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# Warwick District Council Proposed Development Review Forum

**13<sup>th</sup> August 2012**

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## **Item: Coventry & Warwickshire Gateway**

Proposed development of 500 acres on land adjacent to Coventry airport and close to Baginton and Bubbenhall villages for a:-

- **Technology Park (to incorporate B1 floorspace together with car showroom space, hotel and ancillary A1/A3 retail) and**
- **Manufacturing & Distribution Park**

The development is being promoted by the Coventry & Warwickshire Development Partnership (CWDP) which estimates that it will create up to 10,000 jobs.

Chair: Tracy Darke (Head of Development Services)

Presenting item: John Holmes (Oxalis Planning)  
Steven Johnstone (Lawrence Walker)  
David Keir (Roxhill Developments)

Tracy Darke introduced the item, following which the representatives of CWDP made a presentation. Details of the proposal can be found on the CWDP website at [www.c-w-g.co.uk](http://www.c-w-g.co.uk)

### **Question & answer session: (1) Questions from district councillors**

**Question: There are a number of existing problems on the highway network, especially at the A46/A428 (Binley) junction. Will these be eased by the works at Gateway? (Cllr. Shilton)**

Answer: Major works have recently been completed at the Binley junction, however some further adjustments are still required on traffic signals. The Gateway proposal makes further changes to this island to mitigate the impact of increased flows that will arise from it. The situation will therefore be no worse as a result of the Gateway proposal.

**Question: Is the Alvis Business Park included within the Gateway proposal? (Cllr. Shilton)**

Answer: Yes.

**Question: What measures is the Gateway proposal taking to avoid impacting on the natural environment? (Cllr. Sawdon)**

Answer: The impact of the development on the natural environment is being addressed in a number of ways.

The Environment Agency has been involved throughout the development of the Gateway proposal, particularly over the issue of works to the Severn Trent sewer beds and how these will impact upon local watercourses. Monitoring had been carried out on the river and this will carry on into the future to ensure that the measures to remediate the sewer beds land are effective and there is no leaching of contaminants into watercourses.

It is estimated that approximately 40% of the total site will be hard surfaces (hardstanding / buildings) and so measures will be put in place to ensure that this does not have an adverse impact on flows into watercourses. This will be done through the incorporation of drainage systems within the site including the extensive use of balancing ponds.

Measures are being proposed to offset any loss of biodiversity on the site as a result of the proposal. [Warwick District (along with other districts in Warwickshire) is part of a national biodiversity offsetting pilot project whereby the loss to biodiversity as a result of developments is calculated, and then measures are introduced (either off-site or on-site) to counter this loss].

**Question: What will be the impact of the Gateway proposal on the previously agreed highways works at the A46/Stoneleigh Road junction (agreed as part of planning approvals for works at the University of Warwick and at Stoneleigh Park)? (Cllr. Illingworth)**

Answer: The Gateway proposal will improve this junction through introducing signalling. These changes will replace those required under the existing planning agreements with the University and Stoneleigh Park and will meet the needs arising from all these developments.

**Question: Festival Island will be part of the main link between the M6/M1 and M40. Will Gateway help to improve this linkage? (Cllr. Illingworth)**

Answer: Yes. The Gateway scheme is designed to work alongside the Highways Agency scheme at Toll Bar End and one of the key aims of this scheme is to remove this area as a bottleneck to these movements. To do this the Gateway proposal will improve the slip roads to this junction and the existing traffic signalisation.

**Question: What provisions are being made for emergency access / exit points, particularly following any lessons learnt from the fire on a unit along Siskin Drive last week? Why is it not possible to link the new road serving the Gateway proposal with Siskin Drive to provide an alternative means of access to both sites?**

**Answer:** The matter of emergency access and exits is being discussed with the County Council Fire and Rescue Service. An emergency access is proposed around the Parcelforce site at the southern end of Middlemarch. This will provide a linkage between Middlemarch and the new access road to the Gateway site.

Unfortunately, a full road linkage between Gateway and Middlemarch is not possible. This is because:-

1. The land and road levels (about 6 metres) between the two sites would make this difficult to achieve.
2. Modelling has shown that the levels of additional (Gateway) traffic generated would place too much additional traffic onto Toll Bar End. This would entirely negate the benefits to this junction from the Highways Agency Scheme.

**Question: Would the Gateway proposal lead to increases in commercial traffic at the airport? What controls would be put in place to limit the use of the airport for freight or other movements arising from Gateway?**

**Answer:** There is no direct relationship between the airport and Gateway in the application. There are no changes to operational activities at the airport in the proposal. It is possible and even likely that the presence of the airport will attract some companies to invest in the Gateway site. CWDP considers that this is unlikely to result in an increase in freight traffic. The largest freight airports in the UK are Heathrow and East Midlands, and freight traffic is likely to be directed to these. It is likely, however, that companies within the Technology Park will wish to fly in customers and executives via the airport.

**Question: What is the likely timetable for the delivery of the 14,000 jobs [NB: this includes up to a further 4,000 jobs on land to the north of the A45 that will be unlocked by the highways works to Gateway? (Cllr. Doody)**

**Answer:** It is hoped that the highway works and the decontamination of the sewer beds can commence in the summer of 2013. This will take an estimated three years. The first building on the Technology Park could be under construction by the end of 2013 and the first building on the Logistics Park (where most of the prior decontamination would need to take place) would be ready by 2016. The first jobs on the St. Modwens land (north of the A45) could be achieved much sooner than this.

Furthermore, an initial 500 construction jobs would be created, and this would rise to 2,000 jobs when the development is fully underway. It is estimated that these jobs would last between 5-10 years.

It is estimated that it may take between 10 and 17 years for the entire site to be developed and for all 14,000 jobs to be created.

**Question: Whose responsibility is it to decontaminate the Severn Trent land? (Cllr. Hammon)**

Answer: CWDP is not fully aware of any obligations on current or previous landowners to clear up the site, however it will take on these obligations itself as part of the development.

**Question: Where will these new jobs come from? Will they be new jobs or jobs relocated from nearby areas? (Cllr. Bunker)**

Answer: It is anticipated that the jobs will come from a variety of locations. Some will be from firms wishing to relocate and expand (seeking so-called “grow on” space) and which are currently unable to find suitable premises or land. However, other firms will be genuinely new to the Coventry and Warwickshire area.

**Question: How can we be sure that the large units (particularly on the southern site) will generate a reasonable number of jobs? We don't wish to see large sheds with low employment levels. (Cllr. Bunker)**

Answer: The estimate of “up to 10,000 jobs” has been derived from several sources. The main source, particularly on the manufacturing / warehousing units on the Logistics Park is the HCA Employment Density Guidelines (<http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/employment-densities-guide-2nd-ed>). This has been checked against other known information including (a) studies carried out by Prologis which has reviewed 18 sites across the UK which it has developed , and (b) the knowledge and experience of the team behind this proposal. As an example, Prologis estimates that 1 job is created for every 800 sq.ft. of new warehouse space. The job density on the Technology Park is estimated to be approximately 4 times that of a warehouse park.

### **Question & answer session: (2) Questions from parish councillors**

**Question: It is understood that there was an agreement when the Severn Trent land was developed for sewerage beds that it would be reclaimed as open space once this work was finished? (Baginton Parish Council)**

Answer: (From Tracy Darke) Warwick District Council will investigate this and report back.

**Question: What percentage of the zone A (the logistics park) is currently farmland? (Baginton Parish Council)**

Answer: A proportion is farmland however we don't have the exact figure at present.

**Question: What consideration is being given to issues of light pollution? This is a major issue for residents in Bubbenhall. (Bubbenhall Parish Council)**

Answer: These issues have been fully considered and will be addressed in the planning application and in particular the Environmental Statement.

**Question: Research is being undertaken within Bubbenhall which indicates that a significantly lower numbers of jobs will be created in logistics parks than is being claimed by CWDP. (Bubbenhall Parish Council)**

Answer: Refer back to previous answer re: number of jobs to be created. The information informing the Gateway proposal has been drawn from a range of respected sources.

**Question: Will it be a requirement of all units to have sprinklers fitted? (Bubbenhall Parish Council)**

Answer: That hasn't been determined at this stage. Generally, it is expected that sprinklers will be fitted but it is not a legal requirement for these to be done in Warwickshire.

Tracy Darke closed the meeting by outlining the anticipated timetable for a planning application coming forward. A planning application is anticipated in August and this will be followed by a period of statutory consultation carried out by the Council. It is expected that the application will be considered by the district council Planning Committee in December 2012.

She urged anyone with any questions or concerns about the project to contact Rob Young (who will be the case officer for the application) or Gary Stephens (Head of Development Management).

End

Head of Development Services  
Warwick District Council  
17 August 2012