider FEMA including higher end technologies, business parks, office space and rural enterprise.*

2.12 The Needs Assessment Part 1 provides both a commercial and economic analysis of the Functional Economic Market Area. Part 1 also includes an analysis of econometric forecasts for the district. A summary of the baseline forecasts is provided in the figure below. This excludes adjustments made by GL Hearn in relation to uplifts in manufacturing and transportation and storage which are considered to more closely represent the performance of the Bassetlaw economy over the last ten years.

2.13 It is of note that the information and communications sector, typically higher value, is seen to underperform in all forecasts. However the financial and business services sector does see some growth and is likely to be associated with a regional share in growth driven by Sheffield and other core urban areas with high levels of agglomeration.

2.14 In part, the question of a new settlement is whether growth can be achieved in higher value sectors over and above that forecast. It is also noted that the commercial market assessment pointed towards reducing office availability and the potential for a small business park.

Figure 1: Forecast Net Jobs Growth in Bassetlaw, 2018-2035



Source: CE, Experian, OE

2.15 Whilst economic growth is complex, key drivers tend to be skills, growth of existing businesses, infrastructure / environment, investment from indigenous companies and inward investment. Given that the forecasts do not strongly point to Bassetlaw having expected potential in higher value sectors within existing businesses then 'pull' factor(s) would be required to drive inward investment.

2.16 Whilst a new garden settlement would most likely provide a good quality of life and environment there is no obvious driver for higher value inward investment or clustering. The main attribute is accessibility to the A1 however, as considered in Part 1 and Part 2, this is considered to best facilitate investment in transport, warehousing and to a degree manufacturing but not necessarily a driver for higher value manufacturing.

2.17 The draft D2N2 Strategic Economic Plan refers to a range of challenges and opportunities of which food and drink manufacturing may have the greatest relevance alongside increasing the productivity, growth and innovation of existing businesses supported by the virtual Growth Hub.

2.18 In the case of high value inward investment outside of existing agglomerations and critical mass it is typically the case that an institutional investment (higher or further education) or other public catalyst is needed as a driver for growth.

2.19 Excluding the possibility of a major investment, consideration should be given to what smaller start up space and business support services can be delivered as a component to a new settlement to stimulate local growth.

2.20 Whilst the Part 1 commercial market assessment pointed towards some potential for office demand, particularly around the main settlements, it is expected that should it be viable to deliver additional office space it would be better located to an existing settlement with a critical mass rather than on an isolated site near the A1.

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 This report has considered the economic growth potential associated with a garden village settlement in Bassetlaw.

3.2 All settlements typically experience a level of demand for employment land to provide service functions. Benchmarking of areas around the UK suggests that smaller settlements might expect around 20sqm per dwelling (gross). However, settlements in Bassetlaw have a much higher ratio which is not unexpected given its strong industrial legacy, economic make up and connections.

3.3 As a result and assuming proximity to the A1 a settlement might achieve 100 sqm per dwelling or over 10ha in total for a settlement of 1,000 dwellings. This should be balanced with consideration of the proposed locations existing employment hinterland, which may already have a high level of employment provision that could absorb a proportion of the gross estimated requirement. Settlements above this scale may achieve a greater level of employment take up in the long term however 10ha is considered suitable for any initial development allocation as part of a mixed use opportunity.

3.4 It is considered unlikely that a garden village will act as a catalyst for a major inward investment attracting higher value sectors not typically represented in the FEMA. However there should be potential to create an entrepreneurially orientated settlement that can stimulate local business growth and productivity, particularly if public or other investment can support this.

3.5 The scale of employment land considered should make the location sustainable in economic terms and the food and drink manufacturing sector may be a cluster to develop for higher productivity and improvements to technology.

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