

REPORT TO: CABINET

DATE: 18 JULY 2019

TITLE: REVISION OF LONDON ROAD NORTH
ENTERPRISE ZONE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
ORDER

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR DANNY PURTON, PORTFOLIO
HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT

LEAD OFFICER: ANDREW BRAMIDGE, PROJECT DIRECTOR –
ENTERPRISE ZONE AND INTERIM HEAD OF
PLANNING (01279) 446410

**CONTRIBUTING
OFFICERS:** MARK PHILPOTT, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
(01279) 446867

This is a Key Decision
It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I008604
Call-in Procedures may apply
This decision will affect Old Harlow ward.

RECOMMENDED that:

- A** Cabinet approves the proposed amendments to the London Road North Local Development Order, as set out in Appendix A to the report, and authorises that these now be subject to public consultation.
- B** Subject to recommendation A, authority be delegated to the appropriate Head of Service, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, to make such minor or inconsequential amendments to the Order as may be required following the consultation process.

REASON FOR DECISION

- A** To provide greater flexibility in the delivery of development at the Harlow Science Park site and to overcome some barriers to appropriate development which have become apparent through the practical implementation of the planning framework.

BACKGROUND

1. The Local Development Order (LDO) for London Road North (now known as Harlow Science Park) was adopted in July 2014. The LDO sets out a planning framework for the site that in effect provides permitted development for identified

uses to aid the delivery of the Enterprise Zone. This creates a fast track process for the approval of developments on the site with a guaranteed turnaround of 28 days, provided that those developments meet the requirements of the LDO.

2. However, experience of delivery in the last two years has identified that this framework is in many places inflexible and actually acts as a constraint to development. The layout of the site is rigidly defined in the LDO and it does not allow any deviation from this. For example, in the positioning of electricity substations or the location of ancillary facilities such as food, drink and leisure facilities. In the original LDO, all A1 and A3 uses on the site were to be located in the Newhall Approach Character Area (the area immediately adjacent to London Road). However, this is not necessarily convenient for users of the Science Park and prevents flexibility of future development. The revised LDO will not allow any increase in these uses, but will permit them to be located anywhere within the site.
3. This has presented some practical difficulties in achieving delivery of the Science Park as any minor deviation from the original LDO requires a full planning application to be submitted. This defeats the purpose of the LDO which is intended to provide a simplified planning framework and this is one of the key marketing tools for the Science Park. It is possible that without the introduction of the proposed flexibility to the LDO in this report, every development on the Science Park could have to be subject to a full planning application, rather than using the LDO process which was designed to prevent this.
4. This manifested itself in the delivery of the Nexus building which required a full planning application for some masterplan amendments before consent could be given for that building. These related to the location of an electricity sub-station, the shape of the central spine road and the need to change an access road into a footpath.
5. None of the changes proposed will result in any substantive changes to the purpose and vision of the Science Park, nor will they have any impact on the quality of design of the buildings constructed there. Instead, they will permit more flexibility for the development of buildings and enable development to come forward more quickly.
6. Whilst amendments are proposed to create more flexibility, the opportunity has also been taken to update the LDO in a number of factual matters such as changes to land ownership on the site, as set out in Appendix A.

ISSUES/PROPOSALS

7. The proposed revisions to the London Road North LDO are set out in the Appendix to this report.
8. If the principles of these proposals are agreed by Cabinet then they will be subject to public consultation prior to formal adoption of the revised LDO. It is envisaged that this consultation will take place in September 2019.

IMPLICATIONS

Place (Includes Sustainability)

As set out in the report.

Author: Andrew Bramidge, Project Director – Enterprise Zone and Interim Head of Planning

Finance (Includes ICT)

None specific.

Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Deputy to the Managing Director

Housing

As outlined in the report

Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing

Community Wellbeing (Includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)

None specific.

Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing

Governance (Includes HR)

As contained within the report.

Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance

Appendices

Appendix A – Summary of Changes

Background Papers

None.

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

LDO – Local Development Order