

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Council Chamber - Town Hall
23 May 2024 (7.00 - 9.15 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS 8

Conservative Group	Ray Best and Dilip Patel
Havering Residents' Group	Laurance Garrard (Chairman), Reg Whitney (Vice-Chair) and Bryan Vincent
Labour Group	Jane Keane

Councillors Philippa Crowder, John Crowder, Graham Williamson, Christine Smith, John Wood and Matt Stanton were also present.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

1 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of 7 December 2023 and 25 January 2024 were agreed as a true record the Chair was authorised to sign them.

3 LAND NORTH OF FEN LANE, NORTH OCKENDON

The Committee received an update on the proposal for a data centre campus comprising a number of buildings containing information technology infrastructure and energy plant, heated indoor horticultural buildings, an ecology park and a visitors' centre.

The purpose of the presentation was to update Members on -

- the proposed development and any updates from the last presentation
- to receive a presentation being provided by the Development 'Sponsor' Digital Reef and appended document providing details of the development)

- recap on the Committee the Local Development Order (LDO) process, and update on progress on taking that forward
- the progress on the Environmental Impact Assessment
- outline the suite of documents that members of the committee can expect to receive in the report package at such a point that officers seek approval to formally consult on the LDO
- answer any clarifications to questions and considerations raised by members following previous meetings and the site visit on 25th March 2024
- set out next steps
- it is not the purpose of the report to provide a detailed planning assessment of the proposal and provide any recommendations, this would be done at such point that officers seek approval to consult on the LDO

The Committee noted the report and the presentation by the development sponsor (Eleanor Alexander and Piers Slater) and raised the following for consideration as the proposal moved forward:

- Are there any local workforce training plans
- what opportunity are available for local companies and businesses to work with Digital Reef
- Question if the buildings were being constructed to specification with potential occupiers
- What level Contract
- Qualification of height of the building on the site
- Level of harm arising, building on green belt
- Observation and assurance on security that will be in place
- Nature of ownership, will Digital Reef remain as landlord
- What will be the power consumption on the site
- Is it net carbon during construction stage
- There was a keenness to understand vertical agricultural farming, potential for a site visit
- Spare land in the red line, why is not being used
- Is LDO to right route to proceed
- Balance between data security and food security
- Better information on how much land will be lost
- How does stacking work in terms of fuel cells
- Any other source of backup power source
- How can it be ensured that clean energy is used, is it conditioned
- Option to reclaim waste heat
- How that individual occupiers will link up with power supply
- Once building is occupied, will business rate come forth

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Members were informed that any further comments and questions be sent to planning officers within the next week.

Chairman