

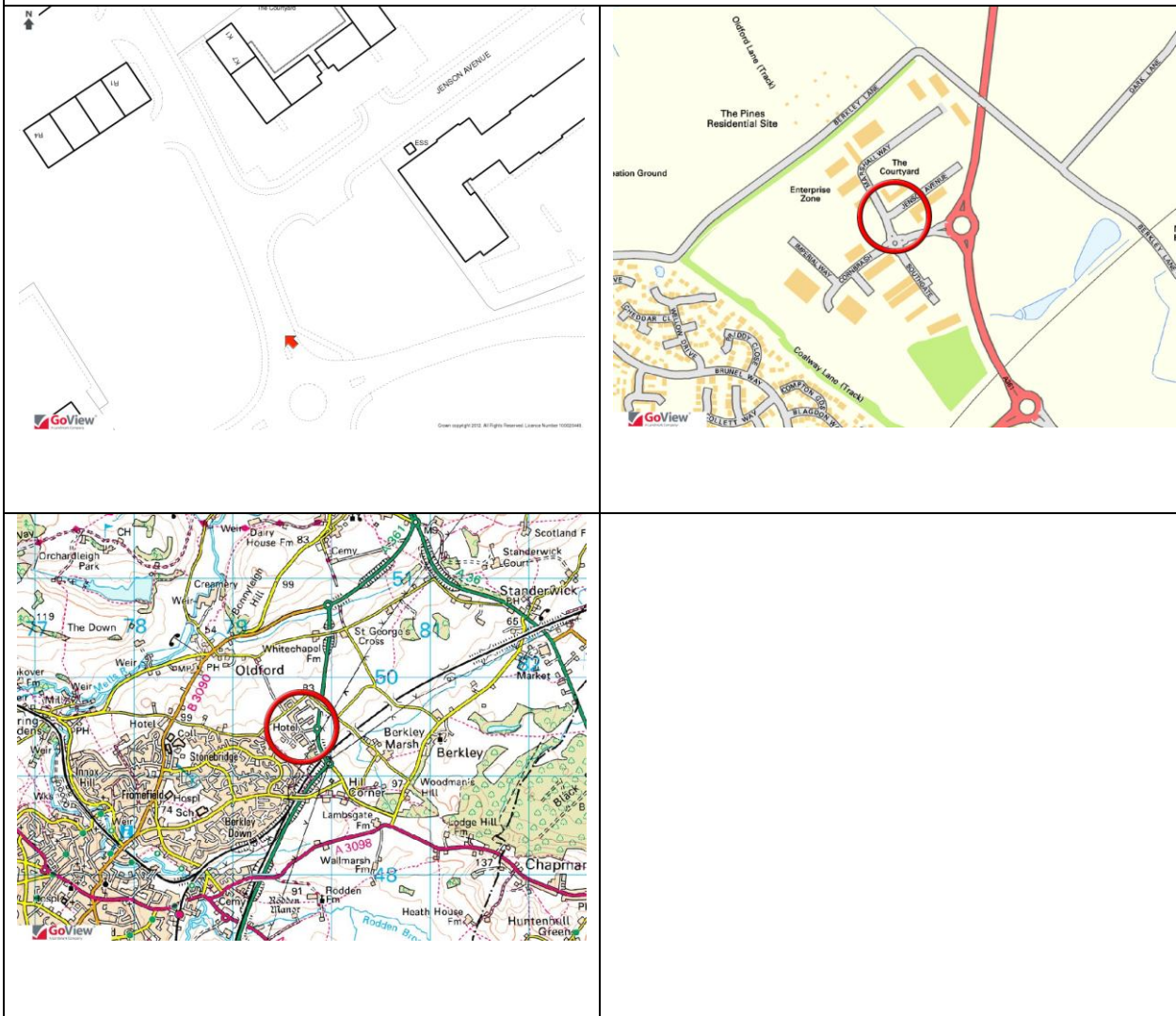
Site No 25 Commerce Park, Frome.



Location

The site is technically outside of the administrative district of Frome Town Council (being within Beckington & Rode) but as one of only two modern business parks within the area is included within this review as its continued success is likely to have significant bearings on the vitality of Frome as a business location as a whole.

This site is located approx 2.4 miles to north east of the Town Centre and Frome train station.



November 2012



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Description

Commerce Park is capable of providing 700,000 sq ft of mixed use accommodation on a site of 64 acres (26 ha).

With planning consent for a variety of uses and the ability to accommodate large and small occupiers, Commerce Park has something for everyone.

Commerce Park is prominently located fronting the A361 to the north east of Frome town centre. Direct access into the park is from a new roundabout enabling the development to accommodate a variety of uses.





Ownership

The site owned and is being developed by Prospect Land although some units have been sold to owner occupiers. The site is managed on behalf of the owners by Myddleton Major.

Planning

Subject Site History

The subject site has been the subject of a multitude of planning applications since 1995 which initially set the masterplan for the site (to include industrial, warehouse and retail uses) and more recently granted detailed planning consent for the existing and proposed buildings.

Detailed consents have been granted for B1, B2, D1, A3 to include offices, light industrial, warehousing and storage, showroom, auction, public house, hotel and petrol filling station uses.

Subject Site Policy

The subject site is within the development limits but is not within a conservation area nor is it within an area of high archaeological potential. The Site has a specific employment policy in the existing Local Plan (F6) which, subject to certain conditions, allocates the land for:

- business
- general industry
- storage and distribution

Nearby Sites

There is a wooded area to the South-eastern extreme of the site that is subject to Tree Preservation Order and the South Western Boundary of the site is defined by a housing estate.

To the north east of the site is an area of land that is allocated for recreational uses (Policy F8)

Highway access and services

The site is relatively flat and already benefits from a modern purpose built roundabout providing direct access to the "Estate Roads" that have been designed to accommodate modern HGV traffic and as a solus site does not create any disruption/disturbance to adjacent non-commercial occupiers.

The location at the north eastern end of the Frome By-pass provides good highway connections to Frome, Westbury and Warminster to the east, Bath and Bristol to the north and

Site No 25 Commerce Park, Frome.



also to the Mendip Town to the West.
 It is assumed that all main services are available.
Ground conditions or contamination issues
 Prior to zoning for development this was a "Greenfield site" and there are no known contamination or environmental issues. The developers have invested in bringing infrastructure to the site and have numerous "oven ready" serviced sites available.

Employment Suitability Comments
 This site is probably not only the best strategic location within Frome, but also within the Mendip area, due to its prominence and proximity to the regional road network via the A362. All of the existing buildings are relatively new and available premises can offer modern up to date facilities that more closely mirror current market requirements than converted or adapted accommodation.
 It is recommended that further land be identified to ensure that the site has the potential to accommodate the needs of existing and future occupiers and provide the opportunity for the Frome economy to compete with other local towns that also have modern purpose built business park opportunities.
 The masterplanning of this site ought to ensure that future development can be "fast-tracked" through the Planning process, which can then be used as a point of differentiation when recruiting inward investment and/or new employers.
Assessment ****

SWOT Analysis	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Location • Prominence and profile • Good Road Access • Purpose built 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of Town and thus does not contribute to vitality of Town Centre • Poor Public Transport Links • No speculative development





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern Accommodation • Well managed • Growth potential for existing occupiers • Wide mix of uses and occupiers • Level Site • Serviced plots “ready to go” • Some available buildings • Design & Build opportunities • Hotel accommodation for business travellers • Expeditious Planning consents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of longer term capacity • Divorced from rest of Mendip
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Threats</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify/allocate further strategic land for longer term growth • Streamline the Planning Consent process through well defined development guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to grow in long term due to physical constraints • Competition from nearby competing conurbations • Continued economic conditions render new development unviable • Overhead Powerlines and railway line adjacent to site will constrain site flexibility

Conclusions regarding site employment potential

Commerce Park is a successful development with almost full occupancy of the existing built stock. Although the economic climate has deterred the developer from speculatively building additional business space it is anticipated that when the market recovers there will once

Site No 25 Commerce Park, Frome.



again be strong demand for new space in this location. Given the site is almost 2/3 built out in a space of it is recommended that additional space is allocated to capture this anticipated demand during the plan period.

Assessment ****



Land to South-east of Commerce park (but north of the railway) might have potential to satisfy future demand

