Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (SSP2) (2011-2031)

Examination Hearings

October 2020

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

Between

Kettering Borough Council and Armstrong Rigg Planning on behalf of Weetabix (Respondent Id 59)
1. Introduction

1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Kettering Borough Council (KBC) and Armstrong Rigg Planning on behalf of Weetabix, hereafter referred to as ‘the parties’. The SoCG details the areas on which the parties agree and disagree in relation to the Kettering Borough Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan.

1.2. This SoCG reflects the current position agreed by both parties with regard to representations made by Armstrong Rigg Planning on behalf of Weetabix through the Regulation 19 consultation.

1.3. This statement is made without prejudice to other matters of detail that the parties may wish to raise during the examination.

2. Background

2.1. This statement relates to the representations made by Armstrong Rigg Planning on behalf of Weetabix to the Kettering Borough Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (SSP2) – Publication Plan Consultation.

2.2. Policy EMP1 of the SSP2 seeks to safeguard a number of existing employment areas, the policy as contained in the Publication Plan supported the modernisation of buildings within these safeguarded employment areas.

2.3. Weetabix is located at Station Road Industrial Estate, Burton Latimer, which is included in the list of sites identified in policy EMP1 and shown on the policies map.

2.4. During the consultation on the SSP2 Publication Plan Armstrong Rigg Planning contacted the Council to raise concerns Weetabix had with the SSP2, the issues raised were:

- The impact of Policy EMP1 – Safeguarding Employment Land on flexibility in terms of how the site could be developed in the future; and
- The impact of the exclusion of land to the north of Weetabix (shown on the plan on page 5 of Appendix 1) from the area identified as Safeguarded Employment Land and the settlement boundary and the impact of the exclusion of this land on Weetabix’s ability to expand into this area in the future.

2.5. Weetabix is a large employer in the Borough. The Council recognises the need for businesses to have opportunities to redevelop, expand and modernise, whilst ensuring that the degree of conflict with policies for the open countryside is taken into account. The NPPF requires planning policies to help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Policy 22 of the JCS identifies prioritising the enhancement of existing employment sites as one of the strands for delivering a stronger more sustainable economy.
2.6. Positive discussions took place between the parties and the Council proposed some amended wording to Policy EMP1 and its supporting text to address the concerns raised. These amendments have been included in the Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Publication Plan, MM1, which was submitted alongside the SSP2 for consideration by the Inspector. The representation from Armstrong Rigg Planning on behalf of Weetabix (comment id 154) also included these proposed modifications and indicated that these changes are the minimum which could be agreed to. These modifications are discussed in section 3.

2.7. The representation from Armstrong Rigg Planning on behalf of Weetabix indicated that it was the intention that a Development Brief would be prepared for the whole site, including the expansion land, in advance of the Local Plan Examination. A Development Brief has been prepared and this is attached at Appendix 1. There are currently no detailed proposals for the site, so the Development Brief sets out criteria which provide supplementary guidance to Policy EMP1. At this stage the Development Brief has not been subject to consultation, but the Council has provided comments on this. The Development Brief is discussed in section 3.

2.8. In addition to the proposed changes to EMP1 and the preparation of the Development Brief the representation also seeks the inclusion of the expansion land in the area identified as Safeguarded Employment Land and an amendment to the settlement boundary to include the area of expansion land. This is an area where the parties are in disagreement and is discussed further in section 4.

3. Matters on which the parties agree

3.1. The following table sets out the main modification agreed between the parties in relation to Policy EMP1 and supporting text. Both parties agree that this modification is necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modification agreed by both parties in relation to Policy EMP1 and supporting text.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amendments to paragraph 5.16 as follows:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Policy EMP1 safeguards a number of existing employment areas. These areas have been assessed as part of the Employment Land Review, the findings of which have informed this policy. **Within these areas the modernisation of existing buildings will be supported.**

**It is recognised that there may be circumstances where parts of employment sites need to be redeveloped or expanded to enable existing businesses to grow and/or modernise. In these circumstances the preparation of Development Briefs/Masterplans which inform proposals for the future development of the employment site will be supported.**
Where an extension is proposed to an existing employment area to enable an existing business to expand or modernise, and the proposed expansion area is located immediately adjacent to a safeguarded employment area but outside the settlement boundary, consideration will be given to the degree of conflict the proposal has with policies which seek to protect the open countryside, and the potential benefits of the proposal in terms of retention and enhancement of employment provision and impact on the local area.

Insertion of additional text to Policy EMP1 as follows:

Within safeguarded employment sites the modernisation of buildings will be supported.

Where proposals for the expansion or modernisation of a safeguarded employment site involve the redevelopment or extension of a site, the preparation of a Development Brief/ Masterplan, which informs proposals for the future development of safeguarded employment areas, will be supported.

Extensions to existing employment areas to enable an existing business to expand or modernise which are immediately adjacent to safeguarded employment areas will be assessed taking into account the degree of conflict with Policy RS4.

3.2. The draft Development Brief attached at Appendix 1 has been prepared to provide supplementary planning guidance for the Station Road Industrial Estate sites which is occupied by Weetabix. The draft Development Brief has not yet been subject to consultation, but the parties agree the content of the draft Development Brief as the basis for future consultation.

3.3. Subject to the conclusions of the Inspector in relation to the proposed main modifications, the parties intend to use this document as a basis to progress a supplementary planning document. If this is the case the supplementary planning document would be prepared to follow the regulatory requirements for the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document, including public consultation.

4. Matters on which the parties disagree

4.1. The parties are in disagreement about whether the area of land identified by Weetabix as an area for expansion to the north of the existing Weetabix site should be included in the area identified as Safeguarded Employment Land and within the settlement boundary.

5. Conclusions
5.1. This statement sets out the areas of agreement and disagreement between the parties. The parties are in agreement that:

- The modifications to EMP1 and its supporting text set out in section 3 are necessary.
- Subject to the Inspectors consideration of the modifications, the draft Development Brief attached at Appendix 1 will form the basis for preparing supplementary guidance to Policy EMP1.

5.2. The parties are in disagreement about whether the proposed area of expansion land should be included within the area identified as Safeguarded Employment Land and within the settlement boundary.

Signed on behalf of Kettering Borough Council

Simon Richardson, Development Manager – Planning Policy

Date: 30/09/20

Signed on behalf of Armstrong Rigg Planning

Date: 28th September 2020
Appendix 1 – Development Brief
SITE SPECIFIC PLANNING GUIDANCE

On behalf of:
Weetabix Ltd

In respect of:
Station Road Industrial Estate,
Station Road, Burton Latimer

Date:
May 2020
Reference:
GA/RW/00120/S001
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Planning Guidance

1.1 This document has been prepared to provide supplementary planning guidance for the Station Road Industrial Estate in Burton Latimer. It supports the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (The Local Plan), in particular policy EMP1. The policy treats the site in two parts:

a. The existing 'safeguarded' land
b. The expansion land

1.2 In line with EMP1 policy requirements this planning guidance fulfils the need to prepare a brief to guide future development proposals on the safeguarded land and the criteria under which proposals for the expansion land will be supported. The guidance achieves this by:

- Providing relevant planning policy guidance against which proposals for the development of the site will be assessed;
- Setting the scene for the development of the land and providing a reasoned justification for the proposals to members of the public;
- Improving the efficiency and transparency of the planning and development process;
- Informing the constraints and parameters against which proposals should be judged;
- Providing greater certainty for the developer and decision makers on the forms of development which will be acceptable;
- Play an important role in meeting the operational needs of Weetabix and ensure their continued success as an important and valued employer in Kettering.

Objectives

1.3 A key objective of the Planning Guidance is to provide clear and realistic expectations and principles to guide appropriate uses and development of the land and in so doing facilitate the delivery of commercial proposals needed to support the operational needs of Weetabix.

1.4 The Intention is that, following public consultation, this document will be adopted by the Council as supplementary guidance. When adopted, it will be used along with other national and local planning policies to guide decisions made on planning applications. Additional opportunities to comment on specific proposals as they come forward will be available in the normal way during pre-application and planning application stages.
2.0 HISTORY AND FUTURE OPTIONS

2.1 Weetabix have operated from the site since the 1930’s, from where their trademark, popular food products are manufactured and distributed internationally to over 80 countries around the world. The company’s products which include Weetabix Breakfast Cereal and Alpen Muesli are manufactured on-site employing over 700 staff from the local area.

2.2 The success of the business provides significant economic benefits for the local area, via direct employment on-site but also through the supply chain with Weetabix sourcing its main ingredient, Wheat, from farms within a 50 mile radius of the site.

2.3 The long association of Weetabix with this site has embedded well established business links with their suppliers and contractors with their continued investment at this site of major importance to the area. Weetabix operate from around 1.3 million sqft of floorspace on the site.

2.4 The range of buildings making up this floorspace, as recognised in the Council commissioned Employment Land Review (2018), are bespoke and of a varied mix of ages. With changing business practices and the inevitable need for replacement, repair and modernisation together with the desire to expand it is important that Weetabix have a clear policy framework in place which provides the confidence and certainty for continued investment at this important site.

2.5 It is anticipated that this will take the form of upgraded, replacement, expanded or new facilities on the safeguarded land. However when that land reaches capacity, or if for operational reasons it is incapable of accommodating specific development needs it is right that this guidance sets out the criteria for development on the expansion land.

2.6 As noted in the Council’s Employment Land Review the bespoke nature of the accommodation on-site is such that it may be difficult to find a new occupier without wholesale redevelopment. With Weetabix’s continued commitment and investment in the site this need not be a concern, however in the event that additional land is required either temporarily or on a permanent basis the expansion land is the obvious choice. In the event Weetabix were forced to find land elsewhere to maintain production, even on a temporary basis, this would lead to costly inefficiencies and disruption to production which would inevitably lead to a more detailed review of business operations in Burton Latimer.

2.7 For Weetabix the expansion land provides for a seamless addition to their existing site thereby enabling necessary changes to be accommodated with minimal disruption. A consideration of key importance to a major producer and distributor of foodstuffs like Weetabix. In any event the use of the expansion land would represent a continuation of development which has already occurred in this part of the site. Planning permission was granted for a large food production unit which partially extends into this zone (KBC Ref. KE/98/0621) which has been on-site since 2000 and prompted an amendment to the Burton Latimer settlement boundary.1 A further planning permission (KBC Ref. KE/04/1308) for warehousing and food production units was also permitted on this land. The minutes of the committee meeting (Full Planning Committee 14 June 2005) record how the benefits to the local economy, sustainability of the development and consistency with national policy represented material considerations sufficient to outweigh any local planning policy conflict.

2.8 In anticipation of future development needs in this area Weetabix acquired the land in 2002 with the specific intention for it to provide for future operational requirements and expansion as the need arises.

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1 Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan, Background Paper: Settlement Boundaries (Update) April 2018, Burton Latimer Site Ref. 17 (page 34)

Figure 1: Site Image Burton Latimer site (source: burtonlatimer.org)
3.0 SITE CONTEXT AND SURROUNDINGS

3.1 Figure 2, below shows the safeguarded land edged with a dotted red line (to the south). The expansion land is edged and shaded red (to the north).

Figure 2: Site Location (source: google.com/maps)

Safeguarded Land

3.2 The safeguarded land represents Weetabix’s headquarters (HQ) on a site which measures 25.5ha, with a variety of industrial buildings of differing scales and ages which together offer around 1,300,000sqft (121,000sqm) of floorspace. Buildings include large format warehouse and manufacturing buildings together with extensive surface car parking and lorry parking. This is illustrated on figure 3, below, which also shows the main access points from Station Road (to the south) and Polwell Lane (to the east).

Figure 3: Weetabix, Burton Latimer (existing site) (source: Weetabix)
3.3 The site is neighboured to the south by housing which fronts Station Road. To the west by the River Ise and the Midland Mainline railway line. Beyond the railway line is a major logistics site which is being developed following the grant of planning permission under KBC Ref. KET/2018/0965. The permission relates to the designated Kettering South Employment site (policy 37 of the Joint Core Strategy).

3.4 To the north of the site is the expansion land, described below. To the east of the site is Kettering Town Football Club and large-scale warehouse units including a major distribution centre in use by Morrisons. These occupy the designated employment site at Latimer Business Park.

3.5 The site is in a highly accessible location between junctions 9 and 10 of the A14, which is a particular focus for employment with major existing sites at Station Road and Latimer Business Park. To the north of junction 9 of the A14 are further major employment sites at Kettering Parkway and further to the north Pytchley Lodge and Orion Way Industrial Estate, together occupying a site area of around 56ha.

3.6 The status of the area as a well-established major employment location will be reinforced by development of the land allocated in the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (policy 37) for employment at Kettering South (parcels A & B). Parcel A located to the west of J9 of the A14 is allocated for primarily B1 (office) and B2 (general industrial) uses including the potential for a public service hub. The considerably larger, parcel B, is located immediately to the west of the Weetabix site, south east of J9 of the A14. The location of these in relation to the Weetabix site is shown in figure 4, below.

3.7 The permission for parcel B (KBC Ref. KET/2018/0965) approves up to 214,606sqm (GEA) of class B8 warehousing and distribution, with ancillary class B1(a) offices. At the eastern side of the site closest to Weetabix the permission allows for buildings up to a height of 23 metres, while to the west buildings of up to 18metres in height are permitted.

The Expansion Land

3.8 The site which extends to around 14ha comprises a featureless parcel of tightly mown grassland which is free of any trees other than to the site boundaries. The site is already situated in a commercial setting with the developed Weetabix site immediately to the south, beyond which is Latimer Business Park. To the north is the A14, while to the west is the Midland Mainline railway line. With the development of the logistics park immediately west of the site its commercial setting will be more readily apparent with the site enclosed on three sides by major built form with the northern boundary enclosed by the A14 dual carriageway. The plan at figure 5 below, give an indication of the scale of the buildings which will border the site, at a height of up to 23 metres.
Figure 5: Kettering South (Parcel B) indicative layout extract (source: Kettering.gov.uk/planningapplication)

3.9 Immediately to the north of the site is Southfield Farmhouse a Grade II listed building. This is accessed from Southfield Lane via Polwell Lane to the north-east of the site. This and Farmfield Close to the south provide a residential boundary to the eastern edge of the site.

3.10 Common with the developed site to the south the River Ise and the railway line run along the western edge of the Expansion Land. Public rights of way HL10 and UA22 run parallel to the River Ise on its eastern bank. The majority of the site falls within flood zone 1 (at least risk of flooding), however part of the western edge of the site falls within flood zone 2.

3.11 The Southfield Farm Marsh SSSI extends adjacent to the north-west corner of the site as illustrated on the plan at figure 6. As a result Natural England will need to be consulted on planning applications for major development on the site in line with the SSSI Impact Risk Zone thresholds.

Figure 6: Constraints Map (source: Ordnance Survey)

**Land Use**

3.12 The land is undeveloped and lies beyond the settlement boundary of Burton Latimer. However policy EMP1 and supporting text recognise the need for redevelopment or expansion of existing businesses to enable existing businesses to grow or modernise and that where proposed expansion areas are located adjacent to safeguarded employment areas but outside settlement boundaries, as is the case with land to the north of Weetabix, Station Road, Burton Latimer, conflict with policies which seek to protect the open countryside needs to be considered alongside the potential benefits of the proposal in terms of retention and enhancement of employment provision. The criteria which proposals for the site would need to address are set out in section 5.0 of this guidance.
Highways

3.13 The site comprises a sustainable location at the north-west edge of Burton Latimer in a highly accessible location between junctions 9 and 10 of the A14 which runs to the north of the expansion land. The A14 provides a direct connection with the A1 to the east and the M1 to the west.

3.14 Access to the existing site is available from Station Road, which runs along the southern boundary of the existing site, with the main entrance from Polwell Lane to the east.

3.15 In association with the permitted works at Parcel B, permission has also been granted for an upgrade to the A509 between J9 of the A14 and the south west corner of parcel B to provide a two way dual carriageway plus a new roundabout providing access to that site (KBC Ref. KET/2019/0666).
4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy
4.1 Consistent with any planning application development proposals will be prepared with regard to and assessed against the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the supplementary guidance provided for in the NPPG.

4.2 With regard to building a strong, competitive economy (Section 6) the NPPF places great emphasis on the need for planning policies and decisions to help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.2

The Development Plan
4.3 For the purposes of this planning guidance, the parts of the Development Plan considered of relevance are the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy – Part 1 Local Plan (adopted 14 July 2016) and the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan, which was endorsed for submission to the Secretary of State for Examination at the meeting of the Planning Policy Committee on 21 May 2020.

4.4 Policy EMP1 of the Part 2 Local Plan safeguards the developed site for employment for B1 (Business), B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Storage or Distribution). The supporting paragraph (5.16) to policy EMP1 acknowledges that the needs of safeguarded employment land may change over time, it states:

It is recognised that there may be circumstances where parts of employment sites need to be redeveloped or expanded to enable existing businesses to grow and/or modernise. In these circumstances the preparation of Development Briefs/Masterplans which inform proposals for future development of the employment site will be supported.

Where an extension is proposed to an existing employment area to enable an existing business to expand or modernise, and the proposed expansion area is located immediately adjacent to a safeguarded employment area but outside the settlement boundary, consideration will be given to the degree of conflict the proposal has with policies which seek to protect the open countryside, and the potential benefits of the proposal in terms of retention and enhancement of employment provision and the impact on the local areas.

4.5 Policy EMP1: Safeguarding Employment Land – states that:

The following employment areas, identified on the proposals map, will be safeguarded for B1 (Business), B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Storage or Distribution). The policy lists 9 sites including:

- Station Road Industrial Estate, Burton Latimer

In accordance with Policy EMP3 (Non-Employment Uses (non-B use class) in Safeguarded Employment Areas), non-B class uses, which are ancillary to the employment uses, will be supported.

Within safeguarded employment sites the modernisation of buildings will be supported.

Where proposals for the expansion or modernisation of a safeguarded employment site involve the redevelopment or extension of a site, the preparation of a Development Brief/Masterplan, which informs proposals for the future safeguarded employment areas, will be supported.

Extensions to existing employment areas to enable an existing business to expand or modernise which are immediately adjacent to safeguarded employment areas will be assessed taking into account the degree of conflict with Policy RS4.

4.6 This guidance fulfils the role of the development brief for the site (including the expansion land).

4.7 Policy RS4: Development in the Countryside – states that:

Development in the open countryside will be resisted unless:

a) It meets the requirements of policy 13, 25 or 26 of the JCS.

4.8 Policy 13 relates to rural exception residential schemes, so is not applicable in the circumstances of this case.

4.9 Policy 25: Rural Economic Development and Diversification – states that:

1. Sustainable opportunities to develop and diversify the rural economy that are of an appropriate scale for their location and respect the environmental quality and character of the rural area will be supported. Enhanced broadband provision to facilitate economic development within rural areas will be supported. Encouragement will be given towards:

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2 NPPF, paragraph 80
a) The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses including locally sourced produce and increasing use of sustainable food production methods;
b) The provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities, recognising that locations with access to local services and facilities by foot, cycle or public transport provide the greatest opportunity for sustainable rural development;
c) Commercial opportunities related to food, craft and ecotourism, and Green Infrastructure projects;
d) The enhancement of local supply networks, linking businesses and consumers, that support the shift to a low carbon economy and to support local rural producers and businesses.

2. Sustainable rural diversification activities should seek to complement and support the ongoing viability of the existing business. Where proposals involve the re-use of rural buildings, a mix of uses will be supported, including small scale business, tourism activities, tourist accommodation, and live/work units.

4.10 Policy 26: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy is supportive of proposals for sensitively located renewable and low carbon energy generation development.

4.11 Other relevant policies of the Part 2 Local Plan include the following:

- **LOC1**: Settlement boundaries. It confirms that land located outside settlement boundaries will be considered open countryside.
- **EMP3**: Non employment uses (non-B use class) in Safeguarded Employment Areas – is a criteria based policy against which proposals which are not ancillary to existing employment uses will be assessed.
- **NEH1**: Local flood risk management policy
- **NEH2**: Green infrastructure – The plan shows that the expansion land falls within the sub-regional green infrastructure corridor 2: Ise Valley (Figure 8.1 and Table 8.2). Policy NEH2 indicates that the integrity of the Green Infrastructure Network will not be compromised by new development. To achieve this, the policy indicates that:
  - Major development will deliver on-site and/or make off-site contributions to achieve a net gain of green infrastructure in accordance with the Kettering Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
  - Applications for non-residential development providing an additional 1,000sqm or more or a site of 1ha or more will be accompanied by a site specific green infrastructure strategy and/or plan to illustrate how GI is integrated within the development proposal and seeks to improve connectivity to the Borough Level Green Infrastructure Network (BLGIN)

4.12 The policies mentioned above need to be read alongside the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS). Relevant policies from that document include the following:

**North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016)**

4.13 Relevant policies:

- **1**: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- **2**: Historic environment
- **3**: Landscape character
- **4**: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- **5**: Water environment, resources and flood risk management
- **8**: North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles
- **9**: Sustainable buildings
- **10**: Provision of infrastructure
- **11**: The network of urban and rural areas – Burton Latimer is a market town whose role is to provide growth in homes and jobs to support regeneration and local services at a scale appropriate to the character and infrastructure of the town
- **19**: The delivery of Green Infrastructure
- **20**: The Nene and Ise Valleys
- **22**: Delivering Economic Prosperity, including prioritising the enhancement of existing employment sites
- **25**: Rural economic development and diversification (referenced above)
- **37**: Land at Kettering South (discussed above in Section 3.0)

Other Relevant Policy Guidance

4.14 Referenced in policy NEH2 of the Part 2 Plan, as noted above, is the Kettering Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2018). It indicates that the Green Infrastructure (GI) in Kettering is focussed along the river corridors of the Ise and the Slade Brook. It explains there are opportunities to enhance existing GI and create new GI and improve accessibility to it.
5.0 SITE SPECIFIC POLICY GUIDANCE

The Existing Safeguarded Land

5.1 There are no fixed proposals for the existing site however this is a situation which is under continuous review as a major manufacturing HQ. Proposals on the site for the expansion of existing facilities, replacement buildings and new buildings for B1, B2 or B8 purposes will be acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with policies in the development plan. Applications will be supported by the relevant supporting information required by the Council’s validation checklist at the time of making the application. These will provide an appropriate assessment of proposals against relevant policy considerations. Proposals will be guided by the following principles:

- Proposals will utilise existing established point of access, unless an alternative point of access can be shown to be demonstrably preferable for highway and amenity reasons;
- Any additional traffic generated by the proposals can be accommodated on the local highway network without unacceptable impacts;
- The height of any new buildings will have regard to the character of the surrounding area and impact on the landscape, unless a clear operational explanation is provided to justify a materially taller building and the proposal does not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape, character and amenity of the surrounding area;
- The risk of flooding will not be increased;
- Any noisy uses or those requiring external lighting are the subject of appropriate mitigation to avoid unacceptable impacts on occupiers of neighbouring properties.

5.2 Non-B Class uses will be acceptable in the event these are necessary to sustain the business operations on the remainder of the site, provided the requirements of Policy EMP3 and other relevant development plan policies are met.

The Expansion Area

5.3 Policy EMP1 indicates that proposals for extensions of safeguarded employment land, which in this case will be into the expansion land, will be assessed taking account of the degree of any conflict with policy RS4. With regard to commercial development, policy RS4 cross refers to policy 25 of the JCS to provide guidance as to the acceptability of such proposals.

5.4 Weetabix’s food producing operations can draw considerable support from policy 25, parts a, c and d. As a business Weetabix manufactures its products using locally produced wheat from farms within a 50-mile radius of the site. Expansion of operations at the site will serve to enhance local supply networks and benefit local rural producers and businesses in a sustainable fashion (parts a & d). The entire use of the site and the expansion land is targeted at maximising commercial opportunities related to food production (part c).

5.5 The development of the expansion land for purposes related to Weetabix’s food producing operations is therefore acceptable in policy terms. Indeed it is positively encouraged by policy 25, subject to being of an appropriate scale to their location and respecting the environmental quality of the area.

5.6 As explained above the expansion land is surrounded by development providing an industrial context. Buildings to the south and east comprise large format warehouse units and this is set to continue with figure 5, above, showing that the land will be neighboured to the west by an extremely large logistics warehouse at a height of up to 23 metres.

5.7 The sites immediate surroundings are characterised by large format industrial buildings, such that the site itself could accommodate buildings of considerable scale while respecting the quality of the area. Proposals for the site would need to demonstrate that the scale of buildings proposed would not have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding area.

5.8 Against this background the expansion land could be used by Weetabix to accommodate:

- New permanent buildings;
- Temporary buildings;
- Additional car parking/lorry parking;
- Renewable and low carbon energy generating development (in accordance with JCS policy 26).

5.9 Such development proposals within the expansion area will be informed by pre-application discussions with Council officers and engagement with other stakeholders and interested parties commensurate with the scale of the proposals. The proposals shall be informed by a supporting statement explaining the functional requirement for the proposals to be accommodated on the subject site and outline the business case for the proposals.

5.10 Development proposals will be accompanied by the supporting information required by the Council’s latest validation checklist, which will inform and provide for a comprehensive assessment of proposals as they come forward. In addition proposals will be expected to comply with the following:

a) Land Use – Focus will primarily be on the provision of B1a (ancillary office), B1b/c, B2 & B8 to reflect and support the manufacturing operations of the main Weetabix site. Any non-B Class uses will be ancillary to the primary role of the site and is anticipated to be those necessary to support
ancillary employee support functions such as training, retail, café or creche. Any other stand-alone non-business uses would need to be justified on a case by case basis, explaining the role such developments would play in sustaining the future success of business operations from the site.

b) **Access and Parking** – Vehicular access will be from established points of site access on Station Road and Polwell Lane, unless an alternative point of vehicular access can be shown to be demonstrably preferable for highway and amenity reasons. Supporting transport information will show that the level of proposed development can be accommodated on site with no unacceptable impacts on the local highway network. Furthermore it will demonstrate that the levels of parking proposed for all modes of transport projected to use the site can be accommodated on-site in line with the Council’s prevailing standards.

c) **Improved Connectivity** – As proposals come forward measures will be explored, commensurate with the scale of development proposed, to improve access via public transport, cycling and walking. These will be supplemented by site-wide Travel Plan measures to reduce single-occupancy car use and encourage sustainable modes of transport.

d) **Flood Risk** – Development on the site will be located and designed to avoid increasing the risk of flooding, with mitigation measures provided as appropriate. Subject to detailed review this indicates development will be sited away from the western River Ise Corridor. Consistent with policy 5 of the JCS provision for sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) will be prioritised, unless there is clear evidence this is impracticable, in accordance with best practice and to reduce pressure on the existing drainage network.

e) **Scale and Layout** – Each proposed development as they come forward will be supported by a design statement. The scale, height and massing of buildings on the expansion land will reflect the character of the surrounding area and ensure that there is not an unacceptable impact in terms of character, amenity and landscape impact.

f) **Green Infrastructure** - Development proposals for the site will have regard to overarching policy aspirations to enhance Green Infrastructure particularly along the Ise-Valley corridor in accordance with the Kettering Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This will include steps to enhance the character, ecological value and future management of this area. This will include buffering the adjacent Southfield Marsh SSSI and improving accessible, useable green space where appropriate and practicable.

g) **Heritage** – The impact of proposals on the single listed building to the north will be assessed on a case by case basis taking account of the impact of existing and committed surrounding development on its existing setting, and weighing this against the public benefits of the proposals.

h) **Trees, Landscape, Bio-Diversity** – Up to date surveys in support of proposals on a case by case basis will inform the nature of any existing constraints to the proposals and put forward appropriate mitigation.

i) **Amenity** – Noisy uses or those requiring external lighting will be located away from sensitive boundaries with residential properties and supported by acoustic and lighting assessments, as appropriate, to demonstrate the pre-existing environment will not be unacceptably affected. Similarly air quality assessments will be prepared as appropriate to demonstrate air quality in the vicinity of the site will remain within acceptable levels.

j) **Sustainability** - Proposals will be designed to limit their impact on the environment in line with prevailing policy objectives.

5.11 Development proposals for the site on both the safeguarded and the expansion land will have regard to criteria outlined above and the development constraints/opportunities plan at [appendix 1](#).
APPENDIX 1

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES PLAN