15 June 2015

Planning Department
Harborough District Council
The Symington Building
Adam and Eve Street
Market Harborough
Leicestershire
LE16 7AG

FAO: Mr Mark Patterson

Dear Sir or Madam,

Planning application for the erection of 100,844 sq m GIA new distribution centre (Use Class B8) with ancillary offices (Use Class B1) and gatehouse, including related service roads, access and servicing arrangements, parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure work on land adjoining and linked to Magna Park, Lutterworth

I have pleasure in enclosing, on behalf of IDI Gazeley UK Limited, a detailed planning application for your consideration.

The planning application proposes to extend IDI Gazeley's Magna Park to provide an expansion facility for DHL Supply Chain on land adjoining Magna Park and accessed from Argosy Way across a new roundabout with Mere Lane.

IDI Gazeley is a leading investor and developer globally of logistics real estate and ranks amongst the foremost pioneers of environmentally sustainable warehouse development in Europe, North America and China. Magna Park is located within the logistics sector's "golden triangle", the area roughly circumscribed by the M1/M69/M6 and within which over 90% of the UK's markets can be reached within the 9-10 hour return HGV drive time. Magna Park is IDI Gazeley's flagship logistics park and ranks amongst the top clusters of logistics operations in Europe. Magna Park is occupied by 25 blue chip firms who operate from the park's 31 high quality, environmentally sound distribution buildings and together employ some 9,300 people, accounting for almost a quarter of the district's jobs. Just over 18% of employees are residents of a post code that lies wholly or partly within a Harborough ward.

DHL Supply Chain is the logistics sector's global market leader and a major inward investor in Harborough who operate four separate distribution facilities at Magna Park, employing together some 700 of the park's 9,300 employees. DHL Supply Chain's preference is meet its expansion needs at Magna Park – a testimony to the park's operating efficiencies and environmental credentials, the quality of IDI Gazeley's management and the high regard in which DHL hold the local labour force.

There is, however, no expansion land within the park. Save for Plot 2110, the small site of the former 3,534 sq m George headquarters, there are no undeveloped plots on the park and have not been since 2007. Very recently, IDI Gazeley have been able to acquire some
further land from an occupier’s site adjoining Plot 2110, which is now the subject of a recently submitted planning application for a 17,180 sq m warehouse. IDI Gazeley will develop Plot 2110 speculatively in response to strong market demand.

The application site for DHL Supply Chain totals 55.41 ha; with the building totalling 102,077 sq m GEA, the application site density is just 18.5%. The DHL demise overall totals 28.14 ha, and the remaining 29.27 ha is given to landscaping, community amenity space and the site’s access arrangements. The extension would operate as a fully integrated part of Magna Park, be covered by the park’s management arrangements, and make use of the existing park’s common services infrastructure and highways. As with the existing park, now almost fully screened by extensive woodland planting (the more than 1 million trees that make up Magna Wood), the application proposals entail extensive investment in landscape works, native planting and ecological corridors, designed to protect the distinctive character of the site and minimise the visibility of the development. The affected permissive footpaths and bridleways, provided by the High Level Stewardship Scheme that expires in 2017, will (realigned as needed) be made permanent for community use. The Mere Lane Lagoon amenity area will be extended with new water swales, meadow and habitat, and a small public car park provided to improve accessibility to the amenities.

A full Environmental Impact Assessment of the application proposals shows that, with the mitigation embedded in the design of the proposals for which planning permission is sought, there will be no significant residual adverse impacts from the development on noise, air quality, artificial lighting / night glow, ecology, heritage and archaeology or visual amenity. The S106 Agreement will deliver a lighting scheme to modernise the park’s existing street lighting to directional LEDs; modernise the lighting onto the Mere Lane frontage; and initiatives to increase the proportion of the labour force who live in Harborough and the opportunities for local businesses to supply the development’s needs. The S106 and S278 agreements will deliver the traffic mitigation needed, including a new roundabout at the junction of Mere Lane with the A5, the extension of the weight limit to Mere Lane to its new section, extend the dualling of the A5 between Emmanuel Cottage and Mere and deliver works to the A426/A5 junction to increase its capacity.

The park’s existing, rigorously enforced, HGV Routing Agreement will be extended to include the DHL Supply Chain scheme and amended to discourage HGV use of the new A5/Mere Lane Junction, and a new Employee Routing Plan will be promoted to encourage employees, including those in the existing park, to avoid Lutterworth town centre and surrounding villages. A Travel Plan will be implemented with measures to increase car sharing, including amongst employees of the existing park, and improve public transport services. Bus stops are incorporated in the design proposals for the application scheme.

The development is estimated to create some 1,230 full time equivalent jobs once operational, of which 28% would be in high value occupations and a further 16% in mid-level occupations; contribute £42.4 million annually in GVA and add some £2.6 million annually to the district’s business rates (of which current Government policy allows the Council to retain up to some 50%).

The proposed development was discussed at pre-application meetings with the Council and the highway authorities between December 2014 and April 2015. A Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) has also been agreed with the local authority. The advice given at these meetings is fully reflected in the design proposals.

This application is accompanied by the Application forms and ownership certificates and the documents listed in Annex 1 to this letter.

The appropriate planning application fee is £169,929; £167,974 by CHAPS and a cheque is enclosed for the balance in the sum of £1,955 (attached). The fee has been calculated on the basis of a Gross External Area of 102,077 sq m.

As the submitted Planning Statement sets out, the application proposals constitute sustainable development in the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). To the extent
that the Harborough District Core Strategy 2011-2028 is consistent with the NPPF, the application proposals accord with it and are wholly in accordance with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and the related national planning guidance. The application proposals generate significant economic benefits, and has pursued those benefits in tandem with the environmental and social gains the development is capable securing. The applications cause no harm that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh those benefits. The accompanying application documentation demonstrates that there are no reasons why planning permission should be withheld.

In view of the above, it is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted at the earliest opportunity so that the important benefits of this development can be realised.

Should you require any further information or clarification then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Nora Galley
BA, MA, MPhil, MRTPI, FRSA
Now Planning Limited

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF IDI GAZELEY UK LIMITED