

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

8TH JANUARY 2008

LONGBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN - SUBMISSION

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr J Dyer
Responsible Head of Service	Dave Hammond

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Longbridge Area Action Plan (AAP) has been prepared in conjunction with Birmingham City Council, Worcestershire County Council and key stakeholders, including the landowners St Modwen Properties PLC. This report details the final version of the AAP which on approval will be submitted to the Secretary of State and undergo an Examination in Public.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That members approve the Longbridge Area Action Plan and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal for submission to the Secretary of State, subject to the Executive Director for Partnerships and Projects being given delegated authority to approve minor textual changes.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The sudden closure of the MG Rover plant at Longbridge in April 2005 had a major impact on the local community in South Birmingham and North Worcestershire as well as the local and regional economy. The Longbridge Area Action Plan has been prepared to secure the comprehensive regeneration of the area. The Plan is the outcome of extensive work with a wide range of stakeholders and all elements of the local community through an innovative range of community consultation which has resulted in a large degree of support for the proposals.
- 3.2 This is probably the biggest regeneration scheme in the West Midlands and one of the largest in the country with over 140 hectares/350 acres of development land. The Plan proposes an exciting and highly sustainable employment led mixed-use development, that will deliver many benefits for the not only the immediate area around the former plant, but the wider West Midlands region beyond. These include around 10,000 jobs, over 1400 new dwellings, a new local centre to provide a real heart to Longbridge, three new parks and other major improvements to the environment. The development will also address many strategic and regional needs including the provision of a Regional Investment Site that will assist in restructuring the economy as well as a strategic park and ride facility and quality transport interchange. The Plan also identifies the need for a range of high quality public transport facilities and services, including improved bus networks and rail infrastructure.
- 3.3 As members will be aware over the last 2 years officers from both Bromsgrove, Birmingham and Worcestershire have been working in

partnership with the major landowners on the AAP. The Local Development Framework Working Party have been involved in the production of the plan throughout, and a number of reports have been presented at the following stages,

- Stage 1-Public consultation to identify key issues and objectives for the Plan in Spring 2006;
- Stage 2- Approval of an Issues and Options Report in October 2006. This report set out 4 possible options for the redevelopment of the former MG Rover site. Subsequent public consultation revealed most support for mixed-use options
- Stage 3- Approval of a Preferred Options Report in February 2007. This set out an employment led mixed-use option that included a target of securing 10,000 jobs, a Regional Investment Site, a new local centre, and about 1400 new dwellings. It also set out more detailed options for public transport. Subsequent public consultation confirmed support for this “preferred option”.

3.4 The Plan sets out policies to create a sustainable community and showcase the highest standards of design. The aim is deliver a mixed-use development with sustainable jobs in new technology based businesses, a high quality built environment, a leading edge approach to creating a mixed use local centre, well designed open spaces and river corridors and to break new ground in helping tackle climate change.

3.5 The plan has been developed for the site as whole but for clarity in this report the proposed development in Birmingham on North Works (19.43ha) West Works (34.35ha) and Nanjing Automotive Corporation (NAC) Site (43.44ha) are as follows

- A 25ha Regional Investment Site, for high technology businesses with some offices and supporting services,
- A new Local Centre including the following:
 - A retail quarter with up to 13,500 sq.m. Gross retail floorspace for convenience and comparison goods. Offices and residential uses on upper floors.
 - A learning quarter comprising a new college facility.
 - A mixed-use quarter with offices, service uses, an Austin Heritage centre, residential and other uses.
- An employment zone adjacent to the boundary with Nanjing comprising industrial and warehousing uses with some live/work units.
- Nanjing Automotive site to be retained for car manufacturing but with encouragement that should any of the site become surplus to requirements it be made available for other employment uses and uses which fit within the overall aims of the AAP and adjoining land uses
- Residential development with associated open space comprising around 350 dwellings adjacent to the Regional Investment site

3.6 The Bromsgrove section of the site is made up of the Cofton Centre and East works, the uses identified for these sites is outlined below;

3.7 East Works (20.86 ha)

Residential - minimum 700 dwellings with a range of house types, styles, and tenures including 35%affordable. The River Arrow will be opened up through the site to provide green links to the open countryside and Public Open Space

Within the east works site small scale local facilities will be provided including small scale retail with new community centre and library.

The main accesses to the site will be from Groveley Lane with a secondary route from the existing access point in Parsonage Drive. No access will be permitted from Cofton Church Lane.

3.8 Cofton Centre (17.84ha)

Employment (Use Class B1, B2 and B8 uses) suitable uses include light industry, general industry, warehousing, and Green Technology developments.

As the Cofton Centre abuts the Green Belt, the opportunity to improve pedestrian and green links to the countryside will be investigated at the detailed design stage, the screening around the site will be protected, and enhanced where possible.

3.9 The above proposals are supported by a Movement Strategy, and an Environment, Open Space and Landscape Strategy. The key elements are as follows:

3.10 Movement Strategy-

- Strategic Park and Ride facility with improved rail station and public transport interchange at Longbridge.
- A quality bus network to link Longbridge to the wider area including Frankley
- Improvements to rail facilities and services in the wider area.
- Improvements to Longbridge Lane and other off site highway improvements including the motorway junctions.
- Improvement of A38 Bristol Road South through the LAAP area.
- A network of local access roads and walking/cycle links

3.11 Environment, Landscape and open space strategy-

- River Rea enhanced across West Works and a new open course across most of North Works. Designed to incorporate flood prevention measures.
- River Arrow opened up and enhanced across East Works
- Other open space, play, recreational and community facilities.
- A new public square / public open space on North Works.
- A new park adjacent to the River Rea on west works.
- Improvements to Cofton Park including new and improved recreational facilities.

3.12 The Plan also contains a set of measures and an implementation programme for securing the delivery of the proposals. In particular it proposes a 'community infrastructure levy' approach to the Section 106 legal agreement in line with latest government thinking.

- 3.13 Sustainability Appraisal and detailed technical baseline studies including retail and transport studies, viability studies and an Equalities Needs Impact Assessment have informed the above stages and the proposals in the attached Submission Document.

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications of submitting the AAP to the Secretary of State, although in future the ability to secure Housing and Planning Delivery Grant will be enhanced by submitting the AAP inline with the timetable identified in the Local Development Scheme. In the longer term the regeneration of the sites in Bromsgrove will generate funds from planning applications associated with the development, and Council Tax and business rates once complete.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Plan is a statutory document and has been prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The Plan has been prepared jointly with Birmingham City Council. Other partners involved are Worcestershire County Council and the main landowners: St Modwen and Advantage West Midlands.

6. **COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 The ability of the council to deliver its objectives is affected by the status of the Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 6.2 The ability to implement the Longbridge high level action plan of the Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy is also highly dependant on the formal adoption of the AAP.

Council Objective (CO)	Regeneration (CO1)	Council Priority (CP)	A thriving market town (CP1)
Impacts			
<p>Whilst the regeneration at Longbridge will not have any immediate effects on creating a thriving market town, an opportunity exists for the town centre to be developed with regard to those developments at Longbridge, potentially attracting people using Longbridge to also visit Bromsgrove where we may be able to offer a different physical environment, and range of opportunities for retail and leisure.</p> <p>The redevelopment of this site will have substantial regenerative effects on South Birmingham and North Bromsgrove</p>			

Council Objective (CO)	Improvement (CO2)	Council Priority (CP)	Customer service (CP2)
Impacts			
No impact			

Council Objective (CO)	Sense of Community and Well Being (CO3)	Council Priority (CP)	Sense of community (CP3)
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Impacts
The developments at Longbridge will provide new local community facilities for those people who currently live in close proximity to the site, as well as much needed affordable housing units.

Council Objective (CO)	Environment (CO4)	Council Priority (CP)	Housing (CP4) Clean streets and recycling (CP5)
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Impacts
The environmental impacts of a residential use on this site will be considerably less than that of a fully functioning car production plant; any future development will have to be developed inline with the most recent standards in sustainable building and design techniques.

A minimum requirement of 35% has been set across the whole site for affordable housing provision, the strategic housing and planning sections are working to ensure that nomination rights to those affordable housing units are available to Bromsgrove residents.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

The final AAP is found to be unsound by the Planning Inspectorate.

7.2 The risks will be managed as follows:

Risk Register: Planning and Environment
Key Objective Ref No: 6
Key Objective: Effective, efficient, and legally compliant Strategic planning Service

8. **CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Once approved and submitted the AAP will be out to public consultation for a period of 6 weeks. The Document and supporting information will be advertised in the Local press as well as being placed for viewing on the websites of both councils, in all libraries across the district as well as the customer service centre.

9. **EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 An Equalities Impact Needs Assessment has been carried out on the Longbridge AAP, in order to assess the potential Equalities and Diversity impacts of the development proposals.

10. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	The Final version of the AAP will create the policy framework for the redevelopment of the Former MG Rover site.
Environmental	The Final AAP will have a section outlining the measures we will expect of site to mitigate for any adverse environmental impact.

11. **OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director - Partnerships & Projects	Yes
Assistant Chief Executive	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

12. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1- Longbridge Area Action Plan-Proposals Map
 Appendix 2- Longbridge Area Action Plan- Submission Document
 Appendix 3- Longbridge Area Action Plan- Sustainability Appraisal- Non Technical Summary

13. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Please contact Strategic Planning Manager for copies

Local Development Framework Working Party Reports

3rd August 2006 - Progress Report
 25th September 2006 - Issues and Options Report
 6th February 2007 - Preferred Options Report

13th December 2007 - Progress Report / Emerging Policy Direction

Executive Cabinet and Full Council Reports

6th September 2006 - Progress Report - Executive Cabinet

16th January 2007 - Joint Resolution to prepare DPD - Full Council

Previous AAP documents and Technical Studies

Longbridge Area Action Plan - Issues and Options Report

Longbridge Area Action Plan - Preferred Options Document

Longbridge Area Action Plan - Submission Document – Supporting baseline studies

- Sustainability Appraisal,
- Equalities Impact Needs Assessment
- Community Needs,
- Cultural Heritage,
- Built Form,
- Design and Environment,
- Ecology,
- Employment Land,
- Socio economic,
- Sport and Recreation
- Geo Environmental,
- Housing,
- River Rea,
- Existing Services Utilities and Infrastructure,
- Retail Assessment,
- Transport Assessments and
- Delivery and Viability Report

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