



Image credit: This is Gravity Limited.

Local Development Orders



Unlock development potential, attract investment, and create social value

Local Development Orders (LDOs) are an important tool to accelerate growth and support project delivery by proactively shaping development.

They help local authorities adopt a local solution to simplify the planning process and attract investment. Throughout the UK, there are brilliant examples of LDOs in action, which are helping build sustainable communities for the future, create social value, support the levelling up agenda and deliver local authority net zero ambitions.

With an LDO in place for specified development on an identified site, planning consent should be easier, less expensive, and faster for developers. This encourages the development of stalled sites by making it easier for developers and landowners

to meet their own development priorities and, in turn, creates opportunity for the surrounding community.

Stantec's planning team understands the broader commercial landscape and can help local authorities unlock development potential. The combination of our experience in preparing LDOs and innovative thinking means we can help from inception through to adoption and delivery.



Image credit: Somerset West and Taunton Council.

Benefits, process and outputs of an LDO

Stantec has developed guidance to steer local authorities through the LDO process. Sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), our specialist planning team worked with the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) to prepare an Advice Note to demonstrate the potential of LDOs. The guidance provides practical advice on the benefits, process and outcomes associated with LDOs as well as how to develop an appropriate LDO to meet your planning ambitions, while considering site circumstances and available resources.

WHY USE AN LDO?

Positive planning tool

- De-risk and provide certainty
- Set parameters
- Speed up and simplify planning
- Unlock stalled sites
- Delivery focused
- Set the vision / create the opportunity
- Collaboration between departments and with Members
- Partnership approach with land owners

HOW

Preparing an LDO

- Site analysis and understanding
- Technical reporting and de-risking
- Viability and site capacity
- Consultation and engagement

* EIA may be required for larger sites - check relevant procedures

WHAT ARE THE OUTPUTS?

Local Development Order

- Statement of Reasons
- Schedule of uses
- Conditions
- Formal consultation and publicity
- S106
- Bespoke fee structure set by the LPA

Design guide

- Opportunities and constraints
- Design parameters and principles
- Valuable marketing tool

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Our services

LDO MANAGEMENT

At Stantec, we take the lead in preparing LDOs on behalf of local authorities and offer multi-disciplinary advice to provide a holistic and effective service to achieve the best possible outcome for your development project.

UNDERSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES

We provide expert planning advice on the development of buildings and land that generate social value – improving the quality of life for those who live, work and study in your local community.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVICE

Our market-leading Environmental Services enable local authority clients to make the best land development decisions. We work alongside councils to deliver integrated LDOs, and EIAs where required, that safely improve quality of life for communities, enhance social value, and drive continuous improvement in delivery. Through collaboration, we ensure our focus is on delivering great outcomes for your projects.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

We provide pragmatic, commercial advice at all stages of the LDO planning process.



Image credit: This is Gravity Limited.

Project experience

Gravity Smart Campus LDO

THIS IS GRAVITY LTD AND SEDGMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL



Image credit: This is Gravity Limited.

Gravity will be the UK's first commercial smart campus and a blueprint for a 'cleaner', smarter future. It aims to attract the world's most innovative companies working in the 'clean growth' sectors.

Expected to create up to 7,500 jobs, the 616-acre Enterprise Zone will be designed to shape connections between people and the places they work, supporting a culture of innovation and wellbeing.

Stantec's planning team established the LDO for Gravity, which will be at the heart of the UK's 4th Industrial Revolution. The Stantec team drafted the clean and inclusive growth strategy, and established 50 social and environmental positive measures in the design of the project.

This early definition of social and environmental success enabled the LDO to respond to 'the' Government's 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution. Stantec also led on the preparation of the Environmental Statement in support of the LDO, providing multi-disciplinary input across our environmental services offering.

The LDO is ideally suited to the Gravity enterprise zone and will create a marketing tool to attract investors to Sedgemoor and Somerset. Aligned with the priority to address climate change and contribute to transport decarbonisation, Gravity can offer up to 1.1 million square metres of advanced manufacturing space and associated facilities and enabling infrastructure, with the potential to create up to 7,000 jobs, and develop up to 750 homes as an integrated part of the smart campus. The site includes a proposed reinstated railway line for freight and passengers, and the sustainable design includes cycling and walking routes to promote active travel.

Working collaboratively with Salamanca Group, Sedgemoor District Council, and the highway authorities through the planning, design, and approvals processes, a technical solution was developed that will unlock the site.

The Gravity Local Development Order (LDO) was adopted by Sedgemoor District Council in February 2022.

Project experience

Nexus 25 LDO

TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL



Image credit: Somerset West and Taunton Council.

Stantec was commissioned by Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) to prepare an LDO and all associated supporting material to deliver Nexus 25, a 25ha strategic employment site in Taunton. TDBC determined that an LDO was the preferred route for delivery of this important employment site, based on our advice.

Our planning team performed the lead consultant role (across all disciplines, including EIA) to address a number of challenging site constraints, including flooding and transport to ensure different issues were addressed in a coordinated manner. The delivery of Nexus 25 was critical in securing funding for Somerset County Council improvements to Junction 25 to alleviate congestion which has now been built.

Nexus 25 is the biggest new employment site in the South West and the LDO is vital to its timely delivery, in line with the economic objectives of the local authority. The site will provide a range of flexible premises providing accommodation for research and development, health, education, and digital technology alongside high-quality office space, light industrial units and warehouses.

Designed as a 'Green Campus,' the site will include walkways and landscaping to create an environment in line with Taunton's new Garden Town status.

The LDO will help to deliver this strategically important development which will encourage business and create up to 4000 new jobs while contributing to TDBC's ambitious growth plans for Taunton.

Now approved, the LDO sets out the extent and nature of the proposed development together with all the criteria and requirements that proposals must meet to satisfy the terms of the Order. Developers must demonstrate to the Council that their proposals satisfy the requirements of the LDO in order for them to proceed.

Project experience

Quayside and Blackfriars LDO, Gloucester City Centre

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



The Quayside and Blackfriars site in Gloucester City Centre has been underused for many years, despite the production of various vision and masterplan documents. The site formed an unattractive 'gap' in the fabric of the City Centre and was a high priority for regeneration for both Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucester City Council, joint owners of the site.

The site is subject to significant constraints, namely archaeology, flooding and contamination. A strong delivery strategy was required to bring forward regeneration and provide a positive legacy for Gloucester City Centre.

Stantec recommended to Gloucestershire County Council that a Local Development Order (LDO) would be a suitable planning tool to bring development forward on the site.

Subsequently we were commissioned to prepare an LDO and accompanying Design Guide alongside a suite of technical reports to help bring forward a viable scheme for the site with a clear delivery strategy.

Our planning team established monthly Steering Group and stakeholder meetings as a means to disseminate information with key parties and undertook Member and Officer training in relation to LDOs and the specifics of the site.

The LDO will enable development to create a new mixed use City district which is of high architectural quality and improves connections with the River Severn at the Quay.

The LDO was granted approval by the Secretary of State in April 2017, making way for the multimillion-pound development scheme which is now underway.

Project experience

Small Scale Employment Space LDO

SOMERSET WEST AND TAUNTON COUNCIL

PROPOSED UNIT IN A TOWN OR VILLAGE CENTRE SETTING

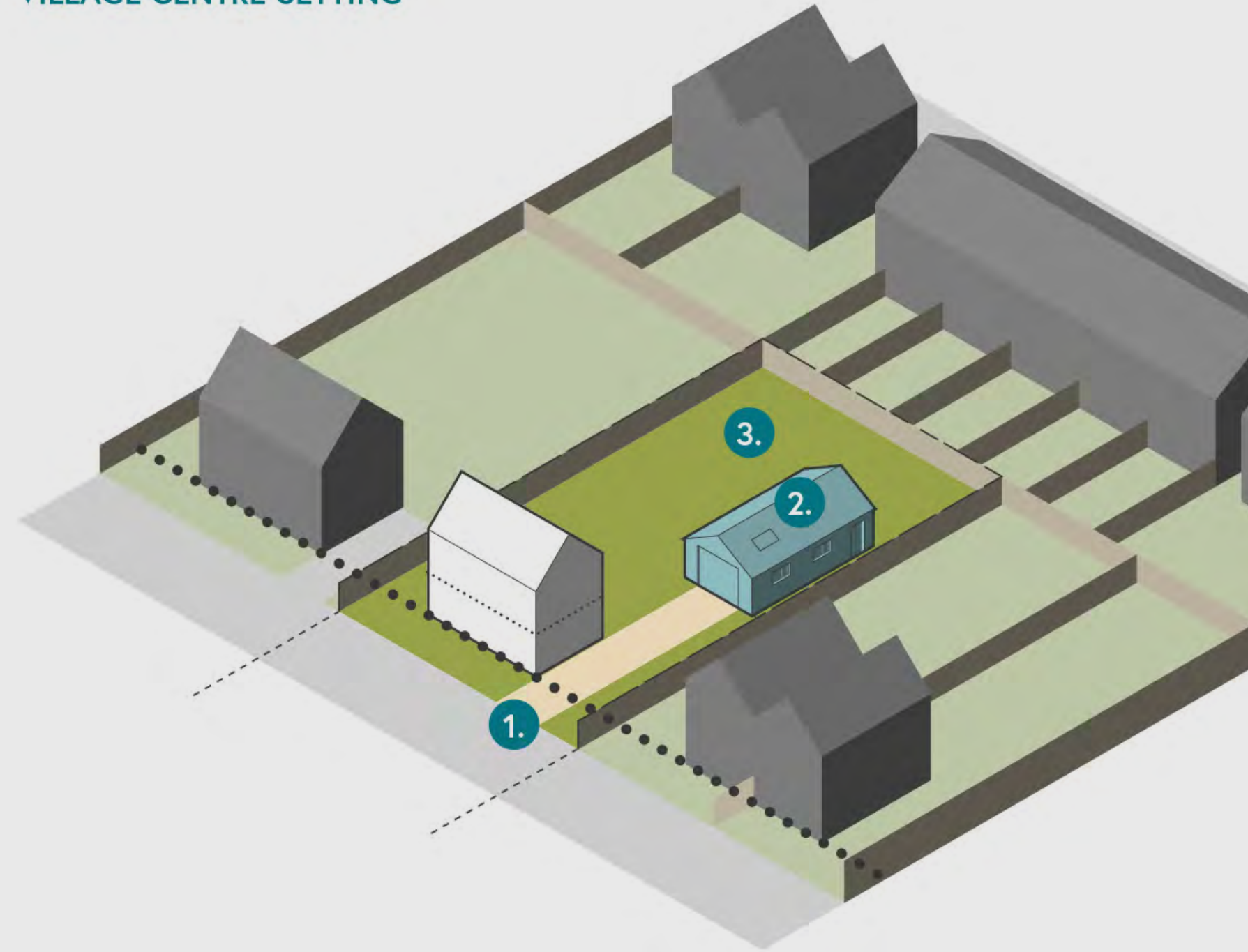


Image credit: Somerset West and Taunton Council.

Stantec created an LDO for Somerset West and Taunton Council to support small businesses by meeting evidenced demand for enhanced work from home and light industrial freehold spaces.

This need has been accentuated by the context of Covid-19 and a national recession requiring local and national government support for business and employment opportunities.

The LDO will provide independent entrepreneurs and small businesses with a mechanism to create or expand their businesses outside the District's established centres for employment.

The Small-Scale Employment Space LDO aims to support and encourage micro-businesses and start-ups across Somerset West and Taunton, with a focus on rural areas where there is an identified need for small scale employment space. The need to encourage employment uses close to where people live underpins the LDO; supporting small business and rural communities.

The LDO approach contrasts to that of the traditional planning application route, which tends to be more reactive than proactive. An example of this is working with Somerset County Council Highways Authority to identify and agree an approach to the LDO which was technically robust and yet easy for LDO applicants to understand.

The LDO and accompanying Design Code have done more than just apply standards to development that a planning application would be required to achieve, they have encouraged good development and provide a useful and practical tool to help applicants to realise their aspirations.

Following a public consultation in January to March 2020, the final LDO and Design Code were adopted in 2020. This was a high profile project which was commended in the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2021.



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