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30 March 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON - SITE AND POLICES DEVELOPMENT PLAN
DOCUMENT CONSULTATION**

**REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF ASTRANTA ASSET MANAGEMENT
RE: HASLEMERE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - EARLSFIELD**

Jones Lang LaSalle has been instructed by Astranta Asset Management to submit representations in regard to the revised Site and Policies Development Plan Document, which is currently being consulted upon by the Council.

Astranta Asset Management do not own any land but are representing the Landowners of Haslemere Industrial Estate, which is a small ageing Estate comprising of four industrial units.

These representations seek to highlight the possibility of alternative uses on the site (such as residential) and also request that the Council ensures that its designation of land for safeguarding for transport works (under policy TN5) is amended, to exclude any land within the ownership of the Estate.

Site Context

The site is situated between Garratt Lane and Merton Road, which both have good access to public transport / buses with the closest railway station being Earlsfield Railway Station approximately 5-10 minutes walking distance from the site. The site benefits from a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 4.

It is accessed off Ravensbury Terrace and as stated above is known as Haslemere Industrial Estate. It is approximately 0.8 hectares in size and comprises of four units.



The site is bounded to the north by Haslemere Avenue (a predominately residential street), to the east by the River Wandle with the local and national railway lines beyond.

To the south (beyond the Rufus Business Centre) is Wimbledon Park Primary School and to the west are mainly residential dwellings. See the Location & Site Plans attached as Appendix 1 to this letter.

All four units within the park are dated (circa 1920s) and are reaching the end of their life.

Difficulties in the continued industrial use of the buildings

As set out earlier, the buildings have come to the end of their lives and in terms of the large amount of investment required to bring the buildings up to modern standards; it is simply not viable to do so.

The reasons for this are two-fold. Firstly, there is little or no demand for industrial units in this location therefore; there is no justification for the financial outlay for the Estate's redevelopment. This is because any speculative industrial development is likely to lay vacant for significant period of time or to attract a tenant, will have to be marketed at a rate that is unlikely to provide enough income to break even (particularly given the initial financial outlay).

Secondly, the size and location of the units on the site do not meet with market requirements. Namely, larger units which are not in close proximity to residential dwellings, in areas with good road access where larger vehicles do not have to negotiate a route along narrow residential streets.

Why the site should be released for alternative uses (such as residential)

The site benefits from being located in an assessable location (in terms of public transport) and it is immediately bounded by existing residential dwellings. The vehicular access to the site is also bounded by residential dwellings and is of a residential scale and suitable for private motor cars (rather than larger commercial vehicles).

Given the need to accommodate dwellings in the Borough within sustainable locations (such as previously developed land), the Council should consider a flexible approach to employment sites such as this, allocating Haslemere Industrial Estate for residential redevelopment in the Council's emerging Site Allocation & Policies Development Plan Document.

This will ensure the best sequentially preferable sites are promoted for residential development a head of less sustainable locations such as greenfield sites or those which

do not benefit from being located in existing residential areas/close to good transport links.

In respect of the site's impact on the adjoining residential properties, its redevelopment for other uses (such as residential) would reduce its impact on the adjoining area and would improve the amenity of the surrounding dwellings.

The Estate's negative impact on the surrounding residential road network has been highlighted by the London Borough of Wandsworth (the adjoining Council) in a letter to the Landowners of Haslemere Industrial Estate (albeit it was addressed to the nearby Rufus Business Centre).

The letter sets out that there have been numerous complaints from local residents in respect to the use of residential roads by commercial vehicles accessing the site. On this basis, the Council recommended that industrial occupiers should not use large commercial vehicles (thereby seeking to restrict the industrial use of the buildings). A copy of the letter is attached as Appendix 2.

Furthermore, the Council's Employment & Economic Land Study dated September 2010 highlights at paragraph 4.28 that small scattered industrial sites in residential areas often provide poor quality accommodation for occupiers, and can be very difficult to re-let if they become vacant.

The Report goes on to state that key problems cited include the generally poor quality of the buildings, which often have had very little investment in their upkeep, difficult road access through residential areas, issues with residential amenity and a lack of market visibility.

In addition to this, the Report sets out that there has been very limited interest historically for large-scale distribution activities within Merton, and other London locations with better strategic access and availability of larger sites are likely to continue to be more obvious locations for such larger distribution activities.

Designation of land for as District Line Safeguarded Land (under Policy TN5)

The attached plan (at Appendix 3) shows the extent of the ownership of the estate. Any designation under policy TN5 should reflect Railtrack's ownership and not that of adjacent landowners as Railtrack/TfL will have no control over the land.

On this basis, the designation should be amended if it infringes on Haslemere Industrial Estate.



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Conclusions

The site is currently reaching the end of its economic life and its redevelopment for industrial use can simply not be justified in financial terms, nor is it in a location or capable of offering the unit size or access, which is required by industrial occupiers.

In terms of the potential for continued industrial use on the site, it is understood that there is currently little demand for this type of industrial floorspace in the Borough and that once the existing tenants vacate, it is likely that the buildings will lie vacant.

Given that it is not viable to redevelop the site for industrial scheme, in order to ensure that the best use of previously developed land is made and the site does not lie vacant in perpetuity; its redevelopment for other uses should be considered.

Furthermore, considering the close proximity to existing homes, a residential redevelopment would offer the opportunity to improve the residential amenity of those people who live nearby, provide new homes for residents in Merton as well as offering a financially viable solution to ensuring that the site does not lie vacant for the foreseeable future. It will also help the Borough to meet the new Government incentives for the building of new homes.

On this basis, Haslemere Industrial Estate should be allocated for residential redevelopment in the Council's emerging Site Allocation & Policies Development Plan Document.

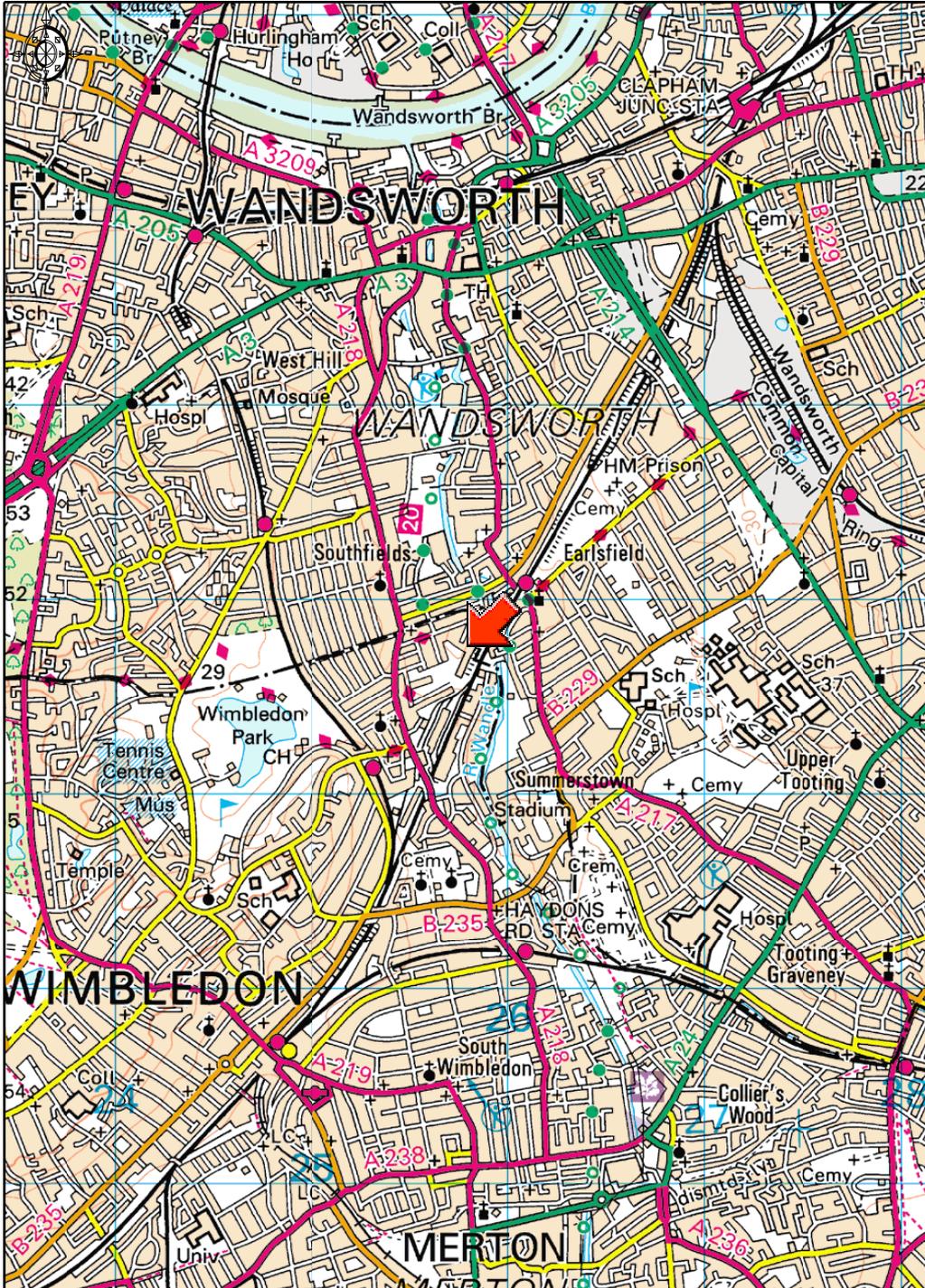
Lastly, the boundary of the safeguarded transport land (under policy TN5) should be reviewed to ensure that it does not encroach on any of the land within the demise of Haslemere Industrial Estate, as set out at in the attached title plan at Appendix 3.

We look forward to confirmation that these representations have been duly received, in the meantime, if you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number above.

Yours faithfully,

Catherine Seddon
Senior Associate
Jones Lang LaSalle

Units 1-4 Haslemere Industrial Estate
London SW18 4HS

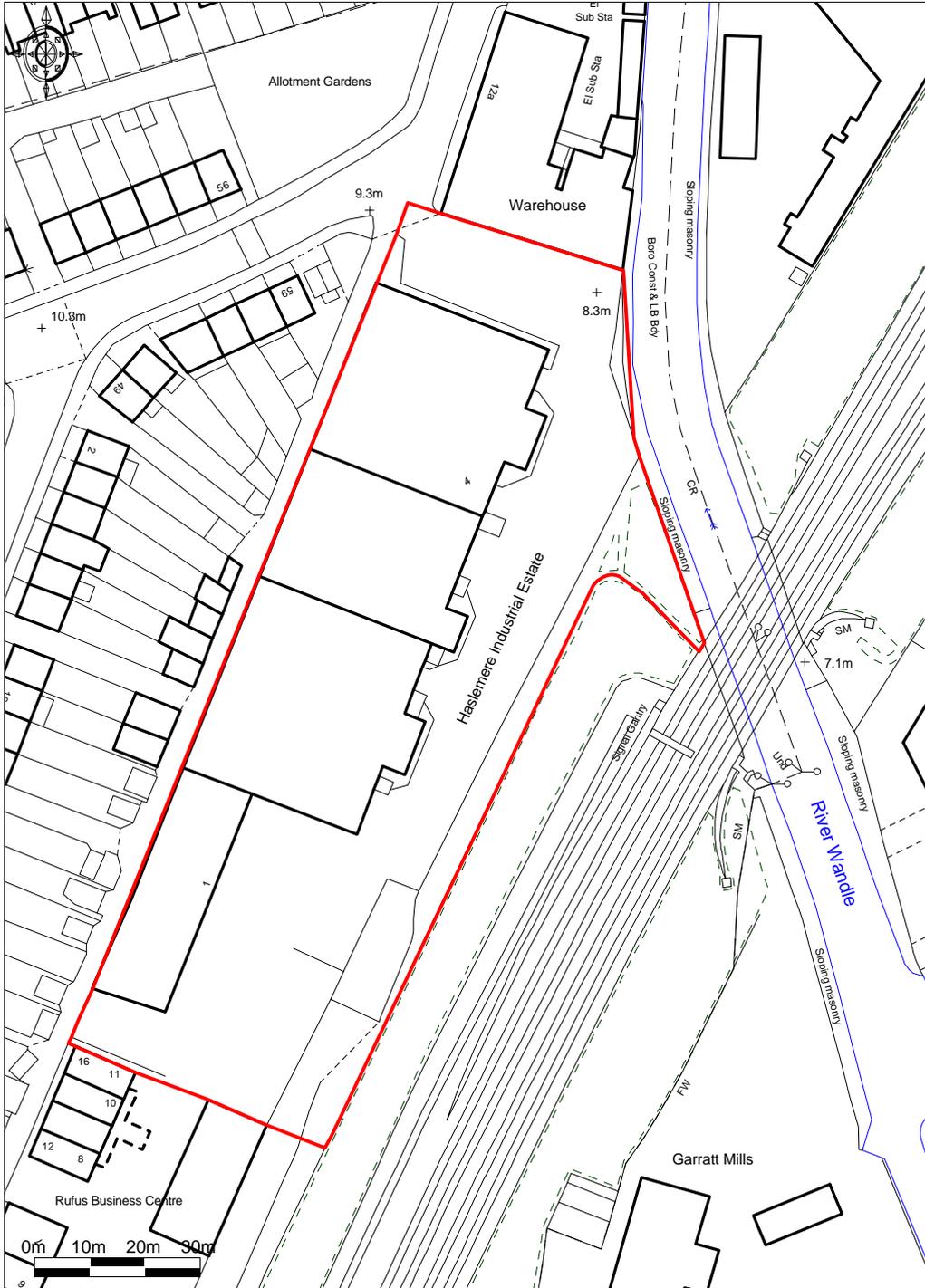


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**Units 1-4 Haslemere Industrial Estate
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Our ref: DTS/ES/AG
Your ref:
Date: 14 March 2012

Dear Sirs

Re: Ravensbury Road / Ravensbury Terrace – Damaged cars.

Reports have been received in this office suggesting that heavy goods and service vehicles principally articulated lorries entering and exiting the industrial estate on Ravensbury Terrace regularly damage cars parked in the immediate area. The Ravensbury Road / Ravensbury Terrace junction being of particular concern.

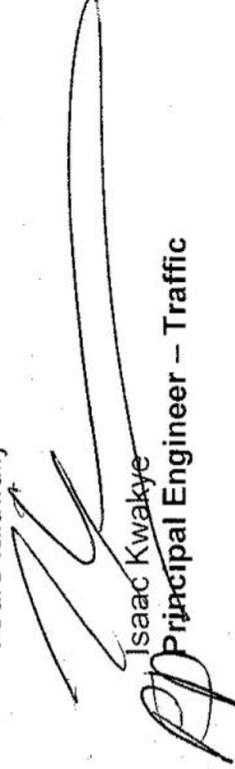
In the interests of road safety and maintaining good relations with local residents, I would ask that for all the businesses trading within the Rufus industrial estate, consideration is given to the following:

- The use of smaller vehicles appropriate for the residential road network in the vicinity.
- The use of the main road network where possible.

Implementing the above measures would reduce the incidences of damage to locally parked cars caused by large commercial vehicles.

Should you require any further information or wish to discuss the contents of my letter, then please contact me on 0208 871 6690.

Yours faithfully


Isaac Kwakye
Principal Engineer – Traffic

Director of Environment and Community Services Department: A G McDonald, BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI
Assistant Director of Environment and Community Services: Bob Langridge, BEng (Hons) CEng MICE

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