

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD

05 September 2018

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 INNOVATION PARK MEDWAY MASTERPLAN – CONSULTATION DRAFT

This report provides an update on progress with the illustrative masterplan for Innovation Park Medway, and seeks to approve next steps.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 On 06 July 2017, Report ERG 17/10 provided this Advisory Board with an update on the North Kent Enterprise Zone. This Enterprise Zone is made up of multiple sites in three locations – Kent Medical Campus (Maidstone), Ebbsfleet Garden City and Rochester Airfield, now known as Innovation Park Medway – and has been ‘live’ since April 2017.

1.1.2 The Innovation Park Medway site is a key priority for Medway Council, who are leading the project and own the majority of the site – the exception being Woolmans Wood Caravan Site which is privately owned.

1.1.3 Administratively, an area of the site (as illustrated in Appendix 1) falls within Tonbridge & Malling Borough. As such, any work by Medway Council to masterplan the whole site and progress a comprehensive development requires the agreement of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council.

1.1.3 As mentioned in Report ERG 17/10, work was being undertaken at the time in preparing to go out to tender to design a masterplan for the site that would provide prospective investors with a good indication of how the area could come forward for development. This work is now well advanced, and a draft of the illustrative masterplan has now been produced (Appendix 2) ahead of planned consultation in September and October 2018.

1.2 Aspirations for Innovation Park Medway

1.2.1 A key priority for both Medway Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is the economic regeneration of their respective areas, in order to strengthen the performance of the local economy, create high quality local employment

opportunities and secure sustainable growth and prosperity. It is in this vein that the masterplan for Innovation Park Medway is being taken forward.

1.2.2 Indeed, with the North Kent Enterprise Zone having gone 'live' on 01 April 2017, Innovation Park Medway is being promoted as offering "high-value technology, engineering, manufacturing and knowledge-intensive businesses the opportunity to grow in a bespoke commercial development with a collaborative business environment".

1.2.3 In addition, a key aim is for it to become a catalyst for innovation and business growth, complementing the existing Medway Innovation Centre, through partnerships with the University of Kent, University of Greenwich and Canterbury Christ Church University that will provide access to leading research, development and a pool of skilled graduates.

1.3 Innovation Park Medway – Illustrative Masterplan

1.3.1 Consultants LDA Design were appointed in February 2018 to prepare an indicative masterplan for Innovation Park Medway, and to fully capitalise on the Enterprise Zone status. This also includes work being undertaken on a number of technical studies completed to an Environmental Impact Assessment standard to support future work on the production of a Local Development Order that will ultimately manage the type and quality of the employment offer on the site.

1.3.2 The consultation draft of the indicative masterplan (Appendix 2) is broken down into a number of main stages:

- Innovation – explaining the ambitions and driving forward an innovation environment.
- Context – setting out site location within a regional context, as well as the planning context.
- Site Appraisal – including access, topography, landscape, ecology and heritage assets.
- Vision for the site – essentially the delivery of a site that offers up to 100,000m² of high quality, innovative commercial space and is underpinned by 5 concepts:
 - i. Breaking innovation out of silos and fostering a supportive community founded on principles of collaboration, promoted through public realm.
 - ii. Mixing up uses to encourage collaboration
 - iii. Delivering a strong and clear identity
 - iv. Ensuring flexibility
 - v. Futureproofing to allow for growth
- The Masterplan itself which sets out a spatial representation for the site, and provides diagrammatical indications of land use, building heights, site access

and movement, and landscaping, as well as providing indicative imagery of how the innovation park could look.

- Phasing, delivery and summary of parameters – in terms of development phasing, it is worth highlighting that the indicative masterplan states that the first potential development parcel is located to the north of the site, with development within Tonbridge & Malling Borough potentially taking place in the second and third phases.

1.3.3 A number of supporting surveys and studies have been undertaken to establish and support the masterplan principles. These cover a wide range of issues, such as air quality, transport impact and noise. Soft market testing has also been carried out to ascertain the level of private sector interest in the site.

1.4 Consultation and Next Steps

1.4.1 Subject to the recommendations being agreed, this indicative masterplan will go out to a period of consultation for a six week period from 17 September to 28 October 2018. At the time of writing this report, the exact details of the consultation have not been finalised but are likely to include:

- Press articles in local newspapers.
- Mail drop to local properties.
- Social Media messaging.
- Dedicated webpages on both TMBC and Medway Council websites, including link to an online questionnaire.
- Exhibition at the Medway Innovation Centre.
- Provision of hard copies at receptions.

Once the consultation is over, it will be followed by a period responding to the comments and issues raised and concluded with revisions to the masterplan where necessary.

1.4.2 Once this has been undertaken, the revised masterplan will then go to Cabinet in January 2019 with a view to adopting it for the purposes of economic development and marketing. This document will then guide the thinking in the future production of either a Local Development Order or Outline Planning Application for the site.

1.5 Legal Implications

1.5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

1.7 Risk Assessment

1.7.1 Not applicable.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

1.8.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.9 Recommendations

1.10.1 That the draft of the Innovation Park Medway indicative masterplan **BE APPROVED** for consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and the Chief Executive confirm that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

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