



REPORT TO:	Cllr Nick Worth, Leader of the Council
DATE:	Wednesday, 27 September 2023
SUBJECT:	Extension of the Local Development Order covering the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone at Holbeach.
PURPOSE:	Seek approval to extend the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone Local Development Order for a term of 15 years.
KEY DECISION:	N
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Nick Worth, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Partnerships
REPORT OF:	Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development
REPORT AUTHOR:	Paul Jackson, Executive Programme Manager
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Holbeach Town;
EXEMPT REPORT?	No

SUMMARY

Members will be aware that the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone (FEZ) comprises a 17 hectare (42 acre) site located to the north-west of Holbeach. The whole of this site is currently covered by a Local Development Order (LDO), which effectively grants permission in principle for a range of Agri-Food uses on the site. The purpose of the LDO is to provide development certainty to the Agri-Food development industry by acting as a stimulus to growth and investment.

The existing site-wide LDO was formally adopted by the authority in November 2019. It was confirmed for a period of 5 years, in line with legislation, and if not renewed will expire in November this year. Since the granting of the original LDO significant development has taken place on site, notwithstanding the economic impacts of both the Covid-19 pandemic and the current Ukraine War. The purpose of this report is straightforward. It seeks approval to extend the existing site-wide LDO for a further period of 15 years and at the same time to update the LDO so that it reflects current planning practice.

In line with the requirements of the legislative regime, the wide range of planning documents underpinning the LDO have been updated. In addition, formal public consultation has been undertaken as expressly required. No objections have been received to the proposals and

significant support has been expressed by, notably, the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Lincoln University, Lincolnshire County Council and our own Inward Investment team.

Members should note that this matter was formally reported to Planning Committee on 6 September 2023. At that Committee Members noted the results of public consultation, endorsed the minor changes to the Order and agreed to extend the timeframe by 15 years, all subject to a final decision to extend the LDO by the authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members consider the content of this report and:

- 1) Note the results of public consultation;
- 2) Note the background reports, including the Monitoring Report showing progress on delivery on site over the first five years;
- 3) Endorse the proposed minor changes to the Order and agree to extend the timeframe to the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone Local Development Order for a further 15 years; and
- 4) Agree to adopt the Order

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone at Holbeach has developed significantly over the past five years. In addition to the provision of essential infrastructure, this including the spur road, distributor road and pumping station, development totalling 4,000 square metres has already taken place on site. A further 1,700 square metres of small business units are in the pipeline. The Centre of Excellence in Agri-food Technology, part of the University of Lincoln, is operational as are both Lincolnshire County Council's 'Hub' building and the base of local company, AJS.

The existing site-wide LDO has proven to be a valuable planning tool which provides certainty to the Agri-Food sector. Its effect is essentially to grant planning permission in advance for a range of Agri-Food uses. It also grants consent in advance for essential infrastructure and site preparation works. This enables developers to proceed with certainty, whilst the Council retains control over the siting and appearance of the buildings themselves.

Given its success to date, the straightforward recommendation is to extend the LDO for a further period of 15 years to facilitate development of the whole of the allocated prestige employment site known as the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone. The rationale remains to stimulate growth, promote the Agri-Food industry locally and beyond, and facilitate the development of innovation and technology within the Agri-Food sector given the emerging cluster of on-site food and science related uses framed around the presence of Lincoln University.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing – This is not recommended as it would hamper the continued delivery of the expected benefits of further economic investment and development on an important prestige employment site. It would also hamper the aims of continuing to promote the wider benefits of the Agri-Food sector both within South Holland and beyond.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone (FEZ) has developed over the past five years in line with the statutory provisions of the Council's adopted Local Plan. This development has been facilitated by a site-wide Local Development Order (LDO) which grants permission in advance for a wide range of Agri-Food uses. Some 25% of the FEZ has been developed to date. The expectation is that that the remainder of the site will take a similar timeframe to develop fully, or a further 15 years.
- 1.2** The success of the LDO cannot be underestimated. It has proven an extremely useful planning tool which is attractive to developers and investors, these notably including Lincoln University. The Council has, in tandem with the County Council, now purchased the remainder of the FEZ site (the Phase 2 land) and is seeking to develop this further by consolidating and expanding the Agri-Food cluster at Holbeach. The FEZ itself provides an important hub to the wider agricultural and food sectors, not least in promoting research and development into scientific and technological advances in food production. Its importance to the District, the County and beyond cannot be over-emphasised in the context of its impact and contribution to the local and regional economy.

2. REPORT

- 2.1** LDOs, when first introduced, nominally extend for an initial period of 5 years. The legislation provides a mechanism for extending the lifespan of LDO's if they remain relevant for a period to be determined by the local planning authority.
- 2.2** There is a clear legislative framework surrounding the manner in which LDOs are extended. This requires the local authority to produce a Monitoring Report, which effectively provides a summary of the development that has taken place on site to date and comments on the success or otherwise of the LDO framework.
- 2.3** There is additionally a requirement to update all the background documents which supported the original LDO, these including for example arboricultural reports, drainage and flood risk strategies, ecological and traffic assessments.
- 2.4** There is a further requirement to undertake public consultation, this including consultation with both formal statutory consultees and the wider public.
- 2.5** All of the above work has been undertaken and completed. Furthermore, the results of the public consultation and the background documentation have been formally reported to and agreed by Planning Committee held on 6 September 2023. The authority now needs to formally determine whether or not it wishes to formally extend and refine the LDO so that it subsists for a further 15 years, during which time it is expected that the wider FEZ will be substantially developed. It is notable in this regard that no objections have been received

to the Council's proposals to extend the LDO. Rather more pleasingly, substantial support has been received from, amongst others, both the Greater Lincolnshire Local Economic Partnership and Lincoln University.

- 2.6 In terms of formal background documentation, the final Monitoring Report is attached at Appendix A. The required Statement of Community Involvement is attached at Appendix B. The Statement of Reasons, which includes the revised LDO, is attached at Appendix C.
- 2.7 The report to Planning Committee held on 6 September 2023 is also highly relevant. A link to this report are included in the 'background documents' section below.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Officers are firmly of the view that the value of the LDO to date justifies its continuation. LDO's are at their heart planning tools which seek to streamline the planning process. The South Lincolnshire FEZ LDO has proven itself effective to date. It has been successful in encouraging development on site and has been welcomed by developers and investors as it not only provides planning certainty but it simplifies the planning process.
- 3.2 Members are invited consider the proposed Order and Statement of Reasons (attached at Appendix C) and, on the basis that they are satisfied, to endorse the Order with or without amendment.

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

- 4.1 To renewal of the South Lincolnshire Local Development Order is designed to support the delivery of a key priority economic project for South East Lincolnshire; a project designed to provide economic benefit far beyond the boundaries of the site and indeed the immediate district. The recommendations are anticipated to deliver a number of benefits, not least through providing confidence to businesses and investors seeking to pursue investment in the Food Enterprise Zone, through long term clarity and assurance on the council's appetite to support investment into the site.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1.1 No specific implications.

5.2 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.2.1 The continuation of, and minor amendments to, the LDO will help to facilitate the Council's ambition to deliver substantial and continued growth as proposed through our Local Plan, in conjunction with our key partners, alongside the stated ambition and to continue to stimulate further growth, productivity and prosperity in the food sector through the delivery of a Food Enterprise Zone in Holbeach.

5.3 STAFFING

- 5.3.1 None.

5.4 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.4.1 No additional legal implications arise from the continuation of an existing Local Development Order covering a specific site formally identified in the Councils adopted Local Plan.

5.5 DATA PROTECTION

5.5.1 None.

5.6 FINANCIAL

5.6.1 No additional financial implications arise from the continuation of an existing Local Development Order covering a specific site formally identified in the Councils adopted Local Plan.

5.7 RISK MANAGEMENT

5.7.1 None.

5.8 STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

5.8.1 Formal statutory consultation forms part of the necessary process of extending the timeframe of an existing LDO as covered in the main body of the report.

5.9 REPUTATION

5.9.1 None.

5.10 CONTRACTS

5.10.1 None.

5.11 CRIME AND DISORDER

5.11.1 None.

5.12 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

5.12.1 None.

5.13 HEALTH AND WELL BEING

5.13.1 None.

5.14 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.14.1 None.

5.15 LINKS TO 12 MISSIONS IN THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

(Use this section to highlight any links to the 12 missions contained in the Levelling Up White Paper set out below. Delete any which are not applicable. If none, insert the word 'none'.)

MISSIONS	
This paper contributes to the follow Missions outlined in the Government's Levelling Up White paper.	
Research and Development	By 2030, domestic public investment in Research & Development outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40% and at least one third over the Spending Review period, with that additional government funding seeking to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.

Skills	By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.
---------------	---

6. ACRONYMS

6.1 FEZ - Food Enterprise Zone

FRA – Flood Risk Assessment

GLLEP - Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership

LCC – Lincolnshire County Council

LDO - Local Development Order

APPENDICES	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
APPENDIX A	South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone Local Development Order Monitoring Report 2023
APPENDIX B	Statement of Community Involvement, South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone Local Development Order Review 2023
APPENDIX C	Statement of reasons in support of a review of the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone Local Development Order 2023

BACKGROUND PAPERS	
No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report	
Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Report to Planning Committee dated 6 September 2023	https://democracy.sholland.gov.uk/documents/s39084/Renewed%20LDO%20Report%20to%20Planning%20Committee%206%20September%202023.pdf

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT	
Name of body	Date
Report to Planning Committee dated 6 September 2023	September 6 th 2023

REPORT APPROVAL	
Report author:	Paul Jackson, pauljackson@sholland.gov.uk
Signed off by:	Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director - Strategic Growth and Development Matthew.hogan@sholland.gov.uk
Approved for publication:	Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director - Strategic Growth and Development