



IT'S ALL IN THE DETAIL

## MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

Science & Technology Park: Potential  
Locations Assessment

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Overview

- 1.1 Chilmark Consulting Ltd. (CCL) working with Prime Example Consulting (PEX) and Urban Delivery (UD) were commissioned in July 2015 by Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council to prepare an analysis of the potential locations for a new Science and Technology Park (STP). This work forms a component of Part II to a wider study of employment land allocations in central Mid Sussex led by CCL.
- 1.2 CCL previously considered the overarching potential for the development of a Science and Technology Park to the west of Burgess Hill south of the A2300 in the Part I *Burgess Hill Strategic Employment Sites Study* (March 2015). That initial analysis concluded that there was a range of potential demand from a variety of knowledge and high technology sectors and that the central Mid Sussex area around Burgess Hill offers a good opportunity, subject to more detailed feasibility and analysis, to support a Science Park linked to an appropriate Higher Education institute or leading technology/industrial or research business.
- 1.3 The conclusions of this Report, based on the analysis and evidence evaluated, demonstrate that while there are a number of potential locations in central Mid Sussex in the parishes of Albourne, Bolney, Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common and Twineham where a new STP could be sited, the preferential location is Location 8 (land near Dumbrells Farm, south of the A2300). This location offers a preferential sustainable choice amongst the identified, reasonable alternatives.
- 1.4 The preferred location maximises the future spatial growth potential of Burgess Hill within the context of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common, makes use of the excellent transport accessibility links (with further enhancements already securing public funding commitment) and will have a close relationship with the existing labour force as well as the proposed employment and residential allocations to the north and west of Burgess Hill.
- 1.5 The report's conclusions are that a proposed STP location to the west of Burgess Hill in Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common parish is suitable, available and achievable within the District Plan period.

## Purpose

- 1.6 The purpose of the overall commission is in two parts:
  - **Part I – Burgess Hill Strategic Employment Site Study** – to review and evaluate supply and demand evidence relating to the potential allocation of employment land to the west of Burgess Hill adjacent to the A2300 road and to draw conclusions on the suitability and deliverability of such an allocation. Part I was completed with the publication of a Final Report in March 2015.

- **Part II – Science and Technology Park Feasibility and Development** – to identify and assess the feasibility and development options for a potential new Science and Technology Park in central Mid Sussex.
- 1.7 In greater detail, the objectives of the Part II study are to:
- a) review, evaluate and test the proposed location for the STP and potential alternative locations in central Mid Sussex;
  - b) identify site constraints and opportunities that define the nature and character of the STP development proposals;
  - c) establish the overall economic and research & development dynamics and characteristics for the STP;
  - d) set out proposed concept development options and alternatives as a basis to test viability and deliverability in physical, spatial and economic terms;
  - e) prepare a headline Prospectus for the development of the STP to support project partners and investor engagement; and
  - f) prepare a Delivery Framework to articulate how the STP can be brought forward and to set out the underlying evidence for the scheme.
- 1.8 This Report is concerned with Part II (a) of the commission, specifically to review and evaluate potential alternative locations to support the proposed identification of a site for a new Science and Technology Park of circa 100,000 sq.m in size in central Mid Sussex.
- 1.9 The purpose is to examine the rationale for locating the proposed STP as it is shown in the *Draft District Plan* (see Key Diagram and description contained in policy DP2). This has required the appraisal of reasonable alternative locations for the STP in planning, economic and physical sustainability terms. The existing Local Plan, the current evidence base and the emerging District Plan provide the foundations for the analyses to be undertaken.

## Structure of Report

- 1.10 Following this introductory section, the Report is structured as follows:
- **Section 2** – sets out a summary of the relevant strategic and local context but without re-iterating the extensive contextual analysis set out in the Part I *Burgess Hill Strategic Employment Sites Study* (March 2015) report.
  - **Section 3** – describes the approach and method for the assessment of potential locations for the Science and Technology Park and outlines assumptions, data sources and limitations of the analysis. The section also establishes the areas of search around Burgess Hill and the rationale for the inclusion and exclusion of particular locations.
  - **Section 4** – provides an examination of each of the potential alternative locations.

- **Section 5** – draws the work together summarising the principal conclusions on the potential location and alternatives for the proposed Science and Technology Park.

## 2. CONTEXT

### Introduction

- 2.1 The context and background to the development of a Science and Technology Park in central Mid Sussex is an important component in assessing the locational choices and alternatives.
- 2.2 The Part I *Burgess Hill Strategic Employment Sites Study* (March 2015) set out the economic and planning policy context in detail at Section 2. It is not the intention of this Report to revisit all of that information in detail; rather a summary of the most relevant strategic and local context is provided herein.

### Context

- 2.3 The principal contextual points relating to the overarching potential for a new Science and Technology Park are summarised in the following sub-sections.

#### Strategic Context

- 2.4 It is necessary and timely to assess the potential locations for a Science and Technology Park, as there is considerable strategic support and drive to provide a new facility to enhance the economic potential and growth of the Greater Brighton area.
- 2.5 The focus on central Mid Sussex and the Burgess Hill area follows on the back of considerable work undertaken by Mid Sussex District Council together with other authorities in West Sussex County to assess the future economic growth prospects of the area, including the role and function of the Gatwick Diamond area (which includes Mid Sussex District).

#### Coast to Capital LEP Strategic Economic Plan

- 2.6 The Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (C2C LEP) published its *Strategic Economic Plan* (SEP) in March 2014 identifying its vision, objectives and critical elements of land, property and infrastructure that are necessary to secure economic growth and to support new public funding from Government; this included a new Science and Technology park at Burgess Hill.
- 2.7 The *Coast to Capital Growth Deal* was published on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014 with the aim of encouraging growth across the Coast to Capital region through targeted investment in infrastructure and innovation. The Growth Deal totals £202 million from the Government's Local Growth Fund to deliver the *Strategic Economic Plan*.
- 2.8 In Chapter 3 of the SEP the spatial priorities for economic growth that the LEP will support are identified. Burgess Hill is identified particularly as a spatial priority as follows:

*“a significant location of employment space and planned new homes, with associated infrastructure improvements and including City Deal commitments”.*

- 2.9 The SEP confirms the proposals for Burgess Hill that it bases its funding settlement with Government upon at page 48 in Chapter 3. It identifies five specific interventions/developments including:
- **A: Science and Technology Park** – a high technology research and development facility promoted by the University of Brighton on a 30 hectare site with potential for 100,000 sq.m of floorspace and 2,500 new jobs (50% of which would be for new graduates) located to the west of Burgess Hill on the A2300 corridor.
  - **E: A2300 Corridor** – capacity improvements on the A2300 to the A23/M23. Delivery is required by 2017.
- 2.10 The SEP identifies that there are identified interventions to highways and broadband infrastructure necessary to ensure the developments can come forward. In this regard, £17 million has been secured from the Local Growth Fund to support the necessary transport and highways improvements to the A2300 road corridor connecting Burgess Hill to the A23.

#### Greater Brighton City Deal

- 2.11 The Greater Brighton City Deal (March 2014) (which includes Mid Sussex District) has subsequently secured a significant funding settlement with Government that supports a substantial programme of infrastructure and development investment aligned with the LEP’s Strategic Plan, including works necessary to support a Science Park development.
- 2.12 Under the Deal agreed with Government £165 million of investment across Greater Brighton is envisaged in the medium term to create a network of Growth Centres in key locations. This is to allow the Brighton economy to expand beyond the limitations imposed by the City’s physical restrictions and lack of available employment sites and floorspace.
- 2.13 The identified Growth Centres include a new Business and Science Park at Burgess Hill (as set out on page 8 of the City Deal agreement). The City Deal recognises the importance of ensuring that economic growth opportunities are captured within the local area and that there are distinct benefits arising for all partners to the City Deal.

#### Gatwick Diamond – Local Strategic Statement

- 2.14 Mid Sussex District is situated within the Gatwick Diamond area. In March 2012 the Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities (including Mid Sussex District) endorsed a *Local Strategic Statement*.
- 2.15 Of relevance to this Report, the Local Strategic Statement specifically recognises the lack of a modern, flagship science or technology park that is seen as particularly attractive to national international investors. Such a facility would need to be complementary to what can be provided from within the existing or extended business areas. The longer-term economic strategic direction therefore includes support for the feasibility of a

science/technology park or parks; and work to assess the scale, nature and location of any further new employment opportunities that may be needed.

### Local Context

- 2.16 The local development plan policy context is established by the saved policies of the *Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004)* together with the *Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish 2031: Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015)* and the *Twineham Neighbourhood Plan (January 2016)*.
- 2.17 The emerging draft policies of the *Mid Sussex District Plan, 2031 (November 2015)*, together with draft Neighbourhood Plans for Hassocks, Albourne and Bolney, are also important, albeit with more limited weight given that these plans are not yet fully tested at examination or adopted.

#### Mid Sussex Local Plan, 2004

- 2.18 The *Mid Sussex Local Plan* was adopted on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2004. A number of policies were saved by direction of the Secretary of State in September 2007 and remain relevant to the assessment of alternative locations for the siting of a Science and Technology Park. These include a number of policies that are concerned with development restraint, protection of landscape character and the maintenance of strategic and local development gaps between settlements in order to reduce or avoid the potential for coalescence of settlements.
- 2.19 Policy C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint) – this policy confirms that outside built-up area boundaries the remainder of the Plan area is classified as a Countryside Area of Development Restraint. In these locations the countryside is to be protected for its own sake. Proposals for development in the countryside particularly extending the built-up boundaries are restricted to developments for agriculture/forestry; new uses of existing rural buildings; extraction of minerals and waste disposal; facilities that are essential to meet local community needs that cannot be accommodated in built-up areas; proposals that contribute to a sense of local identity or regional diversity. The policy emphasises the protection of the countryside adjoining settlements from unnecessary development.
- 2.20 Policy C2 (Strategic Gap) – the purpose of strategic gaps is to prevent the coalescence of settlements and to retain their separate identity and amenity. Policy C2 sets out that strategic gaps have been defined and will be safeguarded in a number of locations including, of relevance to this Study: Burgess Hill and Hurstpierpoint/Keymer/Hassocks; Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath. The policy confirms that development will not be permitted within the strategic gap areas unless it is necessary for agriculture or use that has to be located in the countryside; it makes a valuable contribution to the landscape and amenity of the gap; and would not compromise individual or cumulative objectives or the fundamental integrity of the gap.
- 2.21 Policy C3 (Local Countryside Gap) – policy C3 defines local gaps in areas that are particularly vulnerable to development pressure and where the loss/erosion of those gaps would have a harmful effect on the character of the rural area and amenity and setting of villages. The designation is therefore to prevent coalescence and inappropriate development in the

countryside. The Hurstpierpoint, Albourne and Sayers Common; Keymer/Hassocks/Ditchling; and Keymer/Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint Local gaps are all relevant to this Study. The opportunities for development in these areas are guided by the same restrictions as policy C2 with respect to the purpose of development proposed; contribution to landscape/amenity; and ability to protect the objectives and fundamental integrity of the Local Gap.

- 2.22 BH21 (Land for Informal Open Space) – is concerned with the Council’s intentions to bring areas of land into public ownership as informal public open space. The Plan notes that planning decisions for housing and mixed use schemes have allowed this to occur, forming a green ‘crescent’ of open space around Burgess Hill, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks and Sayers Common. A series of areas are therefore allocated for Informal Public Open Space including Land adjoining Jane Murray Way in Burgess Hill which is relevant to this Study.

Pre-Submission Draft Mid Sussex District Local Plan, 2031 and Focused Amendments (November 2015)

- 2.23 The *Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031: Pre Submission Draft* was published in June 2015 with a further Focused Amendments Plan published for consultation in November 2015. This follows on from the Consultation Draft Plan that was previously reviewed in the Part I *Burgess Hill Strategic Employment Sites Study*.

- 2.24 The Pre-Submission Draft Plan confirms the overall vision and strategic objectives in Chapter 2. The Vision is:

*“A thriving and attractive District, a desirable place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to maintain, and where possible, improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of our District and the quality of life for all now and in the future”.*

- 2.25 The vision is underpinned by four priority themes that support a series of fifteen Strategic Objectives. The most relevant Objectives for this Study include:

- **SO2.** To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District’s distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence
- **SO3.** To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities
- **SO6.** To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that supports development and sustainable communities. This includes the provision of efficient and sustainable transport networks;
- **SO7.** To promote a place which is attractive to a full range of businesses, and where local enterprise thrives;
- **SO8.** To provide opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting.

- 2.26 Paragraph 2.19 of the Draft Plan references the City Deal settlement and particularly notes the potential for a Business and Science Park at Burgess Hill:
- “the City Deal identifies a number of growth areas, including support for the development of the proposed Business and Science Parks at Burgess Hill”*
- 2.27 Chapter 3 offers more detail on the spatial strategy, including a number of points of particular relevance to the proposed Science and Technology Park.
- 2.28 Paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 highlight the high quality, valued environment of Mid Sussex and notes the importance of the countryside in offering a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits. The paragraph emphasises that the location, nature and quality of new development is therefore of the utmost importance to ensure that this environment is protected and enhanced where possible.
- 2.29 Paragraph 3.5 continues referencing work undertaken by Land Use Consultants for the Council to identify the District’s capacity to accommodate new development. It notes the key findings in terms of the heavily constrained nature of much of the District by environmental and landscape/attractive countryside designations, with some two-thirds of the District covered by ‘primary’ constraints to development such as the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AoNB). Secondary constraints in terms of areas that are sensitive to development pressures are also identified as informing the overall, proposed spatial strategy and levels of development.
- 2.30 Paragraph 3.8 identifies the location of Mid Sussex within the Gatwick Diamond as offering the potential to enhance the economic prosperity of the area. It states that the Draft Plan promotes strategic development at Burgess Hill and includes proposals for high quality employment floorspace to enable the towns of Mid Sussex to become more sustainable and to boost the area’s economy.
- 2.31 Paragraph 3.19 notes that the strategy will seek to locate homes and employment opportunities as part of development at Burgess Hill. Work has progressed to develop 3,500 – 4,000 new homes to the north and north west of the town alongside new employment development.
- 2.32 The following draft policies are particularly relevant to the proposed creation of a Science and Technology Park:
- 2.33 Policy DP2 (Sustainable Economic Development) – this policy supports the creation of some 278 jobs per annum in the plan period (the policy has subsequently been amended in the Focused Amendments to 330 new jobs per annum). This is to be achieved through: encouraging high quality development of land and premises; supporting existing businesses and allowing them room to expand; encouraging inward investment and the promotion and expansion of clusters/networks of knowledge, creative and high technology industries; seeking the provision of infrastructure to support business growth. In particular, the policy identifies the allocation of 20-30 hectares of land as a high quality business park at Burgess Hill to the east of Cuckfield Road. The policy also sets out that the development of a Science

and Technology Park has been proposed to support research and development and to provide employment for the wider areas. The policy highlights that a broad location (indicated on the Policies Map) to the west of Burgess Hill has been identified in the Coast to Capital LEP SEP for the Science Park.

- 2.34 Policy DP7 (General Principles for Strategic Development at Burgess Hill) – this policy is concerned with establishing the over-arching principles for growth and development in Burgess Hill. It sets out a range of principles, including: the provision of additional, high quality employment opportunities including business and science park developments; improvements to public transport, walking and cycling; transport improvements that take account of the wider impact of the development on the surrounding area; and highway improvements in and around Burgess Hill to address limitations of east-west movement through the town.
- 2.35 Policy DP10 (Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside) – the draft policy sets out that the countryside will be valued for its own sake, recognising its intrinsic character and beauty. Development outside built-up area boundaries is permitted subject to maintaining or enhancing the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District; and if it is necessary for agriculture, supported by a specific policy reference in the Plan or Neighbourhood Plan. The policy notes the evidence base contained in the Landscape Character Assessment and the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study in order to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.
- 2.36 Policy DP11 (Preventing Coalescence) – this draft policy continues the approach taken in the Adopted Local Plan (2004) stressing the importance of maintaining the separate identity of each settlement in the District. Development is permitted if it does not result in the coalescence of settlements which harms the separate identity and amenity of settlements and if it would not have an unacceptable urbanising effect on the areas between settlements. The policy identifies that Local Gaps can also be created through other Development Plan Documents or Neighbourhood Plans based on objective evidence and a demonstration that existing local and national policies cannot provide the necessary protection.
- 2.37 Policy DP19 (Transport) – this draft policy establishes that new development will be required to support the objectives of the West Sussex Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026. The Plan's objectives include the provision of a high quality transport network that promotes a competitive and prosperous economy; and a network that affords access to services, employment and housing. In meeting these objectives, the draft policy permits development only where inter alia:
- it is sustainably located to minimise the need for travel;
  - it facilitates and promotes the increased use of alternative means of transport to the private car, such as the provision of, and access to, safe and convenient routes for walking, cycling and public transport, and includes suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking;
  - does not cause a severe cumulative impact in terms of road safety and increased traffic congestion; and

- provides appropriate mitigation to support new development on the local and Strategic Road Network.

- 2.38 Focused Amendments to the District Plan were published for consultation in November 2015, with the consultation period closing in January 2016.
- 2.39 The Focused Amendments include a number of modifications to the previous Draft District Plan. None of the proposed amendments alter policies concerning the development of a Science and Technology Park but there are important alterations in terms of housing provision over the plan period.
- 2.40 The Focused Amendments propose an increase in the planned housing requirement from 650 to 800 dwellings per annum (dpa) (13,600 dwellings over the plan period 2014 – 31). Modifications to policy DP5 (Housing) the supporting text and consequential amendments to other policies/paragraphs are therefore proposed to bring this change about.
- 2.41 The increase to the District’s requirement is above its calculated Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN) and has been proposed in order to better reflect and accommodate un-met housing needs arising in other local authority areas through the Duty to Co-operate. In order to secure the additional dwellings, the Focused Amendments also include a new density policy and additional residential site allocations (including a strategic site for 600 new dwellings to the east of Pease Pottage).
- 2.42 The District’s future employment target has also been amended with alterations to draft policy DP2 (Sustainable Economic Development). The revised employment target is for 330 new jobs per annum over the plan period (5,610 net new jobs).

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish 2031: Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015)

- 2.43 The *Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish 2031: Neighbourhood Plan* was subject to a local referendum and was duly ‘made’ (adopted) in March 2015.
- 2.44 The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies concerning a range of matters including countryside, landscape, amenity provision, housing development, economic and employment growth and transport.
- 2.45 The parish vision statement is set out at section 2.2, which states:  
*“We want to keep the village-feel of our community, and keep it a thriving and attractive Parish, a desirable place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to maintain, and where possible, improve the social, economic and environmental well being of our area and the quality of life for all, now and in the future”.*
- 2.46 A series of five Strategic Objectives underpin the Plan. Most relevant of these to the locational assessment for a potential Science and Technology Park are: protecting and enhancing the environment; and promoting economic vitality.
- 2.47 Policy Countryside HurstC1 (Conserving and Enhancing Character) confirms that development will be permitted in the countryside where it comprises an

appropriate countryside use; maintains or enhances the quality of the rural and landscape area of the Parish. The policy notes that the South Downs National Park policy (HurstC2) will take precedent.

- 2.48 Policy Countryside HurstC2 (South Downs National Park) restricts development in the National Park. The policy also identifies that development in the Parish that contributes to the setting of the National Park will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances and does not detract from the National Park's visual qualities and characteristics.
- 2.49 Policy Countryside HurstC3 (Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence) is also relevant to the Science and Technology Park locational assessment. This policy establishes that development will be permitted in the countryside provided that it does not individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and loss of separate identity of neighbouring settlements and provided that it does not conflict with other Countryside policies. Local Gaps are identified between settlements (these gaps are shown on the Parish Proposals Map at section 8). Key Local Gaps are between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks; Sayers Common and Albourne; Hurstpierpoint and Albourne and Hurstpierpoint and Burgess Hill.
- 2.50 The Parish Proposals Map shown in section 8 (page 20) of the Neighbourhood Plan shows the spatial boundaries and areas for relevant policies. The Local Gap Prevention of Coalescence policy (C3) is shown at various locations as per the written policy. There is also a Green Crescent annotation to the Proposals Map on the western edge of Burgess Hill (part of the eastern edge of the Parish).
- 2.51 The Map also identifies an area to the south of the A2300 and to the west of Burgess Hill and to the east of the proposed Business Park (policy E1) as a New Amenity Area (policy Amenities HurstA3). This area is shown as indicative and accords with the proposed Outdoor Community Sports location set out in the *Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy* (2011). The area is noted to be integral to the Northern Arc development proposals.

Twineham Neighbourhood Development Plan (January 2016)

- 2.52 The *Twineham Neighbourhood Development Plan* successfully passed its referendum in January 2016 following an independent examination and was duly 'made' (adopted) in March 2016.
- 2.53 The Neighbourhood Plan covers Twineham parish (Twineham, Hickstead, Twineham Green and part of Wineham). The boundary extends to the east of the A23, to the junction of the A2300 with Pookbourne Lane, while to the west the boundary extends to the District boundary at Wineham and Wineham Lane.
- 2.54 The Plan covers the period 2014 – 2031. It covers a wide range of matters and issues including housing, employment and economic development, landscape and environment.
- 2.55 The Plan's vision includes ensuring that the parish will continue to thrive and reflect the views of the community by maintaining its rural character and natural environment and by promoting essential rural services, housing and infrastructure. The Vision is supported by five Key Objectives:

- **KO1 Design & Character:** All new development in Twineham should be development of a scale and design appropriate to its rural surroundings, which will safeguard the residential amenity and ensure road safety. Development should also respect the character and historic and natural assets of the surrounding area and take every opportunity, through design and materials, to reinforce local distinctiveness and a strong sense of place.
  - **KO2 Housing:** To enable small-scale housing on currently unidentified sites close to adjacent dwellings where there is a proven local need
  - **KO3 Employment:** To ensure appropriate employment opportunities are promoted within the Parish so that people who live locally can work locally
  - **KO4 Environment:** To protect the predominantly agricultural landscape of the Parish for the future
  - **KO5 Rural Infrastructure:** To promote improved infrastructure necessary to the well-being of local residents, including flood risk management
- 2.56 The Plan notes that there are a small number and variety of businesses, including at Ricebridge, Hillmans Farm on Bolney Chapel Lane and at Twineham Place Farm.
- 2.57 Policy TNP3 (Employment and the Local Economy) supports specific types of employment development where it respects or enhances the local character of the built, natural and historic environment, safeguards amenity and does not create a severe impact on the highway network, is not liable to flooding and does not result in settlement coalescence:
- (TNP3.1) - diversification of established agricultural businesses and buildings where it complements the existing farming enterprise
  - (TNP3.2) - Live/work development, where suitable and appropriate to the rural setting of the parish.
- 2.58 Policy TNP4 (Landscape and Environment) confirms that new development will be supported where it: respects local landscape quality ensuring that views and vistas are maintained; incorporates features that improve environmental performance and reduce carbon emissions; and that development schemes must be accompanied by a landscaping scheme that aims to retain amenity and historic trees and hedges. The reasoned justification to the policy particularly indicates the importance of protecting the far reaching views to the north of the High Weald AONB and to the South Downs National Park to the south.
- Bolney Neighbourhood Plan (October 2015)
- 2.59 The *Bolney Neighbourhood Plan* was published for consultation (Reg 16) during October to December 2015. The Plan has been submitted and is at examination stage.
- 2.60 The draft Neighbourhood Plan covers all of Bolney Parish and deals with the period 2015 – 31.

- 2.61 The Parish is bounded by Twineham Parish to the south, Slaugham Parish to the north, Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish to the south-east, Ansty and Staplefield Parish to the east and Cowfold Parish to the west.
- 2.62 Much of the northern area of the Parish is situated within the High Weald AONB (broadly to the north of Bolney Village). At the south-eastern corner, the Parish includes the existing Bolney Grange Business Park situated to the east of the A23 and north of the A2300.
- 2.63 The Plan's vision, set out in Section 2 is to:
- “deliver the sustainable development of Bolney Parish, at a scale and form that preserves its distinctive rural village character, landscape and community ethos”.*
- 2.64 Strategic Objectives are within four priority themes:
- Protecting and enhancing the environment;
  - Promoting economic vitality;
  - Ensuring cohesive and safe communities;
  - Supporting healthy lifestyles.
- 2.65 For the STP locations assessment work, the most relevant priority theme is the Promotion of Economic Vitality. Under this theme the objectives include maximising the potential of existing employment and support the needs of local employers.
- 2.66 Also of importance under the Ensuring Cohesive and Safe Communities theme are objectives to avoid any development which places an unacceptable traffic burden or creates safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists on the local road network and A272.
- 2.67 Policy BOLBB1 (Built-up Area Boundary) indicates that development shall be focused within the Built-up Area Boundary identified in the Proposals Map. Outside the Built-up Boundary development is not permitted unless it relates to another specific Neighbourhood Plan policy; is necessary utility infrastructure for which there is no other reasonable alternative location; is necessary for agriculture or countryside use; maintain and enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character; and takes account of the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- 2.68 Policy BOLE2 (Protect and Enhance the Countryside) deals with development outside the Built-up Area Boundary. It notes that development must demonstrate that it does not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape. Any development which has an unacceptable impact on the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty shall be refused, unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances and that it is in the public interest (as required by national planning policy) and that it fulfils the requirements of Mid Sussex District Plan Policy C4.
- 2.69 Policy BOLB2 (Expansion of Commercial Activity at Bolney Grange Business Park) provides that permission will be granted for B Use Class uses on 0.65 Ha of land at Bolney Grange Business Park.

2.70 Policy BOLT1 (Transport Impact of Development) is concerned with new development avoiding unacceptable congestion on the local road network or on the A272 road. It also supports safe vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian access into and within any development. Provision is also to be made for sustainable methods of non-vehicular movement (walking in cycling in particular) from any new development to the amenities of Bolney village.

Albourne Neighbourhood Plan (October 2015)

2.71 The *Albourne Neighbourhood Plan* has, at the time of writing, successfully passed its independent Examination with a recommendation to proceed to referendum. The Submitted Plan is therefore not yet 'made'. However, it is important to record herein the key issues and matters that the plan covers and the emerging draft policies relevant to this locational assessment.

2.72 The Submitted Plan covers the Albourne Parish area and is concerned with the period 2014 – 31. The Parish area includes Albourne and High Cross. Its western boundary is contiguous with the District boundary, while the eastern boundary is formed by the A23 road. The north of the parish abuts to Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common parish.

2.73 The Plan's draft Strategic Objectives are:

- Keeping the “village-feel” and sense of place
- Protecting and enhancing the environment
- Promoting economic vitality and diversity
- Ensuring cohesive and safe communities

2.74 Policy ALC1 (Conserving and Enhancing Character) highlights that development will only be permitted in the countryside, defined as areas outside the Built-up Area Boundary on the Policy Map subject to a range of criteria including: necessity for agricultural or countryside uses; the development maintains or enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the Parish; it is supported by a specific policy reference elsewhere in the Plan; and it is necessary for essential infrastructure and can be demonstrated that there are no alternative sites suitable and available. The benefits of development must outweigh the harm or loss.

2.75 Policy ALC2 (South Downs National Park) seeks to ensure that development within the Park area ensures that the purposes of the National Park designation are achieved. The purposes include seeking to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities. The policy identifies that the policies of the SDNP Partnership Management Plan will be a material consideration for development.

2.76 Policy ALC (Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence) confirms that development will only be permitted in the countryside provided it does not individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and loss of separate identity of neighbouring settlements. Local Gaps are shown on the Policy Map and include areas between: Albourne and Sayers Common; Albourne and Hurstpierpoint; and Albourne with Twineham. Essential infrastructure development is supported provided that there are no alternative sites suitable and available.

- 2.77 Section 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan considers economic development and employment. Policy ALE1 (Employment) is concerned with maintaining existing employment in identified sites in their built-up areas.

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan (January 2016)

- 2.78 The *Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Consultation* was published in January 2016. The Plan is at an early draft stage and covers the period 2014 – 31.

- 2.79 The Plan covers the whole Parish, including Hassocks and Keymer. It is bounded to the north by Burgess Hill, to the west by Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish and the District’s administrative boundary to the east. The southern area of the Parish is within the South Downs National Park area.

- 2.80 The Draft Neighbourhood Plan’s vision is described at section 3.2 as:

*“To ensure Hassocks (Keymer and Clayton) continue to develop sustainably as a vibrant parish within a countryside setting.*

*To provide access for the whole community to local social, cultural, sporting and environmental amenities.*

*To ensure the Parish retains its rural feel and remains a desirable place to live, work and visit. It is recognised that changes will occur but those changes should protect and enhance the existing character of the Parish”.*

- 2.81 A series of six Strategic Objectives are articulated, the most relevant of these for the locational assessment are:

- To preserve and enhance the rural character of the Parish and its historic buildings, maintaining Gaps to neighbouring towns and villages and having regard to the proximity of the Parish to the South Downs National Park and its biodiversity.
- To encourage economic development and job creation within the built-up area of the village and to develop the centre of the village to form a distinctive social hub.
- To reduce the impact of traffic in terms of congestion, pollution and parking through the management of parking and speeds, accessibility of public transport and improvements in pedestrian and cycle safety; encouraging people to walk, cycle and ride in and around Hassocks.

- 2.82 Policy 1 (Burgess Hill Gap) defines a safeguarded gap between Burgess Hill and Keymer/Hassocks with the objective of preventing coalescence and retaining the separate identity and amenity of settlements. Development in the Gap is supported for agricultural and countryside purposes, the provision of formal and informal open space at Clayton Mills. Development is also supported where it makes a valuable contribution to the landscape and amenity of the Gap and enhances its value as open countryside; and where it would not compromise the objectives and fundamental integrity of the Gap.

- 2.83 Policy 2 (Ditchling Gap and Hurstpierpoint Gap). The policy supports Local Gaps between Keymer/Hassocks with Ditchling and with Hurstpierpoint. The purpose and criteria for development in the Gaps are the same as set out in Policy 1 above.
- 2.84 Policy 5 (South Downs National Park) confirms the Plan's support for development in the National Park where this has regard to the purposes and duty of the Park Authority; and where it would conserve and enhance the landscape character, scenic beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park. It notes that development proposals on land adjacent to the National Park will be supported where they have regard to the setting of the Park.

## Conclusions

- 2.85 There is a significant body of economic strategies and planning policies (adopted and emerging drafts) that are relevant to the future location of a new Science and Technology Park. These strategies and policies need to be taken into account in the locational analysis work set out in later sections of this Report.
- 2.86 The overarching emphasis of national planning and economic policy is to support long term growth, sustainability and prosperity through new economic development, the expansion of existing businesses and new inward investment.
- 2.87 The Gatwick Diamond, Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership and the Greater Brighton City Deal strategies clearly highlight the importance of providing suitable infrastructure, homes and commercial employment development sites in order to drive economic growth. This includes the development of a new Science and Technology Park to the west of Burgess Hill. The strategies are clear and unambiguous in this respect and are closely interlinked in terms of how public sector and private partners will work together to deliver economic infrastructure including land and floorspace.
- 2.88 One of the critical matters that each of the strategies outlines is tackling the shortage of suitable employment floorspace and particularly doing so in order to unlock the growth potential of the Greater Brighton area. The City Deal specifically identifies the potential for a new Science and Technology Park in Burgess Hill as part of the approach to promoting longer term Growth Centres. Similarly, the LEP's *Strategic Economic Plan* highlights Burgess Hill as a spatial priority location for new homes and associated infrastructure improvements (including capacity improvements on the A2300 connecting to the A23).
- 2.89 The Adopted *Mid Sussex Local Plan* saved policies remain relevant and offer appropriate policy direction for the location of new developments. The policies especially support the protection of the countryside outside areas of built-development and existing settlements. The adopted policies include specific spatial direction through the identification of Strategic and Local Gaps that forms areas of Countryside Development Constraint around Burgess Hill, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks and Sayers Common.

- 2.90 The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan was ‘made’ in March 2015 and aligns with the saved policies of the Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Areas of Countryside Constraint and Local Gaps for the Prevention of Coalescence that cover much of the Neighbourhood Plan area. The Plan supports new employment development to the south of the A2300 at Goddards Green. It also highlights the restrictions on development in the South Downs National Park.
- 2.91 The Neighbourhood Plan for Twineham successfully passed its referendum in January 2016 and was ‘made’ (adopted) in March 2016. The Plan identifies the importance of landscape and countryside protection. There is a particular level of policy support in the plan’s reasoned justification for protecting the far reaching views to the north of the High Weald AoNB and to the South Downs National Park to the south.
- 2.92 Similarly, the emerging Neighbourhood Plans for Albourne and Bolney establish draft policies for the protection of the countryside the reflect the need to respect settlement development boundaries subject to very specific criteria which may allow development in the countryside.
- 2.93 The Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan follows suit with a series of relevant draft policies aiming to secure landscape gaps between Hassocks and Burgess Hill (at Policy 1) and between Hassocks/Keymer with Hurstpierpoint and with Ditchling. Development in such countryside gaps is subject to strict criteria for their release.
- 2.94 Where the Neighbourhood Plans encompass either the High Weald AoNB or the South Downs National Park, their draft policies reflect the importance of development restraint and the need to allow development in special circumstances in accordance with District and national planning policies for such important designated areas.
- 2.95 The emerging District Plan policies follow a similar spatial approach and although still in a draft form, reflect a continuation of the District’s preference to focus new development into existing built-up areas and at those locations outside where there is an ability to accommodate new development without major adverse effects on landscape character or the coalescence or unacceptable urbanisation of areas of land between settlements. The emerging Plan includes recent background evidence reviewing landscape character and the ability of the District to accommodate new development (the *Capacity of Mid Sussex to Accommodate Development Study*, June 2014). This evidence needs to be taken into account in assessing potential locations for a new Science and Technology Park.
- 2.96 The Countryside Restraint policies of the Local Plan, the emerging District Plan and the various Neighbourhood Plans (both ‘made’ and those in draft form) clearly recognise the importance of development restraint and protection in Countryside Restraint Areas and for those locations which form part of strategic or local settlement gaps.
- 2.97 It is therefore important that an exceptional case (in terms of *inter alia*: the need for the development, the public interest in supporting such a facility, the proposed site location, the quality and inherent characteristics of the development to be created, etc.) would need to be prepared to support any

detailed development proposal for a new Science and Technology Park in any location where there are Countryside or settlement gap policies in place.

## 3. APPROACH AND METHOD

### Introduction

- 3.1 This section sets out the overall approach and method used to assess potential Science and Technology Park locations in central Mid Sussex. The section also sets out the rationale and extent of the area of search for locations and identifies the assumptions and limitations to the analysis.

### Methodology

#### Approach

- 3.2 In accordance with the requirements of the *National Planning Policy Framework* and the *National Planning Practice Guidance* and on the basis that Mid Sussex District Council has already invested in a significant body of economic and employment analysis and reports over the period of the Draft Plan's preparation and prior to that, this Report makes best use of available information as far as possible and as appropriate. Data sources and the use of existing information are identified in each of the relevant sections of the report.
- 3.3 The analysis has been undertaken through a combination of desk-based and site survey work using published and available information.
- 3.4 A criteria-based approach has been used to assess potential locations for the proposed Science and Technology Park within the defined Search Area (see below). The criteria used draw from the NPPG at Section 3 and particularly paragraph 016 that sets out a series of assessment criteria for potential employment sites/locations, namely factors such as:
- site size, boundaries and location;
  - current land use and character of the surrounding area;
  - physical constraints (access, contamination, steep slopes, flooding, natural features of significance, location of infrastructure/utilities);
  - potential environmental constraints;
  - where relevant, development progress (ground works completed, number of units started, number completed, etc.); and
  - initial assessment of whether the site is suitable for a particular type of use or as part of a mixed-use development.
- 3.5 The NPPG offers further guidance on the suitability of employment sites or broad locations at Section 3, paragraph 019, that advises that sites/broad locations should be guided by:
- the development plan and emerging plan policy and national policy;

- market and industry requirements in the functional economic market area.

3.6 The criteria approach has been used to assess each potential location around the Burgess Hill search area, from which conclusions on the alternative locational choices have been drawn.

### Data Sets

3.7 The following existing, published data sets and information have been reviewed and used in preparing this Report.

**Table 3.1: Principal Data Sources**

Theme	Data Set
<b>Land Use</b>	Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004) and Proposals Map
	Pre-Submission District Plan (June 2015), Focused Amendments (November 2015) and Draft Policy Maps
	Neighbourhood Plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common</li> <li>• Hassocks</li> <li>• Albourne</li> <li>• Bolney</li> <li>• Twineham</li> </ul>
	HEDNA and Update (Feb/June 2015)
	Commercial Land Call for Sites (Summer 2015)
	Settlement Sustainability Review and Addendum (May and July 2015)
	Feasibility Studies for Development Options at Burgess Hill (Sept 2005)
<b>Landscape</b>	Capacity of Mid Sussex to Accommodate Development Study (June 2014) (LUC)
	Landscape Capacity Study (July 2007)
	Landscape Character Assessment (Nov 2005)
<b>Environmental</b>	DEFRA MAGIC
	Sequential Flood Risk Assessment
	Flood Risk Mapping
	Soil Quality and Agricultural Land Grades
	West Sussex Historic Environment Record
<b>Transport &amp; Highways</b>	Mid Sussex Infrastructure Delivery Plan (June 2015)
	Transport Study (Stages 1 and 2) (Sept 2013) (Amey)
	West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-26
<b>Economic</b>	Burgess Hill Strategic Employment Sites Part I Study (particularly Section 7) (March 2015)
	NWS Economic Growth Assessment (April 2014)
	Coast to Capital LEP Strategic Economic Plan (March

	2014)
	Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy (2013)

### Assumptions and Limitations

- 3.8 The purpose of the analysis undertaken is to identify potential locations and alternative choices for the proposed Science and Technology Park in order to support the emerging District Plan.
- 3.9 The analysis has been undertaken using broad physical, economic/market and sustainability criteria that have been applied to a level of detail sufficient to assess the overall potential, opportunities/constraints for different locations. The work has not therefore been undertaken at a site-specific level given the need to identify broad, sustainable locations and alternatives, and the findings are therefore limited in this respect.
- 3.10 The analysis and findings of this Report must be read in the context of a series of assumptions and limitations concerning available information and data and the level of analysis possible at various geographic scales. The Report's key assumptions and limitations are recorded in each of the relevant sections.

### Areas of Search

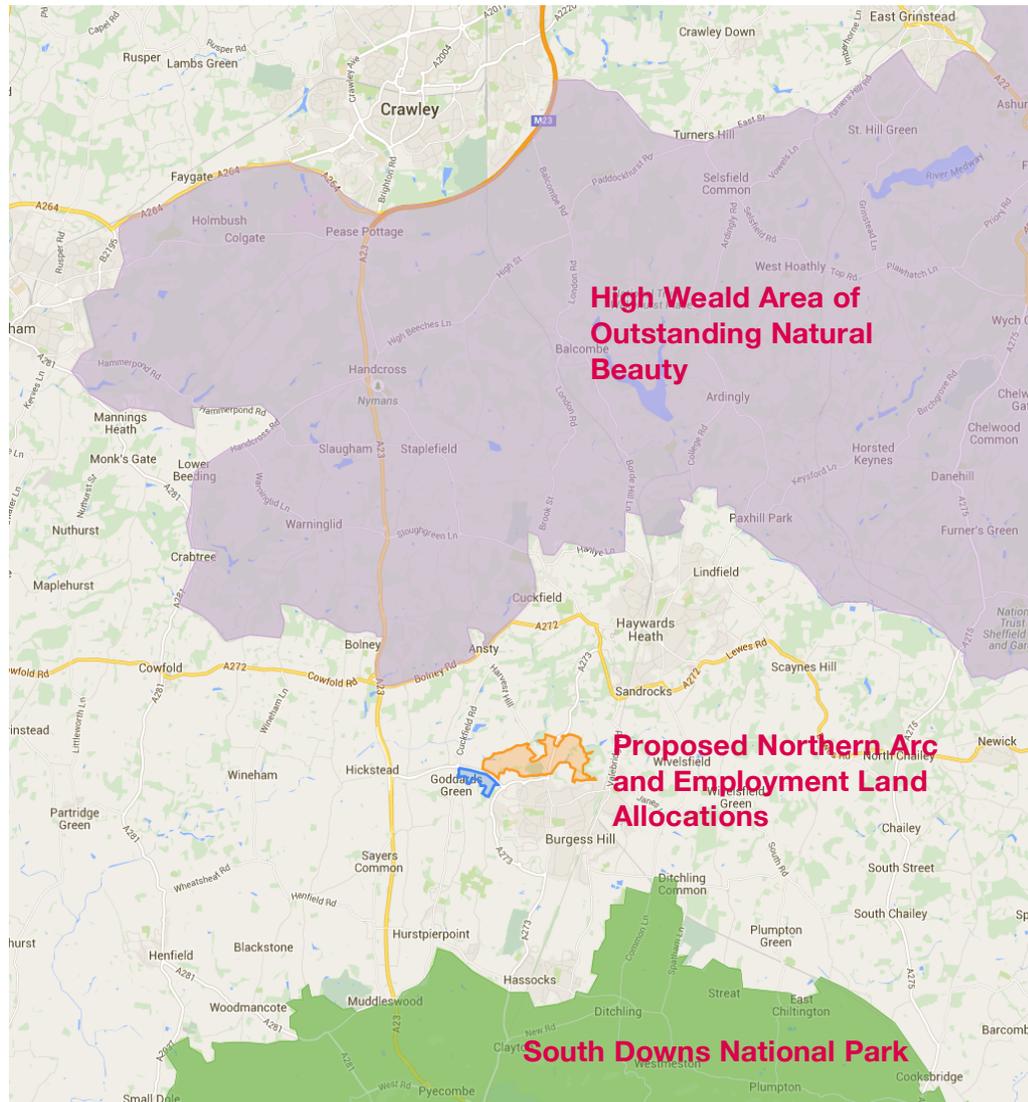
- 3.11 The existing strategic and local context summarised previously in Section 2 of the Report identifies a focus on central Mid Sussex and Burgess Hill as the preferred broad location for the proposed Science and Technology Park.
- 3.12 The overarching rationale for this broad location is derived from a combination of factors including:
- the position of central Mid Sussex Hill at a central point within the wider Coast to Capital LEP and Gatwick Diamond areas;
  - the identification of the area as an appropriate and preferred location for Science and Technology Park development in the Greater Brighton City Deal and Coast to Capital LEP Strategic Economic Plans;
  - the presence of existing strategic road and rail infrastructure enabling a high level of accessibility to south-east regional (including the south coast), London and international markets;
  - the close juxtaposition of Burgess Hill to the north of Brighton & Hove (beyond the South Downs National Park boundary) and the existing higher education and economic growth drivers arising from existing businesses and inward investments to the City as well as more widely in the Gatwick Diamond;
  - the alignment of economic growth potential in the central Mid Sussex area with advancing plans for new residential development, committed infrastructure (highway) improvements to the A2300 and the expansion of allocated employment land in the area;

- the availability of land that is relatively unconstrained in terms of its landscape and environmental nature and character in and around Burgess Hill avoiding areas of the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AoNB);
- reflecting the existing and emerging draft planning policy position that seeks to avoid unnecessary development in the countryside and to avoid coalescence of existing settlements; and
- the potential high quality of life and attractiveness of the central Mid Sussex area for future labour force and employees working at a Science and Technology Park located in the area.

### Areas Included and Excluded from Search

- 3.13 The area of search and consideration is guided by a combination of:
- market demand requirements (i.e. the economic and profile/visibility aspects of the proposed STP);
  - the presence of primary and secondary land constraints such as National Park, AoNB, areas of Flood Risk, Agricultural Land Quality, designated heritage value, landscape character, etc.; and
  - the proposed future spatial distribution of development (i.e. the current and future spatial form of Mid Sussex District and particularly the Burgess Hill and A23 corridor areas as articulated in the *Mid Sussex Pre-Submission District Plan* and relevant Neighbourhood Plans).
- 3.14 Figure 3.1 shows the wider context for the areas included and excluded from the search highlighting the extent of the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Also shown, for reference are the proposed employment land and Northern Arc development sites to the north and west of Burgess Hill.

**Figure 3.1: Areas of Search, Wider Context – Primary Constraints Plan**



Source: Google Map Extract, CCL 2016

- 3.15 There are evident primary constraints to development capacity to the north and south of the central area in Mid Sussex District as identified in Figure 4 of the *Mid Sussex District Plan: Pre-Submission Draft* (June 2015) and Figures 2.3 and 3.2 of the *Capacity of Mid Sussex to Accommodate Development Study* (June 2014) prepared for the District Council by Land Use Consultants.
- 3.16 The *Capacity of Mid Sussex to Accommodate Development* study represents recently prepared evidence underpinning the emerging District Plan and which takes into account current statutory landscape, environmental and development designations as well as providing a synthesis assessment of areas of development capacity. It identifies the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as primary constraints to development of national importance.

- 3.17 The National Park runs in an east-west direction with its northern border near Albourne and stretches southwards to the development boundary of Brighton & Hove. The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty stretches east-west running northwards from Bolney and encompassing land to the boundaries of Crawley and north of Haywards Heath. These areas are covered by key, important, national designations and have therefore been excluded from the locational search and as such form the northern and southern boundaries for the consideration of alternative STP locations.
- 3.18 The District and County administrative boundary is in close proximity to the east of Burgess Hill restricting the potential area of search in that direction.
- 3.19 Land to the north of Burgess Hill (north of the proposed Northern Arc area), south of Haywards Heath/Lindfield and Cuckfield has few primary constraints to development. The area is characterised by a pattern of agricultural land use interspersed by areas of woodland and isolated residential dwellings.
- 3.20 The area to the north of Burgess Hill has limited prominence and visibility from the main access routes and urban centres limiting the support and profile that an STP in this location could offer to the wider economy. It is relatively poorly served by road or public transport facilities which leads to limited accessibility to services and facilities for a future workforce in this location.
- 3.21 Future development of the Northern Arc during the plan period will extend the urban development boundary of Burgess Hill north and north-west from the existing settlement. There is a concern that further, significant, growth through the development of an STP in the remaining gap between Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill would serve to erode the sense of separation and individual identity of both centres. While it would not cause physical coalescence there would be a loss of the existing countryside gap in this location between the two towns.
- 3.22 To the west of Burgess Hill and particularly the A23 road, there are fewer primary constraints to development, however there are practical and contextual considerations that need to be applied to this more rural area in establishing a sensible area of search.
- 3.23 The area to the west of the A23 is characterised by dispersed smaller settlements and large tracts of agricultural land and woodland. There are lower levels of accessibility by road and weaker public transport links within this area well as fewer services and facilities available.
- 3.24 The scale and nature of a STP, including the need to secure high quality, high volume road and public transport access; provide a high level of prominence and visibility for the site to support economic growth and market demand; and offer close juxtaposition to sustainable settlements and population centres for the future workforce, does not align with including an extensive rural area to the west of the A23 or to the area north of Burgess Hill and south of Haywards Heath. On this basis, the western locational search boundary has been drawn to include Bolney, Hickstead and Albourne and their immediate surroundings but not extending further westwards away from the A23. The north/eastern boundary between Burgess Hill and

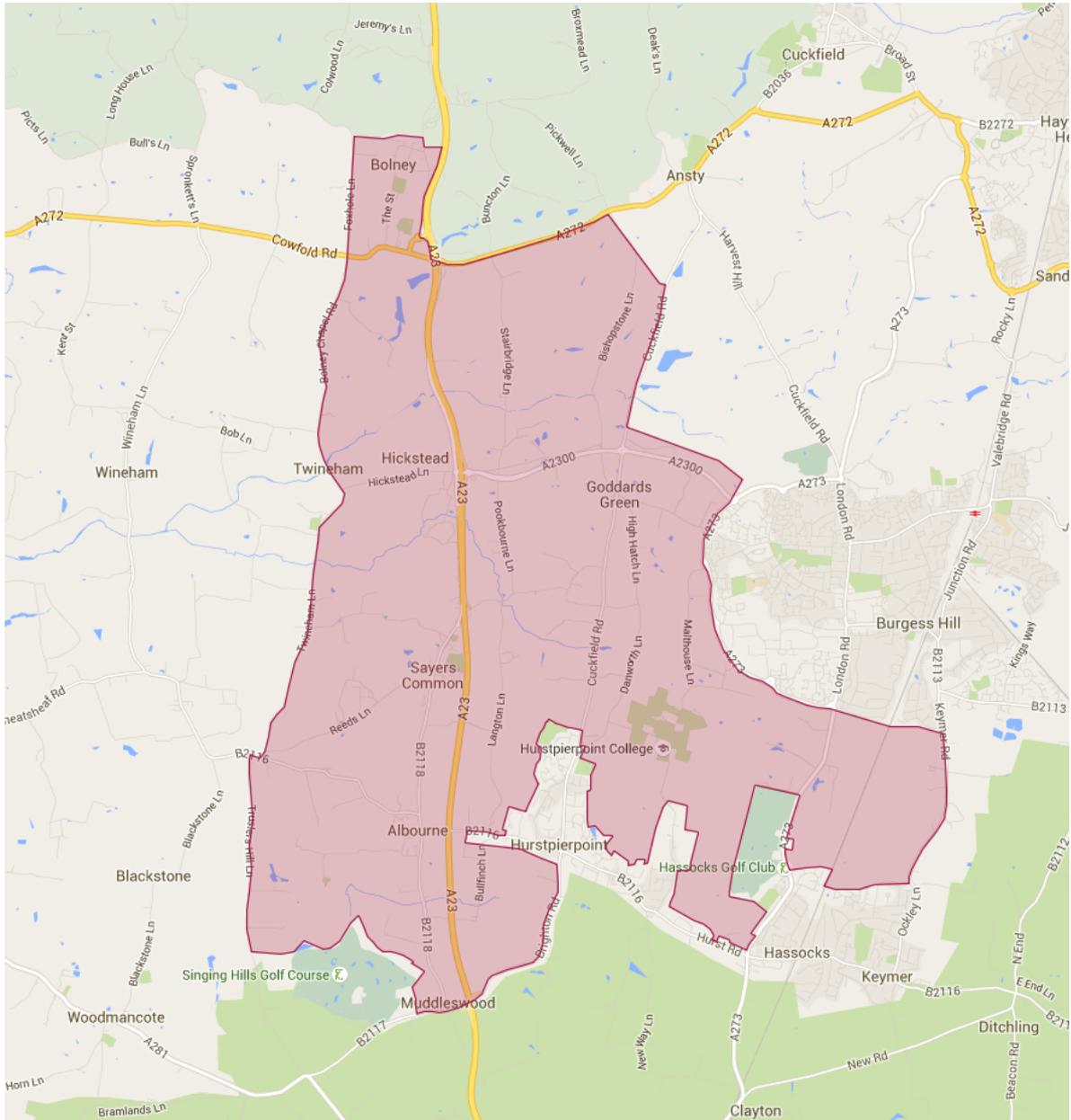
Cuckfield has been drawn to exclude the area of the Northern Arc and between Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill.

3.25 The main area of search has therefore been defined as including land in and near to Burgess Hill, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, Bolney, Sayers Common and Albourne, including:

- the identified STP site location (as shown in the MSDC Pre-Submission Draft Plan Key Diagram and described in policy DP2);
- land along the A2300 from its junction with the A23 in the west to the existing boundary of Burgess Hill in the east (noting the existing land use activities, planning commitments and proposed employment, mixed use and residential allocations for a number of sites along that corridor);
- land running north/south along the A23 corridor broadly between Bolney in the north and Albourne to the south (at the National Park boundary) taking account of identified Primary Land Use constraints to the north and south as defined in the *Capacity of Mid Sussex to Accommodate Development Study* (June 2014); and
- alternative locations arising from the MSDC 'Commercial Land Call for Sites' work in 2015.

3.26 Bringing these locational considerations together, the overall area of search that has been used is shown in red shading on Figure 3.2 below.

**Figure 3.2: Broad Area of Focus for Locational Search for Science and Technology Park**



Source: Google Map Extract 2015, CCL

## 4. POTENTIAL LOCATIONS ANALYSIS

### Introduction

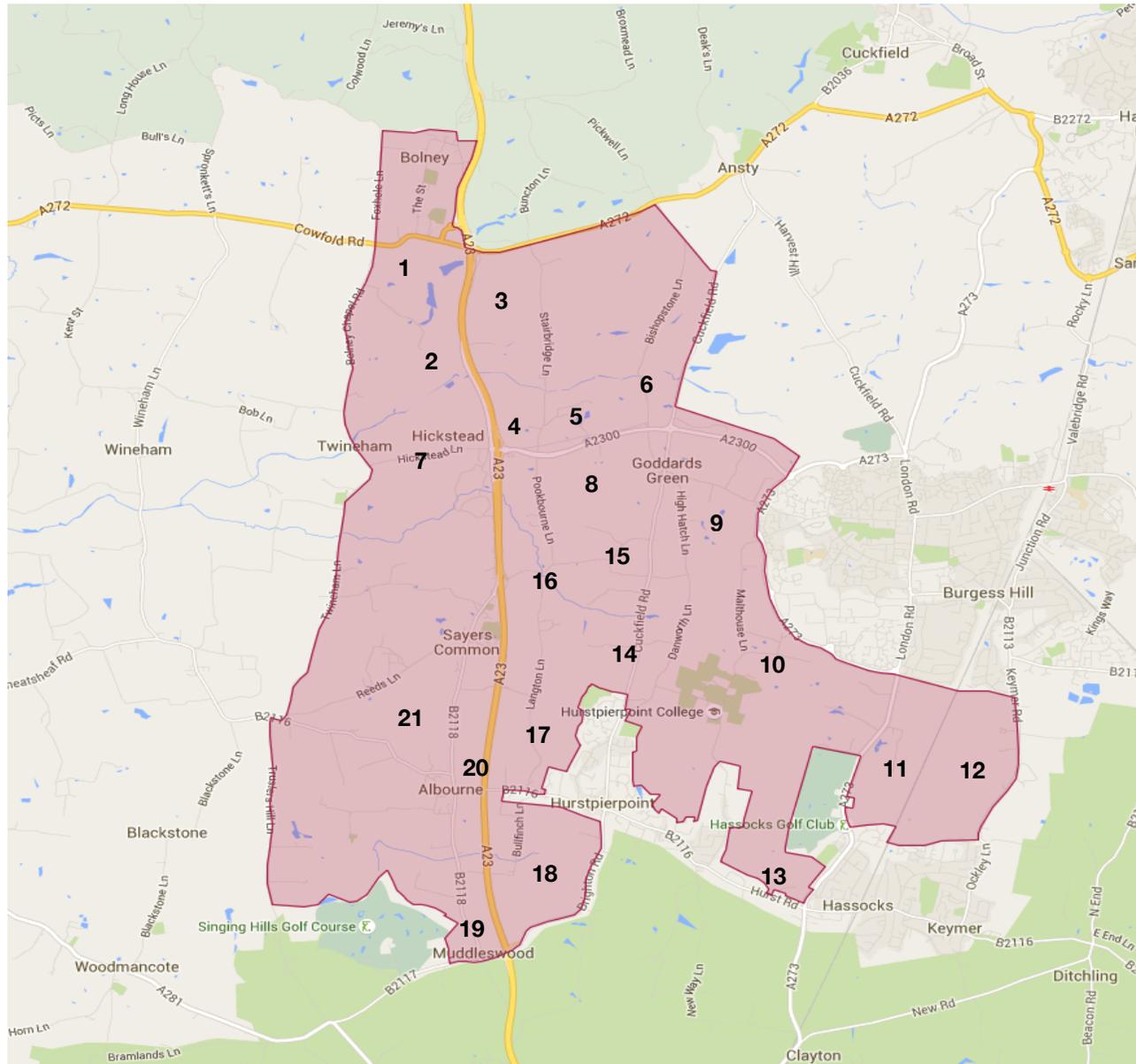
- 4.1 This section of the Report turns to the analysis of potential Science and Technology Park locations within the identified area of search. The range of locations is set out and an analytical matrix provides details evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each alternative.

### Potential Locations

- 4.2 A range of 21 potential Science and Technology Park locations have been identified within the Area of Search as shown in Figure 4.1 below. These locations represent reasonable alternative options for siting the Park based on the key attributes established in Section 3.
- 4.3 Overall, the locations can be grouped into five broad categories:
- around Bolney;
  - along the A2300 road corridor west of Burgess Hill, including Hickstead;
  - on the western edge of the built-up area of Burgess Hill;
  - south of Burgess Hill along the A273 and Hassocks; and
  - around Hurstpierpoint, Albourne and Sayers Common.
- 4.4 Bolney is a small village to the west of the A23 and north of the A272, surrounded mainly by woodland and agricultural land. Locations 1 to 3 are based in this area.
- 4.5 The A2300 road corridor running west of Burgess Hill is a key, strategic road link providing access between Burgess Hill and the A23, with a number of committed developments approved and proposed for allocation in the Draft District Plan. The area currently contains a combination of agricultural land uses together with existing business areas and the town's Waste Water Treatment Works. To the west of the A23 lies Hickstead, the land around which is primarily in agricultural and equine uses. Locations 4 to 8 are situated in this area.
- 4.6 Locations 9 and 10 are based along the western edge of Burgess Hill, by the A273. This is primarily an area of agricultural, formal and informal public open spaces.
- 4.7 To the south of Burgess Hill are Locations 11 to 13. Locations 11 and 12 are situated on either side of the Brighton-London rail line and are on agricultural, recreational and informal public access land. Location 13 is to the north-east of Hassocks situated on primarily agricultural land.
- 4.8 Locations 14 to 21 are spread across an area running from Sayers Common in the north to Albourne and Hurstpierpoint in the south. These areas are

predominately agricultural with recreational uses, with generally more limited access to the A23 road.

**Figure 4.1: Area of Search, Potential Alternative STP Locations**



1. Crosspost, south Bolney
2. Land south A272/Mill Ponds
3. Land south-east A23/A272 Junction
4. Land north-east A23/A2300 junction
5. Land between Stairbridge and Bishopstone Lane, north A2300
6. Land between Bishopstone Lane and Cuckfield Lane, north A2300
7. Land at Hickstead west A23/A2300 Junction
8. Land east A23 and south A2300 at Dumbrells Farm
9. Land south Goddards Green, east Cuckfield Road and west A273
10. Land south west A273 and B2036 Junction
11. Land west railway line, south of Burgess Hill
12. Land east railway line, south of Burgess Hill
13. Land west Hassocks, north B2116
14. Land south Fish Pond on Cuckfield Road, east of Sewage Works
15. Land east Pookbourne Lane, north Northend Lane
16. Land east A23, south of A2300 Hickstead Junction
17. Land east A23, north B2116 and west Hurstpierpoint
18. Land east A23, south B2116 and south-west Hurstpierpoint
19. Land west A23, north B2117, north Middleswood
20. Land west A23, east Albourne
21. Land north Albourne Green, south-east Sayers Common, between B2118/B2116 and Reeds Lane

## Location Analysis

- 4.9 The approach to the analysis of locations enables key themes and multiple indicators to be considered individually and in combination with one another. This assists in identifying the most appropriate (and less appropriate) alternative locations for the proposed Science and Technology Park.
- 4.10 A key focus has been upon identifying the least constrained areas of the District, as areas that are less constrained by environmental designations and issues may be more able to accommodate significant development. It does need to be recognised that further analysis will be necessary at a site level to consider the sustainability of the preferred location in order to fully consider and account for site-specific matters that cannot be covered in a broad-level locational assessment.
- 4.11 Tables 4.1 to 4.5 provide a summary of the assessment work applied against each potential location. This is split into the following broad categories:
- **Basic location information;**
  - **Location suitability – basic characteristics;**
  - **Location suitability – access related issues;**
  - **Location suitability – physical and market attributes, and availability; and**
  - **Conclusions.**
- 4.12 A total of 20 assessment criteria were used, supported by a range of descriptive data (not included with Table 4.1 to 4.5). As far as possible the data was graded into three performance categories for each location:
- **Good/High (coloured Green);**
  - **Average/Medium (coloured Yellow);**
  - **Poor/Low (coloured Red).**
- 4.13 Table 4.6 identifies the primary source and method of assessment for the base data used in Table 4.1 to 4.6. It sets out the rationale for allocating locations to the various performance categories.
- 4.14 It is important to note, however, that certain criteria have not been included within the formal assessment due to little variation across the search area. This includes agricultural land classification (that shows a broadly consistent classification of Grade 3 or lower - i.e. not the best and most versatile agricultural land in accordance with the NPPF across the search area). In addition there are criteria that cannot be clearly assessed at this point as further more detailed, site-specific investigation would be required. This includes ground contamination; land ownership arrangements; and on-site utility and infrastructure availability.
- 4.15 The key conclusion from the locations matrix analysis is that Location 8 is the optimal location for the proposed Science and Technology Park. This is the broad location set out in the *Mid Sussex Pre-Submission Draft Plan* in the Key Diagram and as described in draft policy DP2. This location

provides the optimal combination of performance against the selected criteria, effectively providing the least constrained option.

**Table 4.1: Locations Analysis Matrix: Location Information**

Location Information					
No.	Site/Location	Description	Source	O.S. Grid Reference	Heritage Asset/ Listed Building Notes
1	Crosspost	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)260(1)224	Grade II Granary (Ref 1366114); Grade II Barn (Ref 1025747)
2	Land South A272/Mill Ponds	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)264(1)215	
3	Land South East A23/A272 Junction	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)270(1)222	
4	Land North East A23/A2300 Junction	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Good Access	Site Survey	TQ(5)272(1)206	
5	Land between Stairbridge Land and Bishopstone Lane/North A2300	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Good Access	Site Survey	TQ(5)280(1)205	
6	Land between Bishopstone Lane and Cuckfield Lane/North A2300	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Good Access	Site Survey	TQ(5)282(1)207	Little Lower Ease Grade II (Ref 1119775)
7	Land at Hickstead to West of A23/A2300 Junction	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)265(1)203	Castle Hotel Grade II (Ref 1025583); Little Hickstead Place Grade II 1181890; Grade II Barn (Ref 1181888); Hookers Farmhouse Grade II (Ref 1284816)
8	Land East Hickstead/South A2300 by Dumbrell's Farm	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Good Access	Call for Sites	TQ(5)275(1)203	
9	Land South Goddards' Green/ East Cuckfield Road/ West A273	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Good Access	Site Survey	TQ(5)288(0)199	
10	Land South West A273/B2036 Junction	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Good Access	Site Survey	TQ(5)295(0)178	
11	Land West Railway Line/ South Burgess Hill	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)309(0)171	
12	Land East Railway Line/ South-East Burgess Hill	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)315(0)171	
13	Land West Hassocks/ North B2116	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)297(0)159	
14	Land South Fish Pond on Cuckfield Road/ East Sewage Works	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)281(0)183	Danworth Brook Farmhouse Grade II (Ref 1354860)
15	Land East Pookbourne Lane/ North Northend Lane	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)277(0)197	Naldretts Grade II (Ref 1025647)
16	Land East A23/ South A2300 Hickstead Junction	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)272(0)180	The Thatch Grade II (Ref 1180504); The Millhouse Grade II (Ref 1025642)
17	Land East A23/ North B2116/ West Hurstpierpoint	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)272(0)175	Boxhouse Framhouse Grade II (Ref 1025638); Pigwidgen Cottage Spotted Cow Cottage Grade II (Ref 1025658); Pakyns Manor Grade II (Ref 1354857)
18	Land East A23/ South B2116/ South-West Hurstpierpoint	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)275(0)158	Landfill; composting; General combustion processes >20MW energy input; Washbrook Farm Grade II (Ref 1354858); Cowdrays Grade II (Ref 1194723); Treeps House Grade II (Ref 1194817)
19	Land West A23/ North B2117/ North Muddleswood	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)266(0)153	Reference to 'Planning application for quarries'; Barn to South West Bishops Palace Grade II (Ref 1096870); Bishops Palace Grade II (Ref 1025822)
20	Land West A23/ East Albourne	Greenfield; Close to Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)269(0)165	Kingscot Grade II (Ref 1354848); Aymers Sayers Grade II (Ref 1285464); Coombe Farm Barn Grade II (Ref 1096895); Coombe Farmhouse Grade II (Ref 1372073); Elm House Grade II (Ref 1025643)
21	Land North Albourne Green/ South East Sayers Common/ Between B2118, B2116 and Reeds Lane	Greenfield; Remote from Settlement; Access Limitations	Site Survey	TQ(5)260(0)175	

**Table 4.2: Locations Analysis Matrix: Suitability – Basics**

No.	Site/Location	Location Size/ Potential (Ha.)	Current Land Use	Surrounding Land Use	Landscape Capacity for Development	Adopted District and Neighbourhood Plan Policy Considerations
1	Crosspost	13	Agricultural	Agricultural	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
2	Land South A272/Mill Ponds	29	Agricultural	Agriculture & Recreation	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
3	Land South East A23/A272 Junction	20	Agricultural	Agriculture & Recreation	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
4	Land North East A23/A2300 Junction	35	Agricultural	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial/Commercial (roadside services)	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
5	Land between Stairbridge Land and Bishopstone Lane/North A2300	23	Agricultural	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); BO2 (Re-development of Bolney Grange Business Park)
6	Land between Bishopstone Lane and Cuckfield Lane/North A2300	15	Agricultural	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
7	Land at Hickstead to West of A23/A2300 Junction	82	Agricultural	Agricultural	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
8	Land East Hickstead/South A2300 by Dumbrell's Farm	40	Agricultural	Agriculture & Recreation/Commercial (roadside services)	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
9	Land South Goddards' Green/ East Cuckfield Road/ West A273	28	Agriculture & Recreation	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial	High	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); southern portion within C2 (Strategic Gap); BH21 (Land for Informal Open Space). HurstC3 (Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence)
10	Land South West A273/B2036 Junction	35	Agriculture & Recreation	Agriculture & Recreation	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); C2 (Strategic Gap); BH21 (Land for Informal Open Space); HurstC3 (Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence)
11	Land West Railway Line/ South Burgess Hill	33	Agricultural	Agriculture & Recreation	Low	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); C2 (Strategic Gap); BH21 (Land for Informal Open Space)
12	Land East Railway Line/ South-East Burgess Hill	83	Agricultural	Agriculture & Recreation	Low	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); C2 (Strategic Gap); BH21 (Land for Informal Open Space)
13	Land West Hassocks/ North B2116	17	Agricultural	Agriculture & Recreation	Low	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); C2 (Strategic Gap); C3 (Local Countryside Gap); HurstC3 (Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence)
14	Land South Fish Pond on Cuckfield Road/ East Sewage Works	35	Agricultural	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); C3 (Local Countryside Gap)
15	Land East Pookbourne Lane/ North Northend Lane	19	Agricultural	Agricultural	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
16	Land East A23/ South A2300 Hickstead Junction	42	Agricultural	Agricultural	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); C3 (Local Countryside Gap)
17	Land East A23/ North B2116/ West Hurstpierpoint	33	Agricultural	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial	Low	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); C3 (Local Countryside Gap); HurstC3 (Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence)
18	Land East A23/ South B2116/ South-West Hurstpierpoint	112	Agricultural	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial	Low	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); C2 (Strategic Gap); north-eastern edge within BH21 (Land for Informal Open Space)
19	Land West A23/ North B2117/ North Muddleswood	38	Agriculture & Recreation	Agriculture & Recreation	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)
20	Land West A23/ East Albourne	52	Agricultural	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint); HurstC3 (Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence)
21	Land North Albourne Green/ South East Sayers Common/ Between B2118, B2116 and Reeds Lane	84	Agricultural	Agriculture/Recreation/Industrial	Medium	C1 (Countryside Area of Development Restraint)

**Table 4.3: Locations Analysis Matrix: Suitability - Access**

No.	Site/Location	A Road Access	2-way A23 Junction Access	Train Station Access	Bus Stop Access	Distance to Services/Facilities
1	Crosspost	Average	Good	Poor	Poor/Average	Poor
2	Land South A272/Mill Ponds	Poor/Average	Good	Poor	Poor	Poor
3	Land South East A23/A272 Junction	Average	Good	Poor	Poor/Average	Poor
4	Land North East A23/A2300 Junction	Good	Good	Poor	Average	Average
5	Land between Stairbridge Land and Bishopstone Lane/North A2300	Good	Good	Average	Average	Average
6	Land between Bishopstone Lane and Cuckfield Lane/North	Good	Good/Average	Average	Average	Average
7	Land at Hickstead to West of A23/A2300 Junction	Poor/Average	Good	Poor	Average	Average
8	Land East Hickstead/South A2300 by Dumbrell's Farm	Good	Good	Average	Average	Average
9	Land South Goddards' Green/ East Cuckfield Road/ West A273	Average	Average	Good/Average	Good	Good
10	Land South West A273/B2036 Junction	Average	Poor	Good/Average	Good	Good
11	Land West Railway Line/ South Burgess Hill	Poor	Poor	Good/Average	Average	Good
12	Land East Railway Line/ South-East Burgess Hill	Poor	Poor	Good/Average	Average	Good
13	Land West Hassocks/ North B2116	Average	Poor	Good	Good	Good
14	Land South Fish Pond on Cuckfield Road/ East Sewage Works	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Average
15	Land East Pookbourne Lane/ North Northend Lane	Poor	Average	Poor	Average	Poor
16	Land East A23/ South A2300 Hickstead Junction	Poor/Average	Poor	Poor	Good	Poor
17	Land East A23/ North B2116/ West Hurstpierpoint	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Average
18	Land East A23/ South B2116/ South-West Hurstpierpoint	Poor	Poor	Poor	Average	Average
19	Land West A23/ North B2117/ North Muddleswood	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Average
20	Land West A23/ East Albourne	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good/Average	Average
21	Land North Albourne Green/ South East Sayers Common/ Between B2118, B2116 and Reeds Lane	Poor	Poor	Poor	Average	Poor

**Table 4.4: Locations Analysis Matrix: Suitability – Physical Attributes & Market**

No.	Site/Location	Topography	Pylon	Market Visibility & Prominence	Market Perception of Accessibility	Land Availability
1	Crosspost	Good	Within 100m	Average	Good/Average	Assumed Available
2	Land South A272/Mill Ponds	Good	On Site	Average	Poor	Assumed Available
3	Land South East A23/A272 Junction	Poor	On Site	Good	Good/Average	Assumed Available
4	Land North East A23/A2300 Junction	Good	On Site	Good	Good	Assumed Available
5	Land between Stairbridge Land and Bishopstone Lane/North A2300	Good	On Site	Good	Good	Assumed Available
6	Land between Bishopstone Lane and Cuckfield Lane/North	Good	On Site	Good	Good	Assumed Available
7	Land at Hickstead to West of A23/A2300 Junction	Good	None	Average	Poor	Assumed Available
8	Land East Hickstead/South A2300 by Dumbrell's Farm	Good	None	Good	Good	Available - from Call for Sites
9	Land South Goddards' Green/ East Cuckfield Road/ West A273	Good	None	Good	Average	Assumed Available
10	Land South West A273/B2036 Junction	Good	None	Good	Average	Assumed Available
11	Land West Railway Line/ South Burgess Hill	Good	None	Average	Poor	Assumed Available
12	Land East Railway Line/ South-East Burgess Hill	Good	None	Poor	Poor	Assumed Available
13	Land West Hassocks/ North B2116	Average	None	Average	Average	Assumed Available
14	Land South Fish Pond on Cuckfield Road/ East Sewage Works	Good	None	Poor	Poor	Assumed Available
15	Land East Pookbourne Lane/ North Northend Lane	Good	None	Poor	Poor	Assumed Available
16	Land East A23/ South A2300 Hickstead Junction	Good	None	Average	Poor	Assumed Available
17	Land East A23/ North B2116/ West Hurstpierpoint	Good	None	Average	Poor	Assumed Available
18	Land East A23/ South B2116/ South-West Hurstpierpoint	Good	None	Average	Average	Assumed Available
19	Land West A23/ North B2117/ North Muddleswood	Average	None	Average	Average	Assumed Available
20	Land West A23/ East Albourne	Good	None	Average	Poor	Assumed Available
21	Land North Albourne Green/ South East Sayers Common/ Between B2118, B2116 and Reeds Lane	Good	None	Poor	Poor	Assumed Available

**Table 4.5: Locations Analysis Matrix: Suitability – Conclusions**

Location Information		Conclusions
No.	Site/Location	
1	Crosspost	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to remoteness from settlement, access issues, and pylon constraints.
2	Land South A272/Mill Ponds	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to remoteness from settlement, access issues, and pylon constraints. No direct public road access to Site Location.
3	Land South East A23/A272 Junction	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access issues, pylon constraints and topography.
4	Land North East A23/A2300 Junction	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access issues and pylon constraints.
5	Land between Stairbridge Land and Bishopstone Lane/North A2300	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access issues and pylon constraints.
6	Land between Bishopstone Lane and Cuckfield Lane/North	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access issues and pylon constraints.
7	Land at Hickstead to West of A23/A2300 Junction	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access issues, and remoteness from settlement.
8	Land East Hickstead/South A2300 by Dumbrell's Farm	<b>Primary Optimal Location.</b>
9	Land South Goddards' Green/ East Cuckfield Road/ West A273	Sub-Optimal Location. Issues related to Market perceptions of accessibility and location within Strategic Gap and Land for Informal Open Space.
10	Land South West A273/B2036 Junction	Sub-Optimal Optimal Location. Issues related to Market perceptions of accessibility and location within Strategic Gap and Land for Informal Open Space.
11	Land West Railway Line/ South Burgess Hill	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access and prominence issues, landscape capacity for development and location within Strategic Gap and Land for Informal Open Space.
12	Land East Railway Line/ South-East Burgess Hill	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access and prominence issues, landscape capacity for development and location within Strategic Gap and Land for Informal Open Space.
13	Land West Hassocks/ North B2116	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to A23 2-way junction access, landscape capacity for development and location within Strategic Gap and Local Gap.
14	Land South Fish Pond on Cuckfield Road/ East Sewage Works	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to remoteness from settlement, access and prominence issues and location within Local Gap.
15	Land East Pookbourne Lane/ North Northend Lane	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to remoteness from settlement, distance from services, and access and prominence issues.
16	Land East A23/ South A2300 Hickstead Junction	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to remoteness from settlement, distance from services, and access and prominence issues. Also within a Local Gap area.
17	Land East A23/ North B2116/ West Hurstpierpoint	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access issues, and landscape capacity for development. Also within a Local Gap area.
18	Land East A23/ South B2116/ South-West Hurstpierpoint	Sub-Optimal Location. Primarily due to access issues. Within Strategic Gap area and partially within Land for Informal Open Space area.
19	Land West A23/ North B2117/ North Muddleswood	Sub-Optimal Location. Due to road and public transport access issues and remoteness from settlement.
20	Land West A23/ East Albourne	Sub-Optimal Location. Due to road and public transport access issues.
21	Land North Albourne Green/ South East Sayers Common/ Between B2118, B2116 and Reeds Lane	Sub-Optimal Location. Due to road and public transport access issue, prominence issues and remoteness from settlement.

**Table 4.6: Assessment Category and Indicator Data**

Assessment Criteria	Objective	Assessment/ Data Source	Performance Category Rationale		
			Good	Average	Poor
1. Site number	Identification reference for map and analysis table.	Site numbering broadly from north to south	N/A		
2. Location	Indicative location description.	From Ordnance Survey map details	N/A		
3. Description	Summary of key characteristics of location.	CCL site assessment	Covers if greenfield/ brownfield; distance to settlement/ services; general access position.		
4. Source	Details of source for identification of location.	Site survey or from Call for Sites process	N/A		
5. Grid reference	Location referencing co-ordinates	Ordnance Survey	N/A		
6. Heritage asset	Identification of potential heritage or listed building details.	DEFRA Magic website	N/A		
7. Location size/ potential	Ability to support STP size requirements.	Google Earth Pro map measurements	>25 hectares	15-25 hectares	<15 hectares
8. Current land use	Development compatibility and capacity.	CCL site assessment	Agricultural	Agricultural/ Recreational	Recreational
9. Surrounding land use	Potential land-use incompatibility with STP image and operations.	CCL site assessment	Agricultural	Agricultural/ Recreational/ Industrial	Recreational
10. Land capacity for development	Landscape constraints to development.	Capacity of Mid Sussex to Accommodate Development Study (June	Taken directly from Figure 3.1 and Table 3 of LUC Report.		

Assessment Criteria	Objective	Assessment/ Data Source	Performance Category Rationale		
			Good	Average	Poor
		2014), LUC			
11. Adopted local plan policy considerations	Planning policy compatibility of locations	Taken from MSDC Adopted Local Plan (2004), and Listed policy LDF Proposals Map (Feb 2008) and Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (2015)	No policy constraints	Policy C1 as average.	Specific Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policy considerations
12. A road access	Ability to access primary road network.	Based on Figure 5.1 of LUC Report and Consultants analysis	Direct to A23/A road access to A23 < 1km	Direct A road access, but >1km to A23	B road access
13. 2-way A23 junction access	Ability for easy north/south access to A23.	Based on Figure 5.1 of LUC Report and Consultants analysis	2-way A23 junction within 1km	2-way A23 junction within 1-2km	2-way A23 junction over 2km
14. Train station access	Ease of access to rail network	Based on Figure 5.1 of LUC Report and Consultants analysis	Within Core Train station zone	Within 1km of Core Train Zone	Beyond 1km of Core Train Zone
15. Bus stop access	Ease of access to bus network	Based on Figure 5.1 of LUC Report and Consultants analysis	Fully within bus stop zone	Within & Adjacent to bus stop zone	Outside of bus stop zone
16. Distance to services/ facilities	Level of availability of key services and facilities required for STP.	Based on Figure 5.1 of LUC Report and Consultants analysis	Within Convenience, Leisure, GP and School Zone	Zone with either Convenience, Leisure, GP or School	No key services
17. Topography	Constraints due to topography or location.	CCL site assessment	Flat	Mixed	Steep/ Undulating
18. Electricity Pylons	Constraints due to Pylon proximity.	CCL site assessment	None (on site or close)	Pylons within 100m of site	Pylons on site
19. Market	Market perspective on	CCL site assessment	Consultant's interpretation		

Assessment Criteria	Objective	Assessment/ Data Source	Performance Category Rationale		
			Good	Average	Poor
Visibility and prominence	economic visibility and gateway prominence of location.				
20. Market Perception of Accessibility	Market perspective on overall accessibility of location.	CCL site assessment	Consultant's interpretation		
21. Availability	Known availability of land at locations.	CCL site assessment	Available from Call for Sites	Assumed available	Known to be Unavailable
22. Conclusions	Overall summary of location based on interpretation of above criteria.	CCL analysis	Primary optimal location	Sub-optimal location, due to identified constraints	

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

### Introduction

- 5.1 This section brings together the analysis and findings from the previous sections. It provides a series of conclusions on the potential future location and realistic alternatives for the proposed Science and Technology Park in central Mid Sussex.
- 5.2 Overall it is concluded that the location for the proposed Science and Technology Park, to the south of the A2300, as set out in the *Mid Sussex Pre-Submission Draft Plan* in the Key Diagram and described in policy DP2 is an appropriate and sustainable location. This location is identified as No.8 in the preceding sections of this Report.
- 5.3 This location benefits from available land; good (and improving) accessibility via the A2300 to the A23 to core regional, national and international markets; few physical or environmental constraints; and can be supported as a sustainable location alongside the proposed employment and residential development allocated along the A2300 corridor and to the north-west of Burgess Hill. It is a visible, prominent location that can effectively support the strategic economic growth objectives and wider public interests of the Coast to Capital LEP and the Greater Brighton City Deal.

### Context and Policy Drivers

- 5.4 The overarching emphasis of national planning and economic policy set out in the NPPF and NPPG is to support long term growth, sustainability and prosperity through new economic development, the expansion of existing businesses and new inward investment. New inward investment and the expansion of existing businesses are assisted by the provision of appropriate employment floorspace, including bespoke facilities/spaces for particular market or industrial sectors. The potential development of a Science and Technology Park aligns with the national economic and planning policy objectives in this respect.
- 5.5 The NPPG lays out clear criteria and factors for the consideration of potential employment sites and broad locations for new economic development at Section 3. This Report has used these factors, as far as it is possible to do so, at a high level as the basis to consider potential Science and Technology Park locations.
- 5.6 The adopted *Local Plan* (May 2004) includes a number of policies relevant to the assessment of alternative locations for the siting of a Science and Technology Park. These include a number of policies that are concerned with development restraint, protection of landscape character and the

maintenance of strategic and local development gaps between settlements in order to reduce or avoid the potential for coalescence of settlements.

- 5.7 In addition, the *Pre-Submission Draft District Plan* (June 2015) together with the *Focused Amendments* (November 2015), while still an emerging District Plan in draft form offers a clear vision and spatial pattern for future development in the District.
- 5.8 The potential for a new Science and Technology Park in Mid Sussex, potentially to the west of Burgess Hill is identified in policy DP2 (Sustainable Economic Development), while matters of landscape protection and preventing settlement coalescence are dealt with in draft policies DP10 and DP11. Policy DP19 (Transport) highlights the importance of delivering the objectives of the West Sussex Local Transport Plan including sustainable locations for new development to minimise the need to travel and for appropriate mitigation to support new developments.
- 5.9 The *Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan* was ‘made’ in March 2015 and aligns with the saved policies of the Local Plan and the emerging draft District Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Areas of Countryside Constraint and Local Gaps for the Prevention of Coalescence. The Plan supports new employment development to the south of the A2300 at Goddards Green as part of its strategic objective to enhance economic vitality in the Parish.
- 5.10 The *Twineham Neighbourhood Plan* successfully passed its referendum in January 2016 and was duly ‘made’ (adopted) in March 2016. The Plan identifies the importance of landscape and countryside protection. There is a particular level of policy support in the plan’s reasoned justification for protecting the far reaching views to the north of the High Weald AoNB and to the South Downs National Park to the south.
- 5.11 Similarly, the emerging Neighbourhood Plans for Albourne and Bolney establish draft policies for the protection of the countryside reflect the need to respect settlement development boundaries subject to very specific criteria which may allow development in the countryside.
- 5.12 The Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan follows suit with a series of relevant draft policies aiming to secure landscape gaps between Hassocks and Burgess Hill (at Policy 1) and between Hassocks/Keymer with Hurstpierpoint and with Ditchling. Development in such countryside gaps is subject to strict criteria for their release.
- 5.13 Where the Neighbourhood Plans encompass either the High Weald AoNB or the South Downs National Park, their draft policies reflect the importance of development restraint and the need to allow development in special circumstances in accordance with District and national planning policies for such important designated areas.
- 5.14 The Countryside and Local Gaps policies are critical issues and any future Science and Technology Park development scheme will need to show these policies can be positively addressed and why there is an exceptional need and circumstances to allow such a development in an area of restraint.
- 5.15 The Gatwick Diamond, Coast to Capital LEP and Greater Brighton City Deal strategies clearly articulate the public interest and strategic economic

importance of providing a new Science and Technology Park as part of the package of economic growth infrastructure. The strategies have each identified Burgess Hill as an appropriate location to seek to site such a development within Mid Sussex and highlight the physical and economic advantages of doing so within the wider economic relationships of the Gatwick Diamond.

- 5.16 The constrained nature of opportunities for future expansion within Brighton & Hove is particularly noted to act as a restraint to economic growth and one that will become increasingly exacerbated over time.
- 5.17 The various strategies reflect the need to secure bespoke new science and technology floorspace at a highly accessible and sustainable location close to Brighton and to focus on locations that are capable of accommodating growth, offering high quality housing and can form a sustainable land use pattern without the loss or adverse effects on designated environmental areas such as the South Downs National Park or the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 5.18 The central Mid Sussex area around Burgess Hill offers both a location where sustainable new residential and commercial growth can be supported but is also a location where high levels of accessibility by road and rail combine with a landscape and environmental context that supports the accommodation of new development. The area is within close proximity to the economic and intellectual drivers arising from higher education and industrial research and development in Brighton.
- 5.19 Burgess Hill is recognised as a well-located existing employment centre in central Mid Sussex performing a variety of employment roles and functions. The town and its surrounding area represent a key component in the District's employment land supply and economic offer due to its good strategic communication links to road and rail networks, attractive environment, labour force and skills base and a high quality of life.
- 5.20 At the local level therefore the existing, adopted Local Plan as well as the emerging District Plan both identify Burgess Hill as an area of significant development and economic opportunity.
- 5.21 Substantial new residential and commercial employment land allocations are proposed in the town coupled with a programme of town centre rejuvenation and re-use of existing sites.
- 5.22 The A2300 road that connects Burgess Hill to the A23/M23 road corridor (and hence to international destinations via Gatwick Airport as well as to London and regional centres) forms the road infrastructure 'backbone' for future growth and have outstanding funding committed for capacity and journey quality improvements. This represents a major investment and the basis upon which to consider potential Science and Technology Park locational alternatives.

## Areas of Search

- 5.23 The rationale for seeking to locate a new Science and Technology Park in central Mid Sussex is drawn from a range of factors considered in Section 3 of this Report, namely:
- the position of central Mid Sussex at a central point within the wider Coast to Capital LEP and Gatwick Diamond areas;
  - the identification of the area as an appropriate and preferred location for Science and Technology Park development in the Greater Brighton City Deal and Coast to Capital LEP Strategic Economic Plans;
  - the presence of existing strategic road and rail infrastructure enabling a high level of accessibility to south-east regional, London and international markets;
  - the close juxtaposition of the area to the north of Brighton & Hove (beyond the South Downs National Park boundary) and the existing higher education and economic growth drivers arising from existing businesses and inward investments to the City as well as more widely in the Gatwick Diamond;
  - the alignment of economic growth potential in the area with advancing plans for new residential development, committed infrastructure (highway) improvements to the A2300 and the expansion of allocated employment land in the area through the Northern Arc development;
  - the availability of land that is relatively unconstrained in terms of its landscape and environmental nature and character in and around Burgess Hill avoiding areas of the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AoNB);
  - reflecting the existing and emerging draft planning policy position that seeks to avoid unnecessary development in the countryside and to avoid coalescence of existing settlements; and
  - the potential high quality of life and attractiveness of the central Mid Sussex area for future labour force and employees working at a Science and Technology Park located in the area.
- 5.24 The main area of search has therefore been defined with reference to identified primary development constraints set out in the District Council's evidence base, particularly the *Capacity of Mid Sussex to Accommodate Development Study* (2014).
- 5.25 This has resulted in a practical area of search in central Mid Sussex that involves land in and near to Burgess Hill including land along the A2300 from its junction with the A23 in the west to the existing boundary of Burgess Hill in the east; land running north/south along the A23 corridor broadly between Bolney in the north and Albourne to the south (at the National Park boundary); alternative locations arising from the recent MSDC 'Commercial Land Call for Sites' work. Areas north of Bolney and south of Albourne are excluded as these have primary development constraints of national importance in the form of the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## Potential Locations and Alternatives

- 5.26 The analysis of potential locations and alternatives presents a high level, objective view of the possible areas where a Science and Technology Park may be sited in central Mid Sussex. It has been undertaken in order to consider potential broad locations and in order to support the proposed location identified in the *Pre-Submission Draft District Plan*.
- 5.27 The proposed Science and Technology Park is of a significant size with an expectation to build circa 100,000 sq.m of new floorspace together with supporting facilities and services that would be expected in order to create a world-class facility.
- 5.28 It is anticipated that a site of at least some 15 Ha will be required to construct the Science and Technology Park and a greater area is sought in order to allow both for a high quality landscape but also to ensure that there is room for future expansion as necessary.
- 5.29 While detailed site areas have not been used to assess potential locations at this stage there is nevertheless an underlying requirement to ensure that the potential locations considered have sufficient size potential to allow the Science and Technology Park to be fully developed.

### Primary Optimal Location

- 5.30 Drawing from the assessment matrix set out in Section 4, the following is concluded to be the Primary Optimal Location offering the best potential to site the Science and Technology Park:
- **Location 8: Land East of the A23 and South of the A2300 at Dumbrells Farm.**
- 5.31 There are good and indeed some exceptional reasons why this location should be the Primary Optimal Location within a broad area of Countryside Constraint *inter alia*:
- there is a well articulated strategic economic case in the public interest, including significant opportunities for public economic investment support from the Greater Brighton City Deal, the coast to Capital LEP and through the Gatwick Diamond for a Science and Technology Park in or near to Burgess Hill in central Mid Sussex;
  - Location 8 is capable of supporting a development to the scale, nature and unique environmental and design qualities that are required to create a competitive world-class Science and Technology Park. The location offers a good level of visibility and prominence for the occupier and end-user market;
  - the area currently contains a combination of agricultural land uses together with existing business areas and former industrial operations;
  - it combines good strategic accessibility to the A2300 and A23 as well as to existing public transport services (with the potential for future improvements);

- the location is in proximity to services and facilities offered by Burgess Hill and particularly the committed and allocated future residential and employment locations along the A2300 corridor. The A2300 itself is already subject to committed improvements to road capacity (dualling of the road) and consequent junction upgrade improvements at this location;
- the A2300 road corridor running west of Burgess Hill is a key, strategic road link providing access between Burgess Hill and the A23, with a number of committed residential and employment developments approved or proposed for allocation in the Draft District Plan. There is potential for a wider clustering and prominence effect arising which would be to the benefit of potential end occupiers and users of the Science and Technology Park;
- the location benefits from its situation within an area which has the ability to accommodate new development without significant adverse effects on areas of high environmental value;
- development outside the existing built-up area boundaries at Location 8 is possible without causing the coalescence of settlements or the creation of an urbanised landscape between settlements. The location does not therefore result in visual or actual coalescence or the loss of settlement identity that is more likely to occur if other locations were selected.

5.32 Location 8 is concluded to provide an optimal combination of performance against the selected criteria, effectively providing the least constrained and therefore most preferable location option. Any future development for a Science and Technology Park will however need to ensure that the case for development in a Countryside Area of Restraint is comprehensively articulated building on the positive benefits set out above.

## Recommendations

5.33 The following recommendations are made:

- **R1:** That the Primary Optimal Location (Location 8) be supported as the first choice and preferential location for the siting of a new Science and Technology Park subject to further concept and development testing work.
- **R2:** That Location 8 be identified and supported in the District Plan strategy and policies as appropriate.
- **R3:** that further technical studies and work at a site-specific level be undertaken on the potential development concepts and planning framework for a Science and Technology Park at Location 8.