

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 10 DECEMBER 2013

	STRATEGIC RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE (SRFI) UPDATE
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community Yes
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Purpose of report	To seek Cabinet's 'in principle' support for the East Midlands Gateway development proposal north of East Midlands Airport
Reason for Decision	To provide assurance of the Council's in principle support of the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) proposal
Council Priorities	Business and Jobs
Implications:	This report indicates the potential impacts of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange proposal within the district
Financial/Staff	The Council will be consulted on an application and there will be a cost in preparing the Council's response
Link to relevant CAT	Business CAT
Risk Management	Risk assessments will be completed as appropriate
Equalities Impact Assessment	None discernible
Human Rights	None discernible
Transformational Government	Any response to the eventual application will be prepared in partnership with Leicestershire County Council who will also be a consultee
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory.

Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	None.
Background papers	None.
Recommendations	CABINET SUPPORTS 'IN PRINCIPLE' THE EAST MIDLANDS GATEWAY STRATEGIC RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE PROPOSAL.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of the preparation of the previous Core Strategy document, the Council agreed to support a policy which would facilitate the development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) within the district.
- 1.2 For the past two years, the SRFI proposal for the district has been north of East Midlands Airport, near to Lockington and Hemington and has become known as the East Midlands Gateway or Roxhill proposal.
- 1.3 Up until recently work had been underway by the promoters of the East Midlands Gateway site (Roxhill) to submit a planning application for the scheme to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for their determination in the summer of 2013. The project is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008, and therefore is required to be the subject of an application for development consent to be submitted to (PINS). The Planning Act 2008 establishes the legal framework for the preparation of, and then the determination of NSIP proposals and applications. A final decision whether to grant development consent will be made by the Secretary of State for Transport.
- 1.4 However during 2013, the Government announced the outline route for the High Speed 2 rail link (HS2). The initial HS2 route cut straight through the Roxhill proposed site. Consequently Roxhill have agreed amendments to the HS2 proposal with Government. These changes would entail extending the tunnel which passes underneath East Midlands Airport to also avoid the Roxhill site and therefore not prejudice the future delivery of that site.
- 1.5 Therefore, the Roxhill proposal is now likely to be subject to public consultation in January 2014 with a likely submission to PINS of March/April 2014.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The site consists of land to the north of East Midlands Airport, east of Castle Donington. It is located south of the villages of Lockington and Hemington, and immediately west of the M1 junction 24. The site as identified for the planned application also consists of the land necessary to accommodate the proposed infrastructure works, including land to the south of Kegworth for a new bypass road. The key benefits of the project that are currently known are to provide:

- a. Up to 6 million sq.ft. of rail connected warehousing floorspace;
- b. Around 7,000 jobs involving a wide range of technical, managerial, administrative and operational posts;
- c. Up to 900 construction jobs;
- d. A new dedicated rail access, from the Nottingham – Birmingham freight only line;
- e. A full inter modal freight facility;
- f. Improved strategic highway arrangements, with a newly configured Junction 24 of the M1, and additional capacity at Junction 24a;
- g. New local access arrangements to Lockington and Hemington, including the closure of the junction of Church Street with the A50 (delivering local road safety benefits);
- h. Provision of additional public transport connectivity to the East Midlands Gateway site, including enabling the extension or enhancement of existing bus services to link communities such as Coalville;
- i. Significant landscaping and earthworks which would result in the buildings being substantially screened from the west (Castle Donington), and north (Lockington-Hemington); and
- j. The provision of a new by-pass to the south of Kegworth

2.2 Clearly however a site of this nature would not be without its impact. The creation of the warehousing floorspace will require very substantial buildings which, whilst they will be substantively screened, they will not be completely obscured. Additionally, such a significant development will inevitably create a significant amount of new traffic movements. There may also be noise impacts resulting from the operations at the site. These are all impacts that will be scrutinised by PINS once an application has been submitted. It is anticipated that any background evidence required to inform the Local Impact Assessment will be undertaken jointly with Leicestershire County Council who will also need, in due course, to inform PINS of their formal view of the application.

3.0 THE INFRASTRUCTURE APPLICATION

3.1 Once a planning application is submitted, the Council, will be invited to prepare a Local Impact Assessment of the proposals and to submit that assessment to PINS for their consideration. This impact assessment will essentially form the Council's detailed and formal view on the application.

3.2 Clearly therefore it would not be possible at this stage, in the absence of such information for the Council to reach a detailed view on the application. However given that the application is imminent and since the revocation of the former Regional Spatial Strategy along with the Council's withdrawal of its emerging Core Strategy, it is considered necessary for Cabinet to offer an 'in principle' view of the development proposals to provide some assurance to both the promoters of the scheme, but also the local communities what the Council's position is likely to be.

3.3 Cabinet should also note that the applicants are seeking to confirm a view on their application from both the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) and

Leicestershire County Council (LCC). Both the LLEP and LCC have previously expressed their general support for the proposals.

4.0 THE NWLDC VIEW

- 4.1 The Roxhill proposals have previously been considered and supported in principle by the Council as part of the development of the emerging Core Strategy. It is recognised that the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on the local area surrounding Lockington and Hemington and Castle Donington. However that impact needs to be weighed against the benefits of a proposal of this nature, summarised in paragraph 2.1.
- 4.2 Clearly Cabinet will want to reserve its formal position on the Roxhill proposals until all of the details of the scheme are known. However, given the substantial potential for job creation and the likely local, regional and national benefit of such a proposal, it is recommended to Cabinet that 'in principle' support for the Roxhill scheme should be offered at this stage and the applicants encouraged to submit their application to PINS at the earliest opportunity to allow the detailed examination of the scheme to take place.