

Employment Land Review

Summary of comments from commercial agents

Interviews conducted in August 2014

Agents contacted

- Clare & Company
- Park Steele
- Wadham and Isherwood
- Traynor Ryan

The following feedback comes from the first three commercial agents only. The last company was keen to participate but it was not possible to arrange an interview within the timescale.

Guildford Road Depot

- Good location off A31
- Site needs improvement
- Blights Bourne Mill site
- Any change will need careful management of traffic

Coxbridge Business Park

- Good location off A31
- Mixed use
- Cannot compete with Business Parks in Farnborough
- Lack of parking – not allowed to park on estate roads

Riverside Industrial Park

- Popular
- Easy to let
- Good town access
- No room for expansion
- Traffic congestion sometimes a problem

Riverside Business Park

- Easy to let
- Sells well to owner occupiers
- Good office and storage space
- No room for expansion

Romans Retail Park

- Provides economic units for larger goods, which are not suited to town centre location
- Parking on site

Romans Industrial Estate

- Fully let
- Convenient storage/industrial use close to town centre

Farnham Business Centre

- Good facility in good location
- Secondary space
- Small Starter Units
- Awkward ground leases make units difficult to sell

St. Paul's House

- Outdated offices
- Small units with parking
- Peripheral location
- Flexible leases
- Current demand for small offices improving

St. Stephen's House

- As above
- Difficult to re-configure
- Not very appealing externally

Hurlands Business Centre

- Remote location
- Somewhat dated
- Good occupancy
- Mixed use space
- Sits well with surrounding residential – could be considered for residential use
- Ongoing need for similar space

Farnham Trading Estate

- Ongoing demand for larger warehouse units on outskirts of town
- Little scope for increasing floor-space
- All occupied on long leases

Grove Bell Industrial Estate

- Industrial units with quasi-retail use
- Full occupancy in business units
- Large convenience store under construction
- Further unit(S) to be let as part of new-build

Bridge Court

- Now fully let
- Good accommodation but slow to let.
- Good access to A31

Coleman's Yard- Site promoted for alternative use by landowner through call for sites

- Extremely low grade space in Conservation Area
- Surrounded by residential
- Not a natural commercial site
- Should be considered for residential

Coal Yard, Wreclesham - Site not promoted for alternative use by landowner through call for sites

- Mainly open storage
- Difficult for commercial use
- Should be considered for residential

The Dairy, Weydon Lane- Site promoted for alternative use by landowner through call for sites and included in WBC Farnham sites within settlements (17 dwellings)

- Difficult site for commercial use
- Residential use should be encouraged

Farnham Business Park

- Established Business Park
- Good quality offices with good parking
- Easy to let
- Well located on A31
- Expansion possible, only if adjoining rail site becomes available

Buildbase - Site not promoted for alternative use by landowner through call for sites

- Established retail use
- Poor access
- Should be considered for residential

Hone's Yard

- Good site with good parking
- Meets demand for small office space
- Could adapt to mixed use

Abbey Industrial Estate

- Rural location
- Meets need for low-grade accommodation
- Easy to let

Millennium Centre

- Good quality larger office space
- Ideally situated
- Good Parking
- Will probably be let by floors in current market

Headway House

- As above

Preymead Farm

- Tertiary industrial use
- Open storage
- Mainly motor trade
- Meets need, as landlords of modern estates resist motor trade uses

Century Farm

- As above
- Provides cheap industrial space

St. George's Yard

- Ideal for Farnham
- Small, town centre offices in pleasant surroundings
- Adequate parking
- Sell well

The Factory

- Quirky, old-style accommodation in rural location
- Good occupancy
- Short-term leases
- Easily let
- Good parking on site

Stephenson Engineering - Site not promoted for alternative use by landowner through call for sites but included in WBC Farnham sites within settlements (12 dwellings)

- Redundant building near residential
- On market for several years
- Adjoins heavy duty electrical sub-station, which may hamper residential development

Surrey Sawmills

- Meets need for low-level industrial use
- Caters for uses unwanted on other sites
- Could be part of much larger residential application in future

Land at Water Lane - Site promoted for alternative use by landowner through call for sites

- Poor access and location
- Possible low-level storage use

1. Demand for employment land in Farnham

- 2014 has seen steady improvement in demand
- Surprising demand throughout summer
- Too little of right size and quality

2. Marketability of sites

- Strong market across the board but shortage of modern space
- Potential clients seek better space elsewhere
- Shortage of semi-skilled workers in Farnham creates problems
- Lack of parking and inadequate road system are not attractive to businesses
- Steady demand for good quality town centre office space with parking
- All sizes of sites let well – quality provision with parking always marketable
- Most sites are on long leases but freehold market strong at present
- Good market for small, modern office space – 1500 to 2500 sq.ft.
- Ongoing demand for light industrial units of all sizes – 2000 to 10,000 sq.ft.
- Prime location shops always in demand – 1000 sq.ft. approximately
- Storage units in demand but must have easy access and turning-space – 10,000 sq.ft
- No current links with UCA – possibility of internships in design and marketing

General Comments

- Lack of supply keeps rents high but does not allow for expansion
- Farnham has traditionally produced highly successful companies, which need space to grow
- Farnham will need to provide more employment space of all types
- The town must cater for the needs of the 21st century
- Change to residential use is good for outmoded offices
- Farnham should not compete with Farnborough but complement its provision
- High-tech industries are well-served in Farnborough and good industrial space is available in Aldershot
- Demand for small, well-served office space will remain high
- St. George's Yard and Borelli Yard are good examples of town centre development