

 Special Executive Committee 29th September 2008		Agenda Item No. 2
Title	Station Area Planning Brief	
For further information about this report please contact	John Archer Head of Planning john.archer@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456500	
Service Area	Planning	
Wards of the District directly affected	Brunswick, Milverton	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	Executive 23 rd July 2007 - 271 Executive 11 th February 2008 - 890 Executive 25 th March 2008 - 1034(H) Executive 22 nd May 2008 - 104	
Background Papers		

Contrary to the policy framework:	Yes/No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	Yes/No
Key Decision?	Yes/No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes/No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports <u>must</u> be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director		Bill Hunt
Chief Executive		Chris Elliott
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mary Hawkins
Legal		Simon Best
Finance		Marcus Miskinis
Portfolio Holder(s)		Cllr. John Hammon
Consultation Undertaken		
<p>Following approval of the draft brief a six week period of formal consultation took place, over 70 responses were made. To supplement the consultation an exhibition was held in the Royal Priors shopping centre on the 13th June 2008, to which over 170 people attended. Separate presentations were also given to Royal Leamington Spa Town Council, Conservation Area Advisory Forum and the Town Centre Management Initiative. Officer and consultant discussions have also taken place internally and with officers from Warwickshire County Council.</p> <p>Progress of the brief has been monitored by Planning on a day to day basis and via regular Steering Group meetings which has included nominated members of Warwickshire Country Council.</p>		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the work undertaken by consultants GVA Grimley and its associates WSP Environmental and TWS Architects in preparing a final planning and development brief for the Station Area, Leamington Spa. It is recommended that the final brief be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Planning and Development Brief for the Station Area (attached as appendix one to this report) be formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to guide and assist in bringing forward development in the area.
- 2.2 That the previous Council supplementary planning guidance 'Development Principles for the Station Area' (1999) be withdrawn.
- 2.3 That the Urban Coding Exercise – High Street/Clemens Street/Tachbrook Road (1999) be withdrawn insofar as it impacts on the Station Area brief.
- 2.4 That an officer working group be established to develop partnership working between all relevant interested parties to progress implementation of the brief.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The provision of a clear development framework for this area of Leamington will provide the guidance necessary to ensure that the development of this important location is undertaken in a beneficial and co-ordinated manner.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED

- 4.1 It would be possible for Executive not to approve the brief, in which case no up to date planning framework for the area would be put in place.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The project is being entirely funded by Advantage West Midlands. The only cost to the Council for this project is officer time, met from normal budgets.

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 This draft brief has been prepared against the background of policies in the adopted Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 At the special Executive held in May 2008, the draft Station Area Planning and Development Brief, prepared by GVA Grimley, was approved for the purposes of consultation. Further background information regarding the process of preparation of the draft brief, the previous report can be found at: www.warwickdc.gov.uk/stationarea .
- 7.2 A six week period of consultation was held in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, starting on 13th June 2008 and ending on 25th July 2008. There was considerable public interest in the brief during this time and over 70 responses were received. A summary of responses has been

compiled along with details of other methods of engagement undertaken in the Statement of Public Consultation document (appendix three of this report). The summary of responses groups comments by either issues or a specific area of the brief. The Council's response and changes made to the brief as a result are indicated alongside consultee representations.

- 7.3 The final brief is attached as appendix one. The content of the brief outlines the background to its development; constraints and opportunities; the planning policy context; our vision for the area; development principles and sustainable principles that have been adhered to through the process. The final chapter outlines how the principles of the brief will be taken forward to implementation and delivery.
- 7.4 Three of the plans accompanying the brief are attached as appendix two, showing the extent of the brief area, current and preferred land uses. All other plans mentioned in the brief can be viewed at the web address below.
- 7.5 Several technical background reports, including transport and sustainability assessments, have informed choices taken in the brief, and these documents are publicly available on the Council's website: www.warwickdc.gov.uk/stationarea

Vision

- 7.6 The brief establishes a vision for the area as a whole, defining it as a 'Gateway' to Leamington within which landmark buildings and high quality design are required to achieve a mix of uses, create improved linkages to the other areas of the town and secure sustainable transport.

Development Principles

- 7.7 The general development principles for the whole of the Station Area focus on ensuring compatibility with the overall planning framework; sustainable development, particularly how the site area can contribute to the use of on site renewable and low/zero carbon energy; minimising the impact on the road network; high quality design and creating an attractive environment in which to live and work.

Land Use

- 7.8 In broad terms the preferred land uses for the Station Area have not changed from those proposed in the draft brief. However, there have been some proposed changes and clarifications as summarised below: -
 - I. Concerns were raised regarding the quantum of 'ancillary' retail on the proposed office led development on the former Ford foundry site. Therefore, the term ancillary retail has been replaced with small scale and any such proposals would need to demonstrate that they would not harm the vitality and viability of the town centre.
 - II. The preferred use for former Ford car park off Princes Drive has been retained for light industrial. The brief also recognises that there may be the opportunity for one of the current uses in the station area to relocate there, namely either the bus depot or one of the building merchants. Hence, provision has been

made for either of these uses to relocate subject to an entrance/exit arrangement to the satisfaction of the local highways authority.

- III. The proposals for railway station area have been revised following comments during the consultation. Proposals for commercial development in the south east corner have been deleted from the final brief. There was little support for this through the consultation process and concern over the impact of the setting of the listed building (rail station) and effect on the station gardens.
- IV. The brief supports the principle of a multi-deck car park and an improved layout arrangement for all users of the station. The brief does not determine the final layout of the station forecourt (as like other parts of the Station Area), this will be in part determined by the Station Travel Plan.
- V. Despite some opposition to the principle of a northern entrance to the station, this has been retained in the brief as a long term aim. Given the level of development proposed in the station area this gives a clear window of opportunity to provide some lasting benefit to the community. The ability to provide an attractive route to the station and increase the station capacity in the longer term, is recognised as a significant possible benefit.
- VI. There were a number of suggestions for new crossings over the rail line in order to ease congestion along the main arterial routes. As the Statement of Consultation explains, it was felt that this was not an option that land uses could bear, and would require significant funds from elsewhere. There is however, provision in the brief for a pedestrian/cycle crossing over the railway subject to feasibility and any potential uses on the Old Warwick Road frontage generating a high amount of footfall.

Transportation

- 7.9 The brief recognises that there is a range of highways and transportation issues. It is not the role of the brief to resolve these in detail, but to provide a clear context for development to come forward. A station travel plan is currently being prepared by Warwickshire County Council which will address the balance of transportation provision at the station forecourt area and address detailed questions of prioritising sustainable transport. It will also be necessary for all development proposals to demonstrate how they will address traffic impacts and provide travel plans.

Current Guidance & Local Plan Framework

- 7.10 In order to provide clarity on the Council's preferred approach it is appropriate that previous supplementary planning guidance, 'Development Principles for the Station Area (1999)' be withdrawn. This document focussed on the regeneration and environmental enhancement of the railway station and some of the aspiration of this document may appear to be in conflict with those listed in the Station Area Brief.
- 7.11 In addition, the supplementary planning guidance Urban Coding Exercise – High Street/Clemens Street/Tachbrook Road should be withdrawn insofar as it impacts on the Station Area brief. The rest of the document should be retained as supplementary planning guidance as it provides valuable guidance on a framework for the environmental enhancement of this central part of the Old Town area.

- 7.12 Chapter four has been revised to make clear the brief should be read in conjunction with the Local Plan, and other national and local planning guidance. Thus, for instance, the standard local requirements for affordable housing, renewable energy and parking apply.

Future Progress

- 7.13 The final chapter of the brief suggests a way forward following the adoption of the brief as supplementary planning guidance. It is intended that a partnership of landowners, infrastructure providers, funding partners and other stakeholders be formed to progress the brief on the ground. Further work, including joint discussions will be required to determine the process through which this group will operate to implement and deliver the vision and proposals in the adopted Station Area Brief.