

## CHARNWOOD LOCAL PLAN 2021-37

### STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND BETWEEN CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL AND LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY RELATING TO THE LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY SCIENCE AND ENTERPRISE PARK

#### 1. Purpose

- 1.1. This statement identifies the areas of common ground between Loughborough University (LU) and Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) regarding the re-allocation of the Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park (LUSEP) extension in the Pre-Submission Draft Charnwood Local Plan. The statement should be read alongside the representations made on behalf of Loughborough University, with particular reference to those in relation to LUSEP.
- 1.2. The aim of the statement is to provide certainty on the deliverability of the LUSEP extension and give confidence that the policy requirements identified in Policy LUC3: LUSEP can be achieved. It also identifies those matters in relation to LUSEP where there is scope for further discussion. It is made without prejudice to the participation in the formal examination of any participant and the views that may then be expressed.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1. LUSEP is one of the largest science parks in the UK accommodating a diverse range of businesses active in the knowledge based and high technology manufacturing sectors and makes a significant contribution to the sub-regional economy. It is well related to the main university campus and builds upon and fosters a close relationship between academic and businesses research and development. The original phase, home to Loughborough Innovation Centre, was completed in 1992 and LUSEP has continued to grow since then.
- 2.2. The principle of capturing the expertise of the university to support technology transfer and develop innovation, research and development, encouraging growth in the local economy, has been supported by strategic policy for 30 years. LUSEP was originally promoted by the Loughborough Local Plan in 1994 with successive plans, including the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (2004), the Leicestershire and Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan (2005) and the Regional Plan (2007) promoting a Science and Enterprise Park where uses would be closely related to the University and its research in a campus style development, landscaped to create a parkland setting.
- 2.3. One of the priorities for the Charnwood Core Strategy (2015) was to extend LUSEP and promote its continued commercial potential by ensuring sufficient land was available for future long-term growth. This was achieved by allocating a 77ha extension to the west of the existing Science and Enterprise Park. The extension of the Science and Enterprise Park remains a major priority for the University, Borough Council, County Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP). This continued ambition has been exhibited by the inclusion of the LUSEP allocated extension as part of the multi-site Loughborough and Leicester Science and Innovation Enterprise Zone.

2.4. The University has recently agreed funding to progress an illustrative masterplan for development of the allocation and will seek to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with CBC to progress an outline planning application for the site in the near future.

3. Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park Allocation (Policy LUC3)

3.1. The LUSEP Local Plan allocation (LUC3) covers 73ha, reflecting the previous Core Strategy allocation, with the vast majority under the sole ownership of LU. Policy LUC3 (see Appendix) provides a framework for the delivery of knowledge-based business space in a landscaped campus on the site, including appropriate ancillary uses. The policy will also seek to support uses that relate to the University's academic, research and other activities; respect heritage assets, the landscape setting and biodiversity; provide high quality, climate adaptable design, using sustainable construction techniques; make a positive contribution to transport provision, including more sustainable travel options; and ensure the provision of significant green infrastructure on the overall site.

4. Areas of Agreement

4.1. There is agreement between CBC and LU with respect to the following matters:

- i. The allocation of the site for an extension to the Science and Enterprise Park is appropriate and justified, and Policy LUC3 is considered sound.
- ii. The objectives of the requirements in Policy LUC3 in relation to knowledge based business uses on site, including appropriate ancillary uses, and the mechanisms proposed for achieving them are supported.
- iii. The objectives of the requirements in Policy LUC3 in relation to the environment, including the creation of a landscaped parkland setting, and the mechanisms proposed for achieving them are supported.
- iv. The objectives of the requirements in Policy LUC3 to ensure a reduction in carbon footprint and a resilience to climate change, and the mechanisms proposed for achieving them are supported.
- v. The objectives of the requirements in Policy LUC3 to provide a fully accessible and legible development, including sustainable modes of transport, and the mechanisms proposed for achieving them are supported.
- vi. LU will work with CBC and relevant partners to support the refresh of the University's LUSEP Gateway Policy; agree a flexible development framework (including a masterplan and delivery and phasing arrangements); establish an economic development strategy; and assist in the creation of appropriate management and marketing practices to deliver LUSEP.

5. Potential Areas for Further Discussion

- 5.1. Both parties agree that there are ancillary elements of general manufacturing and warehousing which may be required on site from operators within the knowledge-based sector to ensure their businesses can grow and develop to their maximum potential. CBC considers that the necessary flexibility is provided through Policy LUC3 with the provision for ‘appropriate ancillary uses to serve the Science and Enterprise Park’. Nevertheless, the Borough Council would be open to minor wording changes if it is considered that further clarity is required.
- 5.2. Both parties agree that there will be further discussions regarding the relationship between the requirements that 40% of the site area be provided for green infrastructure and for developments to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity recognising that it may be possible to include 10% biodiversity net gain within the overall green infrastructure requirements. Further work will provide the opportunity to explore how the areas of green infrastructure that will be provided can achieve the required biodiversity net gain on site. It is noted that Policy EV6 does provide for biodiversity offsetting where appropriate and recent discussions have identified that the University’s extensive land holdings may potentially offer some scope for this.

6. Review of Statement of Common Ground

- 6.1. This statement will be reviewed, and where necessary updated, if there is a material change in circumstances that affects the items identified in sections 4 and 5.

Signed on behalf of Loughborough University	Signed on behalf of Charnwood Borough Council
Name: Graham Howard	Name: Richard Bennett
Position: Director of Estates & Facilities Management	Position: Head of Planning and Regeneration
Date: 11 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	Date:

## Appendix – Pre-Submission Charnwood Local Plan: Policy LUC3: Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park

### Policy LUC3: Loughborough Science & Enterprise Park

We will allocate 73 hectares of land to the west of Loughborough University for an extension to the Science and Enterprise Park.

This will include 31 hectares of land to the east of Snell's Nook Lane and 42 hectares to the west of Snell's Nook Lane.

By 2037 the Science and Enterprise Park will have delivered suitable knowledge-based business space in a landscaped campus that:

- provides for uses that directly relate to the University's own operational activities including teaching, research and development, administration, student accommodation and sports facilities;
- provides for the development of businesses operating within or directly supporting the knowledge-based sector;
- delivers a range of development opportunities that includes an innovation centre, space for business start-ups, grow on units for small and medium sized enterprises and potential for inward investment;
- provides for appropriate ancillary uses to serve the Science and Enterprise Park and ensures that any main town centre uses are in accordance with Policy T1;
- protects historic and archaeological features including the setting of Garendon Registered Park and Gardens and its assets in accordance with Policy EV8;
- integrates with the sensitive landscape and respects its character, biodiversity and appearance in accordance with Policies EV1 and EV6;
- retains 40% of the overall site area for Green Infrastructure, designed to maintain key linkages across the site connecting into the surrounding network in accordance with Policy ENV9;
- provides high quality design and innovation in the form and layout of the development, buildings and green space in accordance with Policy DS5;
- where viable, exceeds the sustainable construction techniques in accordance with Policy CC4;
- delivers buildings and spaces that have been designed to be adaptable to future climatic conditions, including extremes of temperature, drought and flooding, in accordance with Policy CC4;
- includes appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems and flood alleviation measures and where possible reduces flood risk in Loughborough in accordance with Policies CC1 and CC2;
- provides genuine choice to walk and cycle and is well connected to public transport networks in accordance with Policy CC5; and
- makes a positive contribution to the provision of highway infrastructure as identified through a Transport Assessment in accordance with Policy CC5 and INF2.

We will do this by working with our public and private sector partners, including Loughborough University, to:

- prepare a gateway policy to ensure the Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park maintains its unique character as a place for knowledge-based activity;
- agree a flexible Development Framework, including delivery and phasing arrangements and a masterplan that sets parameters and a phasing strategy for the delivery of a cohesive development;
- establish an economic development strategy to capture the wider benefits of the development; and
- support the University in the development of management and marketing practices that assist the delivery of the Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park.

We will require the flexible Development Framework and detailed planning applications to be informed by a Green Infrastructure Strategy and a Sustainability Assessment that identifies the developments response to carbon emissions reduction and climate change resilience.