

## **Report to the Cabinet**

**Report reference: C-024-2021/22**

**Date of meeting: 08 November  
2021**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Portfolio: Planning & Sustainability – Cllr. Bedford**

**Subject: North Weald Employment Land Master Plan**

**Responsible Officer: N Dawe / N Richardson (01992 564094).**

**Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246).**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- 1. To approve the draft Strategic Masterplan Framework and commencement of the public consultation for the employment land at North Weald, identified as NWB.E4 in the Local Plan Submission Version 2017.**
- 2. To note that the staged public consultation will take place in November, December, and January to allow the widest possible contribution and to take account of the Christmas / New Year period.**
- 3. To note that a further update will be provided to share the results of the public consultation and to adopt the masterplan, so that it can be given appropriate weight as a material planning consideration in the determination of future planning applications. This update will take place in the February to April 2022 period.**

### **Background**

1. The Strategic Masterplanning Briefing Note 2018 was agreed by the Council's Cabinet in October 2018. This document sets out the requirement for the endorsement of Strategic Masterplans and Concept Frameworks as allocated in the emerging Local Plan Submission Version 2017 (LPSV). This requirement is set out in the preamble to Policy SP3 Place Shaping and in the place specific policy relating to North Weald (Policy P6).
2. North Weald Airfield Masterplan Area comprises the main airfield and parcels of land to the east (ref: NWB.E4) and west (ref: NWB.E3) comprising a cluster of industrial, commercial and retail uses in the south east with associated car parks and hardstanding. The Masterplan Area is proposed for allocation in the LPSV for business use, general industrial/storage and warehousing. The areas to the eastern side of the airfield are identified as locations that could be developed to provide employment opportunities that are sustainable, promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of transportation and provide viable alternatives to private car use. These would be delivered in concert with the nearby proposed housing developments, particularly in North Weald and Latton Priory whereby measures should provide for, and encourage, more sustainable travel patterns by

contributing toward integrated walking and cycling, and public transport connectivity to the wider areas, including Epping and Harlow.

## **Masterplan**

3. It is both good practice and a policy requirement of the emerging Local Plan, that a masterplan for the North Weald Employment Zone options is produced to ensure such a proposed development achieves high quality place making and meets the Council's expectations in terms of scale, employment, transport, environment, and other considerations set out in the Local Plan itself.

4. The Council as landowner has undertaken an extensive period of public consultation and technical assessment work in order to develop a draft masterplanning framework in relation to the North Weald Airfield site. The key public engagement activities undertaken by the Council are set out at Appendix 1. A master plan has been prepared in relation to the parcels of employment land at North Weald airfield that has responded to feedback received during the public consultation and following negotiations with technical and planning officers to ensure the masterplanning framework conforms with the policies in the emerging Local Plan, National Planning Guidance and expectations of the Council as landowner.

5. The masterplan has been prepared and is supported by extensive technical work in terms of land, environment and biodiversity, transport, heritage and other relevant technical matters.

6. In particular, professional advice and input to the master plan has occurred because of the proximity of the employment land to an operational airfield.

## **Issues from Initial Consultation**

7. The comments received from the first consultation were broadly supportive, however from the points that were made, and the issues raised, attention has been made to the following in drawing-up the final version of the consultation document:

- The range and size of the buildings and their proximity to North Weald village.
- Highway access and general transportation issues.
- Environmental consideration, green corridors, links with the separate residential development.
- Future use of the existing control tower and the retention of views of airfield.
- The provision of a range of employment opportunities that meet current and future needs and aspirations.
- The specific employment needs of the young, especially graduates and new entrepreneurs.
- The impact on existing business that use (the southern end) of the site.

8. Following the receipt of comments as a result of the public consultation, further work was undertaken by the Council's consultants to address the points and issues raised and as a result of these changes have been made to the proposed master plan that are included in the draft masterplan framework presented with this report.

## **Proposed Consultation**

9. The final public consultation on the masterplan is intended to take place in the period November 2021 through to the end of January 2022. This represents an extended period of consultation to take account of the Christmas / New Year Period.

10. The outline plan for the consultation is as follows, (with dates being confirmed if and when Cabinet approval is given).

Early November	Quality Review Panel second presentation of masterplan
Mid November	Briefing session in detail of Cabinet, Local Members, Other Key Local Partners (e.g. Parish Council).
Late November through to early December	Technical consultation with statutory partners, e.g. Essex County Council.
January	Public consultation through a mix of virtual and present sessions and on-line responses to maximise the opportunity of questioning and comment.
February	Full report to Cabinet, (earliest date).
March	Full report to Cabinet (latest date).

### **Other Related Activities**

11. This proposed decision is related to the District operating as a Local Planning Authority and giving agreement to consulting on a draft masterplan for a proposed development area prior to its adoption (if appropriate).

12. Cabinet members should however be aware that work on the following related activities is currently being under-taken:

- Masterplanning of the North Weald residential development area.
- Project planning for the North Weald SANG and extended environmental and green infrastructure considerations.
- Project planning for the receipt of additional contributions from the HMRC Inland Border Facility to address environmental concerns.
- Strategic planning of the future operation of the airfield.

Appropriate co-ordination is taking place regarding the planning and operational issues.

## Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
  - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
  - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
  - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender
  - gender reassignment
  - marriage/civil partnership
  - pregnancy/maternity
  - race
  - religion/belief
  - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy or change.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an EqIA**. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.
8. To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:
  - Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
  - Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
  - Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
  - Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty

- Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
- Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

<b>Section 1: Identifying details</b>
Your function, service area and team:
If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team:
Title of policy or decision:
Officer completing the EqlA: Tel:                      Email:
Date of completing the assessment:

<b>Section 2: Policy to be analysed</b>	
2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):  What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● service users</li> <li>● employees</li> <li>● the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?</li> </ul> Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?
2.4	Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?

2.5	Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?

### **Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation<sup>1</sup>**

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	What does the information tell you about those groups identified?
3.2	Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?
3.3	If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:

## Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

<b>Description of impact</b>	<b>Nature of impact</b> Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	<b>Extent of impact</b> Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age		
Disability		
Gender		
Gender reassignment		
Marriage/civil partnership		
Pregnancy/maternity		
Race		
Religion/belief		
Sexual orientation		



## Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqIA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If ' <b>YES</b> ', use the action plan at <b>Section 6</b> to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.



**Section 7: Sign off**

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.  
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service:

Date:

Signature of person completing the EqIA:

Date:

**Advice**

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqIA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqIA for your records. If this EqIA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.