

**APPENDIX 2(iii):
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR REGENERATION**

PROJECT: ASTRA ZENECA AND DISHLEY GRANGE

Astra Zeneca and Dishley Grange	
Vision	To promote the delivery of a contemporary employment area to sustain and enhance the prosperity of Loughborough and provide locally accessible jobs reducing reliance on commuting to other centres across the sub region and to attract replacement high earning employment opportunities to mitigate the economic impact occasioned by the closure of the Astra Zeneca research and development facility.
Description	<p>The Dishley Grange site adjoins Loughborough's established Bishop Meadow Industrial Park on the northern fringes of the town, benefiting from excellent access to the A6 and labour markets across the sub region. It is well positioned to provide for local growth, to replace redundant production capacity lost to alternative development within the town and to play a part in servicing the strategic needs of businesses reliant upon East Midlands Airport.</p> <p>The adjoining Astra Zeneca site accommodates a range of high quality laboratories and offices (769,375 sq ft), logistics capacity (52,898 sq ft) and manufacturing space (126,658 sq ft) supported by ancillary plant and buildings. Efforts have been made to attract a single occupier from the pharmaceutical sector able to derive the maximum benefit from the specialist range of buildings, but no such interest has emerged.</p> <p>Jayplas, a local company active in the field of plastics recycling has announced its intention to purchase the site. It is understood that the company will retain approximately 13 ha to accommodate its own operational needs and that the balance (15.34 ha) is likely to be placed on the market.</p>
Deliverables	<p>The Dishley Grange site is expected to deliver 800 jobs from a range of contemporary office, industrial and warehouse buildings.</p> <p>The future of the "surplus" 15.34 ha within the former Astra Zeneca site is uncertain. The new owners may be persuaded to retain the range of specialist buildings provided suitable occupiers can be found. It is possible that there may be companies from within the pharmaceutical/bio sciences sector which could not acquire the former Astra Zeneca site in its entirety which may retain an interest in parts of the original buildings. In the event that no specialist demand is identified for the range of buildings on the site it would appear probable that site may be cleared to provide serviced development platforms suitable for a wide range of business manufacturing and warehousing operations. The Borough Council will work closely with the new owners of the site to secure its</p>

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early and beneficial use to create new employment opportunities.

<p>Planning Policy</p>	<p>Policy E/5 of the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan allocates 20 hectares of land at Dishley Grange for employment uses subject to specified criteria set out under Policy E/5(c).</p> <p><i>Planning permission for employment development of land at Dishley Grange, Derby Road, Loughborough, will be granted provided the following criteria are met:</i></p> <p><i>i) all highway improvements necessitated by the development are provided. As a minimum these will include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>▪ the construction of a new distributor standard road link between Bishop Meadow Road and the A6 north of Dishley Grange;</i> <i>▪ the diversion and re-alignment of the A6 to provide a dual carriageway section of trunk road to the north-west of Dishley Grange to include a roundabout link to the new distributor road;</i> <i>▪ improvements to the A6/Shepshed Road junction in Hathern;</i> <i>▪ the improvement of the A6/Bishop Meadow Road roundabout junction;</i> <p><i>ii) primary access to the site is taken from a roundabout on the new distributor road;</i></p> <p><i>iii) a cycleway is constructed alongside the Blackbrook between the A6 and the Grand Union Canal and linking into employment areas;</i></p> <p><i>iv) approximately 32 hectares of land are laid out for replacement and improved playing field provision including changing rooms and associated parking facilities. Provision shall include as a minimum:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>▪ 3 cricket squares</i> <i>▪ 4 football pitches</i> <i>▪ 4 hockey pitches</i> <p><i>v) the Loughborough New Football Club Project is retained or relocated on a site appropriate for the Club's long term development requirements which involve the provision of a club house, floodlighting, enclosure of the pitch and training areas;</i></p> <p><i>vi) substantial block planting and landscaping to a minimum depth of 20 metres is provided where necessary to separate conflicting land-uses, screen the development from important views and safeguard the setting of Dishley Grange;</i></p>
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- vii) *blocks of planting are provided within the recreation area to add visual interest to the site;*
- viii) *buildings on the site are designed to a high standard in terms of their use of materials, colours, heights, massing and layout taking into account the edge of town location adjacent to the Loughborough/Hathern Green Wedge and the Soar Valley Area of Local Landscape Value;*
- ix) *buildings in key positions, particularly along the primary site frontages to the new distributor road, Dishley Grange and the adjacent recreation land, will make minimal use of plastic coated steel in their facades in preference for more traditional materials. Large span steel clad buildings will be situated towards the centre of the allocation or suitably screened to avoid any unnecessary intrusion to the detriment of the surrounding area;*
- x) *a positive and complementary relationship is achieved between the development and the adjoining recreation land and the Dishley Grange complex. Open storage, parking and service areas will not be appropriate in these locations;*
- xi) *substantial landscaping is provided within the employment site to fragment the overall mass of the development;*
- xii) *necessary measures are taken to provide appropriate compensatory washland or flood accommodation in any detailed scheme to be agreed with the local planning authority in consultation with the Environment Agency;*
- xiii) *it can be demonstrated that measures will be taken to maximise the potential for access to the site by walking, cycling and public transport.*

A package of measures will be required as part of the implementation of the development which significantly reduces the use of private cars to and from the development. This will provide measures and facilities to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport for occupiers jointly or separately.

In addition the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions to address the following matters generated by the development:

- a) *the creation of a landscaped public open space and wildlife park on 18ha of land north of the distributor road alongside the River Soar, with arrangements for proper maintenance to be agreed with the Borough Council on completion;*
- b) *the establishment of a recreation/leisure/tourism/educational facility centred on Dishley Grange involving the conversion and re-use of the historic buildings on the site;*
- c) *implementation of measures to improve bus access along the A6 and penetrating the industrial area from Belton Road via Belton Road West in the form of bus stops and information, bus priority measures and contributions to services as appropriate;*

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- d) continuation of a cycle route from the site along the Blackbrook/Grand Union Canal corridors to link to housing areas in Loughborough for journeys to work.

The Astra Zeneca site falls within an area where Policy E/8 seeks to safeguard employment land and buildings:

Planning permission for development for uses other than those falling with Part B (business, industrial and warehousing) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, (as amended) of land and buildings situated within primarily employment areas, will not be granted unless:-

- i) the removal of the employment use would enable the achievement of significant environmental improvements in local residential amenity by virtue of the removal of heavy traffic movements, indiscriminate street parking and/or sources of noise, fumes, dust, vibration or other nuisance; or*
- ii) the alternative use would secure specific benefits to the advantage of the local community which would also serve planning function and could not be achieved by other means; or*
- iii) the land and buildings are unfit for employment purposes; or*
- iv) the alternative use is small scale, complementary and ancillary to the main employment use; or*
- v) the alternative development could not be suitably accommodated within a town centre location or a residential area by reason of its trading profile, overall appearance or need for buildings of industrial scale and character, and is not a shop falling within Class A1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes Order) 1987 (as amended); or*
- vi) the alternative use is otherwise acceptable in planning terms and would be essential to enable the relocation or expansion elsewhere in the area of the current activity for which the site or premises have become unsuitable.*

And provided the loss of the employment use would not result in a shortage in employment land and buildings either in the short term or over the plan period, nor result in any underprovision to the disadvantage of the local community or across the Borough as a whole.

Planning History
On 23rd June 2011 the Plans Committee approved outline planning permission ([P/08/2048/2](#)) on the Dishley Grange site, with all matters reserved except access and scale, for employment development (Use Classes B1 & B8) with roundabout access to A6, associated engineering works and relocation of recreation uses. The proposed employment area extends to 9.5 ha with an indicative capacity of 400,000 sq ft of industrial, warehouse and office buildings, with 3.25 ha dedicated to replacement recreation facilities. The site is currently being marketed by [William Davis Ltd](#).

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The planning consent is subject to a Planning Agreement covering provisions for a replacement football ground, contributions towards transportation measures including travel packs, drainage, public art, and monitoring and legal costs. The original scheme as proposed in the adopted Charnwood Local Plan envisaged a significantly larger site area allied to the extension of the A6 access road via a courtesy road to the Astra Zeneca site; that more ambitious proposal necessarily had to be reduced in scale to avoid conflict with essential wash-land.

Astra Zeneca has been consolidating its research and development facility on the Bishop Meadow Industrial Estate over the past decade but announced in March 2010 that the facility was to close with the loss of an estimated 1,200 jobs. The 28.34 ha site, at the time of its closure, accommodated 1,337,139 sq ft (124,224 sq m) of buildings

Issues

It has been announced that the former Astra Zeneca site is to be acquired by Jayplas. That company requires approximately 13 ha of the site to accommodate its own operational requirements related to the recycling of plastics. The company has yet to decide how best to dispose of the surplus 15.34 ha.

In partnership with the LLEP and Leicestershire County Council a number of options for encouraging inward investment might be considered. Those options include:

- The engagement of the marketing expertise of the LLEP in partnership with the owners appointed agents to prominently place the site in the market place to appropriate investment.
- The prospect of establishing a joint venture joining Leicestershire County Council, Charnwood Borough Council and the LLEP to give confidence to potential inward investors that the partnership will prioritise the collective powers and resources at their disposal to create a favourable environment for investment employing such measures as local development orders and the direction of available funding streams.
- The exploitation of land at Messenger Close within the AZ portfolio over which the Borough Council has an option to purchase (£2.5 million) provided a development partner can be engaged to underwrite the costs and commit to an early development of that part of the site as a catalyst for attracting or encouraging further investment in the remainder of the site.

The Dishley Grange site potentially faces some significant initial costs in providing vehicular access via a new roundabout on the A6 and the construction of flood defences before employment generating development can proceed. Such infrastructure may present a candidate for attracting Growing Places funding subject to developer confidence in meeting the necessary 2/3 year repayment schedule.

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Interventions/ Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Ascertain from William Davis Ltd the level of commercial interest in the Dishley Grange site and any initial timetable for the delivery of infrastructure and development phases. 2 Investigate whether the need for significant advance investment in the Dishley Grange site to provide for access and/or flood defence measures is likely to be an impediment to early delivery – potential candidate for Growing Places Fund 3 Establish communications with representatives handling the marketing of the Astra Zeneca site and/or LLEP to determine commercial interest in the site and options for CBC and public sector engagement in facilitating or enabling inward investment. 4 Consider with relevant partners whether there is any benefit in moving towards the designation of a “local enterprise zone” which might capture both the Dishley Grange and Astra Zeneca sites. A flexible planning regime may be delivered through a local development order specifying broader local parameters for permitted development. Fiscal incentives cannot match those offered in a genuine EZ but provision for Business Rate Discounts is to be implemented under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and may assist in attracting inward investment.
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