

 Executive – 12 October 2011		Agenda Item No. <h1>10</h1>
Title	Coventry and Warwickshire Gateway development proposals	
For further information about this report please contact	Bill Hunt Deputy Chief Executive 01926 456014 bill.hunt@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	Stoneleigh	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?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 14 September 2011 Minute number XX	
Background Papers	Report to Executive, 14 September 2011- Delivering the Vision Report to Council, 29 June 2011 – Proposed Enterprise Zone Report to Executive, 8 June 2011– Proposed Enterprise Zone Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Board minutes CWLEP Enterprise Zone application	
Contrary to the policy framework:	No	
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No	
Key Decision?	No	
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No	
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	No	
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Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Deputy Chief Executive		Author
Head of Service		Paul Pinkney
CMT		Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer		Andy Jones
Finance		Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)		Cllr. Caborn
Consultation & Community Engagement		
n/a		
Final Decision?	Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members as to how proposals for the development of a major employment site, the Coventry and Warwickshire Gateway, could be brought forward despite the failure to gain approval for an Enterprise Zone within the sub-region.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Executive instruct officers to explore all possible opportunities to bring forward development at the proposed Coventry and Warwickshire Gateway site (the Gateway), utilising the three-pronged approach set out within Appendix One, in order to inform the development of the new Local Plan for the district.
- 2.2 That Executive approve the principle of bidding, in conjunction with Coventry City Council, to join the Department of Communities and Local Government 'Frontrunners' Scheme.
- 2.3 That Executive delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (BH), in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Development Portfolio Holder, to finalise a bid.
- 2.4 That Executive note that the full Council will receive updates on progress of the work relating to a future Gateway development through the previously agreed programme for the development of the new Local Plan.
- 2.5 That Executive note the progress of the discussions held to date with the Coventry and Warwickshire Development Partnership LLP
- 2.6 That Executive note that the Council has been offered, and accepted, a seat on the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Board and that Councillor Caborn be nominated as this Council's representative.
- 2.7 That is accepted as a front runner (2.2 above) a member joint working party with Coventry City Council be set up comprising the Leader, Development Portfolio Holder and local ward member, to oversee the detailed delivery of any resultant scheme.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council gave its full in-principle support to the CWLEP's bid for an Enterprise Zone (EZ) within the sub-region on land at and around Coventry Airport in June 2011.
- 3.2 The EZ bid was ultimately unsuccessful but the CWLEP continues to recognise the importance of the Gateway as a strategic sub-regional development site with the potential to create over 10,000 jobs and address issues, including potential barriers to growth, identified in their 5 year strategy. The CWLEP therefore considered a report, attached as **Appendix One**, at its Board meeting of 7 September 2011, approving its recommendations.
- 3.3 Whilst the potential to realise the specific benefits that would have arisen from the designation of EZ is no longer available the basis on which the Council supported the EZ bid remains intact, i.e. that development in this location holds significant potential for job creation and economic stimulus. It is therefore

prudent that the Council does all it can to explore possible means of bringing forward such development.

- 3.4 It is therefore proposed that the Council works with its CWLEP partners and the joint venture company, Coventry and Warwickshire Development Partnership LLP, specifically established to bring forward development of those areas of the proposed Gateway site within the district boundary, utilising the three-pronged approach described in Appendix One.
- 3.5 One element of the proposed approach is to explore the potential development of a Business Development Order, a new provision and a variant of the Neighbourhood Development Order concept, that is planned to be made available through the future adoption of the Localism Bill. Further details are available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/neighbourhoodplanningvanguards/>
- 3.6 Senior officers at the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) have suggested that an application be made by both this Council and Coventry City Council for 'frontrunner' status to enable the potential use of this new power to be investigated in detail prior to the Localism Bill becoming statute. It is therefore proposed that an application for 'frontrunner' status is made in the current bidding round that closes on 4 November 2011.
- 3.7 A thorough exploration of all the possible options for future development of the gateway site would directly inform the development of the district's new Local Plan, the timetable for which was agreed by Executive at its meeting of 14 September 2011.
- 3.8 The work will not, in itself, commit the Council to designating the site as a major employment site within the Local Plan or to seeking to re-designate Green Belt land to accommodate such development although approval of the recommendations will represent an 'in-principle' indication of its willingness to explore both options and to test them throughout the process set out in the 14 September report. This will mean that full Council will be able to specifically assess the potential benefits of development at the Gateway site at its meetings of 30 November 2011 and 28 March 2012.
- 3.9 The Deputy Chief Executive (BH) and the Director of City Services and Development at Coventry City Council have already met with representatives of the joint venture for exploratory discussions to assess the viability of their proposal to develop the Gateway site despite the decision not to grant EZ status for the area. Both Councils believe that their willingness to explore the three-pronged approach is genuine and that the joint venture recognises the need to work with the planning authorities and local communities to ensure that any development proposals they bring forward achieve the maximum benefits for all parties.
- 3.10 The joint venture has also made it clear that the proposed Gateway site will not include any of the land within the operational boundary of Coventry Airport. This is significantly different to the EZ bid proposal which included land within the airport boundary to both the north and south of the runway.
- 3.11 A map showing the extent of the proposed Gateway site is attached at **Appendix Two** and, for comparison, another map showing the site of the unsuccessful EZ bid is attached at **Appendix Three**. Members will note that

the Gateway site, marked in red at Appendix Two, broadly correlates with zones A, B and E of the EZ bid but that all the airport land within zone C has been excluded as has zone D.

- 3.12 Members will also note that red Gateway areas extend to the west of the previous zones B and C, right up to the developed area of Baginton village. This is in no way an indication that this whole area would be considered for development but, on the contrary, recognition that a substantial 'green buffer' would need to be created between the village and any development, which would not actually extend beyond the western edge of the previous zone B and C boundaries. This principle of showing the full extent of the area that the joint venture would purchase in order to create a green buffer also accounts for the expansion of southwards and eastwards of the previous zone E.
- 3.13 The red zone marked at Appendix Two also shows the extent of the highways that would be directly improved through development of the Gateway and other junctions, away from the main site (circled in red), that would also be improved. Amongst the latter is the A46 junction that provides access to the University of Warwick and Stoneleigh Park/Stoneleigh village. The potential to make significant improvements to the district's transport network and its overall economic prosperity by improving this junction, together with the Styvechale and Tollbar islands on the A45/A46, is a significant feature of the Gateway development and the extent of those improvements has widened from those envisaged in the EZ bid.
- 3.14 Subject to approval of the recommended approach officers would engage in detailed discussions with the joint venture, Coventry City Council, the Highways Agency, Warwickshire County Council and if necessary, St. Modwens, (the owners of the land north of the A45) in order to explore all possible options to bring forward development of employment opportunities and infrastructure improvements.
- 3.15 Officers will continue to engage, separately, with the operator of Coventry Airport, the Patriot Aerospace group of companies, to discuss their aspirations for development. As members are aware development at this site will continue to be governed by existing permitted development rights, as amended by the Parcellforce s106 agreement and Secretary of State determination on the Interim Passenger Facility (passenger terminal), or by the future submission of any new planning application(s). The ability of the airport to bring forward development therefore remains unchanged but any proposals to do so will be entirely separate from any future development of the Gateway site.
- 3.16 At its 7 September 2011 meeting the CWLEP Board also approved a proposal to expand the size of the Board through the addition of 2 further members, one each from the private and public sector. In recognition of the strategic importance of the Gateway site the CWLEP Board determined that the offer of the additional public sector place should be extended to Warwick District Council. The Leader of the Council has accepted this offer and nominated Cllr. Caborn to become our CWLEP Board representative, recognising that this will be of significant benefit to his role in leading on the delivery of the Council's Vision and the development of the new Local Plan.
- 3.17 If frontrunner status is sought and granted it is suggested that the detailed delivery would be aided by a joint member working party with Coventry City

Council. Representation on that from this Council is suggested as the Leader, the portfolio holder for Development Services and the local ward member.

4. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 The principles underpinning the development of the Gateway, i.e. economic stimulus, the creation of significant numbers of new jobs and the ability to increase business rates growth, are entirely consistent with the achievement of the objectives within the Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy and Corporate Vision.
- 4.2 The exploration of options to bring forward development at the Gateway site will also directly inform the development of the Council's Core Strategy (Local Plan).

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 There are no direct budgetary implications arising from these recommendations.
- 5.2 The proposed approach will require significant officer time but this can be accommodated within the resources that will need to be deployed to bring forward the work on the delivery of the Council's Vision and the preparation of its new Local Plan.
- 5.3 If any specific work is required that can not be contained within existing budgets this would be subject to member approval through normal channels.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Executive could decide not to adopt the recommended approach to explore options for development at the Gateway site. This has been discounted given the site's potential to bring forward significant employment growth and infrastructure improvements that would be consistent with the Council's strategic aims.
- 6.2 Executive could also decide not to support the recommendation to apply for CLG 'frontrunner' status. This has been discounted on the grounds that a successful bid would enable the Council to test out the viability of deploying one of the new provisions proposed within the Localism Bill to maximise the engagement between the business sector and local communities in the development of any new proposals for growth.