

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	PLANNING COMMITTEE	8 NOVEMBER 2017	5

BLACKPOOL AIRPORT ENTERPRISE ZONE MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone (the EZ) was designated in November 2015, and came into existence with effect from 1 April 2016 with a programmed 25 year lifespan and aspirations to host 3,000 new jobs, secure in excess of £300m private sector investment with 180 plus new businesses locating to the EZ.

It has the potential to secure more than £50m of retained business rates over its lifetime to be utilised to support provision of enabling infrastructure, marketing and promotion, together with an objective of securing a long term sustainable future for Blackpool Airport.

The EZ is centred on the existing Squires Gate and Blackpool Business Park employment areas, and much of the operational infrastructure of Blackpool Airport is included in the zone, although this excludes the main runway. The EZ covers an area of 144 Ha (much larger than many of the UKs other EZs) straddling the boundary between Fylde (55% of the site area) and Blackpool (45%), much of the site sits within designated greenbelt and has multiple stakeholders with approaching 40 freehold and long leasehold property interests and over 200 occupiers, all of which offer a series of challenges to successful delivery.

The ambitions for the EZ will be supported through the production and adoption of a Masterplan, as set out in the Fylde Local Plan to 2032, by both Fylde and Blackpool Councils. This report outlines the key findings of the draft Masterplan and sets out a proposed public consultation, which will be jointly undertaken by both Local Authorities concurrently. It is envisaged that the consultation will conclude on 21st December 2017. The Masterplan will then be amended accordingly before the final version is presented to both Local Authorities in January 2018 for adoption.

The Masterplan is the latest of a number of key documents needed to support the delivery of the economic, social and environmental ambitions of the BAEZ. Blackpool and Fylde Councils have to date agreed the '*Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone Business Rates Relief Policy*' and a '*Memorandum of Understanding*'.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the draft Masterplan (shown at appendix 1, 2 and 3) is approved for public consultation.
2. That the consultation (as set out in this report) commences and that a summary report of responses received and any suggested alterations be reported to the Planning Committee in January 2018.
3. That the Planning Committee receive a final version of the Masterplan for consideration and adoption in January 2018.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Finance and Democracy Committee, 20th June 2016 – Item 5: Blackpool Airport Corridor Enterprise Zone – Business Rate Relief Policy

It was RESOLVED to approve the Blackpool Airport Corridor Enterprise Zone Business Rate Relief Policy as attached at Appendix A of the report

Finance and Democracy Committee, 26th September 2016 – Item 5: Support the Delivery of Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone

The committee RESOLVED to

- 1. Approve the attached draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and authorise officers to undertake non-material alterations to the MoU as necessary;*
- 2. Note that the Council's potential £1m commitment to the Moss Road project was included within the list of infrastructure investment schemes that are identified within the Memorandum of Understanding (in a non-prioritised order) as contributing towards the unlocking of growth potential within the Enterprise Zone;*
- 3. Note the establishment of a Project Team to provide the primary resource infrastructure necessary for the delivery of the Enterprise Zone and to maximize occupancy of the site to be funded initially by Blackpool Council and in time by income arising from business rate growth across the enterprise zone site according to an agreed formula;*
- 4. Note the arrangements agreed with the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership for the creation of a Programme and Project Board to support the delivery of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone; and*
- 5. Recommend that the Chairman of the Finance and Democracy Committee be nominated to the Project Board of the Blackpool Enterprise Zone for consideration by council.*

Finance and Democracy Committee, 25th September 2017 – Item 12: Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone Progress Report (Information Item Only)

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	√
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	√
Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	√
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	√
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	√

REPORT

1. Background

- 1.1 Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone (BAEZ) was designated in November 2015, and came into existence with effect from 1 April 2016 with a programmed 25 year lifespan and aspirations to host 3,000 new jobs, secure in excess of £300m private sector investment with over 180 new businesses locating to the BAEZ.
- 1.2 It has the potential to secure more than £50m of retained business rates over its lifetime to be utilised to support provision of enabling infrastructure, marketing and promotion, together with an objective of securing a long term sustainable future for Blackpool Airport.
- 1.3 The BAEZ is centred on the existing Squires Gate and Blackpool Business Park employment areas, and much of the operational infrastructure of Blackpool Airport is included in the zone, although this excludes the main runway. The BAEZ covers an area of 144 Ha (much larger than many of the UK's other EZs) straddling the boundary between Fylde (55% of the site area) and Blackpool (45%), much of the site sits

within designated greenbelt and has multiple stakeholders with approaching 40 freehold and long leasehold property interests and over 200 occupiers, all of which offer a series of challenges to successful delivery. The BAEZ is designed to operate in a way to compliment the offer of its near neighbours, the Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone in Wyre and the Warton Enterprise Zone.

- 1.4 The BAEZ offers two mutually exclusive financial incentives for new occupiers, NNDR (Business Rates) relief of up to £55,000 per annum for five years (available in designated areas until 31st March 2022) or Enhanced Capital Allowances for investment in new fixed plant and machinery, (available until November 2023) offering a very tight window of opportunity to kick start the BAEZ, given the likely level of enabling infrastructure that will be required to open up development and investment opportunities.
- 1.5 The BAEZ has a wider variety of target sectors than most and will seek to attract investment from Aviation, Energy, Advanced Manufacturing, Food and Drink manufacturing and Digital and Creative sectors and back office administration but will not be closed to other suitable employment opportunities being hosted.

2. Masterplan Background

- 2.1 Following a competition run by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) an award of £50,000 was secured in January 2017 to support the provision of detailed master-planning for the EZ. In March 2017, following completion of a competitive tendering process led by Blackpool Council and supported by Fylde Council, a consultant team led by Mott McDonald and including How Planning, BE Group and IBI architects, were appointed to undertake the Masterplan preparation for the BAEZ.
- 2.2 The final cost of producing the Masterplan and the subsequent Implementation, Delivery and Marketing strategies will be approaching £150,000, of which £50,000 has been paid by DCLG via the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The balance will initially be met from the provisional funding allocation by Blackpool Council as accountable body.
- 2.3 The Masterplan presented in this report has been the subject of extensive 'stakeholder' consultation over many months and represents an eminently sensible and practicable approach to achieving the objectives of the BAEZ over its 25 year lifespan. It is not the final or finished version and indeed one of the objectives of the BAEZ is that the Masterplan is regularly reviewed over the lifetime of the project to ensure it is up to date and reflective of the changing economic circumstances as the project develops.

3. Masterplan – non-technical summary

- 3.1 The Masterplan seeks to achieve the vision of "Creating space for leadership in activity, business, thought and creation". BAEZ will be one of the North West's Premier Business Locations offering connected, high quality business and industrial premises within an excellent setting.
- 3.2 The Enterprise Zone will build upon:
 - its location within the Lancashire Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster – a key part of the Northern Powerhouse
 - its legacy, as an airport, to connect Blackpool, the region, and globally
 - its proximity to Blackpool town centre and links to skills, knowledge and services
 - a growing knowledge base delivered from the state of the art Blackpool and Fylde College within the BAEZ
 - its excellent accessibility from the M55 and improving public transport connectivity (via tram and bus)
 - its proximity to an internationally significant energy and chemical industries cluster (the Energy Coast)
 - its coastal setting and links to both Blackpool and Lytham St Annes.

- 3.3 The following objectives have been set out to help deliver the vision. These are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 1: Meeting the Demand from a Diverse Range of Sectors - To continually adapt the masterplan in a planned manner through the promotion of distinct character areas which meet the demand of modern businesses and industries from a diverse range of sectors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 2: Improving Accessibility - To provide a fully connected business and industrial park which provides enhanced transport infrastructure with an emphasis on sustainable transport, which increases accessibility to, and navigation in, the EZ.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 3: Delivering Critical Infrastructure - To ensure that utilities and other business critical infrastructure is competitive with the premier business locations nationally and internationally and seeks out low carbon alternatives where feasible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 4: Marketing and Promotion - To maintain high levels of new investment in Blackpool and Fylde through strong branding and marketing which promotes the Enterprise Zone and the Town Centre as a leading location for inward investment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 5: Supporting Competitive Businesses, Knowledge and Innovation - To provide supporting actions which help existing and new companies to improve their competitiveness and create an environment for exchange of ideas where future knowledge is captured for sustainable growth within the region.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective 6: Create an Active, Productive and Liveable Environment – Deliver a high quality and sustainable urban environment where cutting-edge architecture is complimented with healthy, safe and connected spaces to create an interesting, active and engaged place to work and do business.

3.4 The proposed Masterplan (as shown at appendix 1, 2 and 3) illustrates the desired outcome of the EZ at the conclusion of the 25 year lifespan of the project. The Masterplan will necessarily be delivered over this time period given the considerable size and scale of the potential development opportunities.

4. Consultation

4.1 A public consultation on the Masterplan will run from **Thursday 9th November until Thursday 21st December 2017**. Both Blackpool and Fylde Council will manage the consultation process in their respective areas. A drop-in event will be held during this period at either the Lancashire Energy HQ (Blackpool and the Fylde College’s facility within the BAEZ) or Blackpool Airport’s Offices. Final details are yet to be fully agreed, although this event will likely take place at the end of November or early December.

4.2 The Masterplan will be available on the websites of both Local Authorities and feedback will be taken online, by email, letter and in person at the drop-in event. It is hoped that the ambitions, layout, design and many other matters can be improved through the comments and feedback from a detailed public consultation.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct implications arising from this report. The cost of producing the Masterplan and the subsequent Implementation, Delivery and Marketing strategies will be met by DCLG via the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and by Blackpool Council as the accountable body for the Airport Enterprise Zone.
Legal	There are no direct implications arising from this report.
Community Safety	There are no direct implications arising from this report.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct implications arising from this report.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no direct implications arising from this report.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct implications arising from this report.

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Steve Smith	Stephen.smith@fylde.gov.uk 01253 658445	26/10/17

Attached documents

Appendix 1 – Draft 25 Year Masterplan Illustration

Appendix 2 – Draft 25 Year Masterplan CGI Visualisation

Appendix 3 – Draft Blackpool Airport EZ Masterplan – Summary Document (to follow)