

TITLE OF REPORT: Draft International Advanced Manufacturing Park Area Action Plan (Regulation 18) consultation

REPORT OF: Anneliese Hutchinson, Strategic Director, Economy, Innovation and Growth

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for the Council's proposed response to the consultation on the [draft International Advanced Manufacturing Park \(IAMP\) Area Action Plan \(AAP\)](#).
2. To recommend that Cabinet delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Economy, Innovation and Growth in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to make minor changes and submit the consultation response.

Background

3. Sunderland City Council and South Tyneside Council adopted the IAMP AAP in 2017 to support the development of a new employment park on land to the north of the existing Nissan car manufacturing facility which is known as the IAMP.
4. Work on the delivery of the site is well advanced and the Councils are now consulting on a new draft version of the IAMP AAP

Proposal

5. Approve the proposed response to the consultation (see Appendix 2).
6. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Economy, Innovation and Growth in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders and Cabinet Member to:
 - a. Make any minor changes to the proposed response; and
 - b. Submit the response before the deadline of 23rd September 2024

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the proposed response to the draft IAMP AAP consultation for the following reasons:
 - i. To provide a formal response to the consultation
 - ii. To satisfy the requirement under paragraph 24 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for local planning authorities to be under a duty to cooperate with each other on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.

CONTACT: Chris Carr ext 3415

Policy Context

1. The proposed response is consistent with the Council's pledge to make Gateshead A Place Where Everyone Thrives by highlighting and commenting on issues in the draft consultation document which could impact on Gateshead and its residents.

Background

2. The existing IAMP AAP was adopted in November 2017 by both Councils and is a cross-boundary planning document covering the period 2017 to 2032. It has successfully enabled the delivery of 45,300 (rounded) square metres of employment floorspace and has successfully facilitated consent of a further 334,7343 square metres of development. Of this, 108,615 square metres is currently under construction, in the form of the new AESC UK Gigafactory. Once completed, this will form a significant asset of international importance, being one of the UK's only automotive battery production facilities. It will be important to the UK, the North-East (NE) region, Sunderland and South Tyneside's decarbonisation agenda going forward.
3. The existing IAMP AAP forms the statutory development plan for the area. Upon adoption, this AAP would replace the existing version of the AAP as the development plan for the area.

Key Changes in Draft AAP

4. The draft AAP 2024-2042 has been prepared as an update to the original plan 2017-2032 to reflect changes in policy and technology since the first plan, and it includes 2 additional areas for employment land allocation (sites AA1 and AA2) (Fig 4 of 2024 plan).
5. The draft AAP reflects the designation of the site as part of the North East Investment zone which brings new and different opportunities from those originally considered for the site. The draft plan promotes principal uses associated with Automotive manufacturing and now extends to include green manufacturing and clean energy.
6. The plan retains policy S2 to protect the IAMP from general employment development, residential development and large-scale retail or leisure uses', proposals for which will not be permitted. The site includes an ancillary use hub indicated adjacent to the A1290 to support employment and public transport access opportunities. A more flexible approach is proposed to supporting retail uses within the hub through the removal of the upper floorspace limit for each unit and overall.

Next steps

7. The current consultation gives the Council the opportunity to provide a formal response on proposals for the IAMP, identifying potential implications for

existing, and future development in Gateshead, along with potential implications on the environment and landscape. This represents the first consultation stage (Regulation 18), with a further round of consultation anticipated in early 2025 before submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State for Examination in Public.

Proposal

8. It is proposed that Gateshead Council issues a response to the consultation on the proposed IAMP (Appendix 2), highlighting issues that are likely to have implications for existing development and Gateshead's Local Plan. The consultation response will be part of ongoing dialogue between the Local Authorities under the Duty to Cooperate, aimed at resolving cross-boundary issues relating to strategic priorities.

Consultation

9. The responses were drafted in consultation with specialists from the Spatial Planning and Environment, Transport Strategy, Economic Development and Regeneration teams.
10. A report on Action Plan was taken to Environment and Transport Portfolio on 3rd September 2024.

Alternative options

1. There are no alternative options.

Implications of Recommendation

2. **Resources:**
 - a. **Financial Implications** – None
 - b. **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resource implications arising from this report
 - c. **Property Implications** - There are no direct property implications arising from this report
3. **Risk Management Implication** – No associated risks
4. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – No associated risks
5. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – No crime implications
6. **Health Implications** – The proposed actions will take place in the context of the Council's continuing commitment to provide a range of suitable housing for all needs
7. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** – No climate emergency and sustainability implications

8. **Human Rights Implications** - None.

9. **Area and Ward Implications** – None

Gateshead Council Response:

Question 1: Do you have any comments on the proposed introduction outlined above? The Councils are particularly interested in whether you agree that there is a need to update the IAMP AAP for the reasons set out above.

Question 2: Do you agree that there is a justification to expand the IAMP AAP area? Do you agree that the area identified in Figure 2 would represent the most appropriate location for the expansion of the IAMP?

Whilst we agree with justification for the proposed expansion the Councils should consider how the AAP could facilitate or, if appropriate, safeguard land that would assist in developing rail freight access between the site and the Leamside Line.

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed draft vision? Do you wish to make any comments on the proposed draft vision?

The draft vision includes reference to ports, airports and roads but does not include rail. Rail transport for freight or passenger services and particularly the reopening of the Leamside Line referenced in section 8 of the draft AAP are important transport assets that should be included as part of the vision for the site. It is therefore suggested the vision is amended to include reference to rail.

An important aspect of the site will be the provision of access for sustainable transport modes including public transport and active travel modes. The site will need to be designed to take these into account. The vision states '*It will be a planned and sustainable employment location*'. Sustainable in the sense of transport will mean it will be accessible for all modes of transport. It is suggested this should read "It will be a planned, accessible and sustainable employment location'.

Question 4: Do you agree with the proposed draft objectives? Do you wish to make any comments on the proposed draft objectives or have any additional ones which you feel should be included?

As noted above reference to rail is considered important. Objective 7 states 'Ensure links to sub-regional infrastructure, including ports, roads, airports, energy and digital connectivity.' Reference to rail should be made in this objective.

Objective 8 states 'Ensure a suitable transport network to realise the vision.' A suitable transport network would apply to all modes and for all transport purposes (freight, public transport, active travel). It is suggested this is presented as a SMART objective. E.g. 'Ensure the vision is supported with a sustainable multi modal transport network maintained for the lifetime of the IAMP'.

Question 5: Do you consider that there is a need for any other evidence base or supporting document which has not been set out above?

Question 6: Do you consider that the allocation of additional land for the development of Principal uses is required?

Question 7: Do you consider the areas of land identified represents the most appropriate location for the additional employment land required?

Question 8: The Councils are also seeking views on the supporting evidence base, such as the IAMP Employment Land Position Statement (2024). Do you have any comments on the evidence presented in any of these documents?

Question 9: Do you consider that the Councils' proposed approach to the North East Land Sea and Air Museums continues to be appropriate?

Question 10: Do you consider that the Councils' proposed approach to residential development continues to be appropriate?

Yes

Question 11: Do you consider that the Councils' proposed approach to applicable leisure, retail and other main town centre development is appropriate?

Yes, it is understood that the approach centres on and prioritises manufacturer and low density employment development focussed on production, supply chain and distribution activities directly related to the Automotive and Advanced Manufacturing sectors.

The Hub is intended to be the focus of ancillary uses in the IAMP, providing for a multi-modal transport interchange and the day to day shopping and leisure needs of people working at and visiting the site. Accordingly, provision at the Hub should be focussed on development that supports employees within the wider site context. It should not be intended to provide a destination town centre development. Leisure, retail and other facilities would be available at the surrounding local centres providing facilities and services for their residents.

Question 12: Do you consider that the Councils' proposed approach to ecological and landscape mitigation is appropriate?

Question 13: Do you have any other comments about the proposed Land Uses Policy?

Question 14: Do you have any comments about the proposal to have no maximum floorspace threshold and for this to be considered through individual planning applications?

It is noted that within the original plan reference to upper floorspace was to ensure that the development would not have a significant adverse impact upon the strategic road network. It is stated that 'it has become clear through early phases of development within the IAMP that the employment densities that were originally envisaged within the modelling work which underpinned the original AAP, were significantly higher than those that have been delivered in practice. '

It is suggested that the overall quantum of floorspace which will be permitted at the IAMP will be removed from the policy, which will allow the consideration of proposals on allocated development land on their own merits. The modelling exercise undertaken to inform the original AAP is intended to be repeated to establish the likely employment densities that could be supported and the required highway infrastructure improvements to achieve this if different from that set out originally. Removal of maximum floor space from the policy is considered acceptable subject to testing of each development proposal against the detailed transport assessment output. The development of the IAMP will generate significant freight and employee movements which on further analysis may result in necessary capacity

improvements in addition to those that have already been identified in the original AAP. It is noted The Councils have commissioned a detailed Transport Assessment to fully understand the impacts upon the surrounding highway networks and to identify any additional mitigation required, and, if required, when the need for this will be triggered.

Question 15: Do you have any comments about having more flexibility between Principal and Supporting Uses?

Question 16: Do you have any additional comments to make on the proposed Mix of Uses policy?

Question 17: Do you have any comments on the principle of the establishment of a Hub for retail, leisure and other applicable main town centre uses.

Establishment of a central hub to support public transport, retail and leisure is supported. The Hub would provide ancillary uses in the IAMP, providing for a multi-modal transport interchange and the day to day retail and leisure requirements of employees working at and visiting the site. Its provision would reduce travel demand off site for employees during the working day and provide a pronounced arrival location within the IAMP.

Question 18: Do you consider the existing hub location to be the most suitable location for retail, leisure and other applicable main town centre uses?

It is accepted that the hub location has synergy with Nissan development and there are public transport link benefits, given the proximity of existing bus services. In more strategic terms though, the location of the public transport interchange should be considered in the wider scope of the future development of the area and the routing of the public transport services that will serve the site as a whole. The routings and the location of the interchange should be such as to give the services the greatest chance of success and sustainability.

Question 19: Do you consider that there are other locations within the IAMP AAP redline area which would offer a more appropriate Hub location?

Question 20: Do you agree that a more flexible approach should be taken with regard to the proposed uses within the Hub and removing the cap on the size of these uses?

Question 21: Do you have any comments on what the design policy should include?

The design principle for the site should recognise the potential conflict between freight movements and active travel movements. The site should be designed to ensure these are segregated and safe for all users. It is suggested that the design policy B2 should be re worded to include 'provide an effective and efficient direct segregated network of routes for cyclists and pedestrians'.

Question 22: Do you have any comments on the draft design policy

Question 23: Do you agree with the proposed approach to the content of the Highways and Transport Policy as outlined above

The Public Transport section of the AAP fails to take in to account the recommended main modification of the policy by HM Inspector in his report of 2017. The Inspector recognised the importance of linking public transport to the IAMP from other centres and recommended the following MM123.

Policy T3: Public Transport

A To promote sustainable transport, development the IAMP must include:

- i. Provision of enhanced bus services between the IAMP and:
 - a) surrounding residential areas;
 - b) Heworth and Sunderland multi-modal transport interchanges; and
 - c) Hebburn, Jarrow, South Shields and Washington centres;
- ii. bus priority measures on the key routes entering the IAMP;
- iii. adequate provision for buses on the proposed new bridge over the A19 and over the River Don;
- iv. new bus stops and improved waiting facilities within the IAMP AAP area; and
- v. new traffic signal installations incorporating facilities to enable priority for buses.

This policy in its detail should be included in the revised draft AAP and will contribute to improved public transport accessibility for Gateshead residents to jobs at the IAMP.

Question 24: Do you have any other comments on what should be included in the proposed Highways and Transport Policy

It is considered that Policy T1 I (vi) should give more strength to promote the use of car clubs as a sustainable form of transport. The Policy states 'consider the introduction of mobility hub with cycle/car club facility for the IAMP site'. This policy should be strengthened by making a commitment to deliver a mobility hub at the central hub with satellite deployment of cycle and car club facilities. Use of the term 'consider' in this policy is not acceptable and may weaken a stance on sustainable transport provision.

The draft AAP talks about provision of cycle/walking facilities within the development, but there should also be a commitment to ensuring connections with the existing surrounding network. It's in the supporting text but not the policy.

This is a strategic development/location which should go beyond 'prioritising' or 'supporting' - as the Inspector made clear in his recommendations, the development should be 'providing' enhanced bus services. The link to Heworth is particularly important, not just for Gateshead but for access from the wider region.

Question 25: Do you have any questions on the scope of the proposed infrastructure provision policy?

Question 26: Do you agree with the proposal to designate areas within the IAMP AAP as potentially suitable for wind energy development

Question 27: Do you have any questions on the scope of the flood risk policy?

Policy FR1 A part iii: - the reference to minimises pollution suggests some pollution might be acceptable; suggest rewording to adequately manages pollution

Policy FR1 A (iv) and C is duplication

Policy FR1 is limited to SuDS at development plot level only but should mention strategic level SuDS linkages that are necessary for coherent green infrastructure. Therefore, consider cross referencing complementary policies.

Question 28: Do you have any comments regarding the proposed principles set out above with regard to the new Landscape policy?

Question 29: Do you consider the approach to Landscape and Visual Impact assessment (as outlined above) remains appropriate?

Question 30: Do you consider the approach to ecological and landscape mitigation set out above, including removal of a specific identified ELMA is now appropriate?

Question 31: Do you have any other comments on the approach to the proposed landscape policy?

Question 32: Do you consider that the principles set out above should be incorporated into the proposed Ecology and Biodiversity Policy?

Question 33: Do you consider that the green infrastructure principles outlined above remain appropriate?

Question 34: Do you have any additional comments on the green infrastructure principles and suggestions for other principles which could be incorporated into policy?

Question 35: Do you consider the approach to the River Don corridor appropriate? Yes. The requirement of a 50m wide buffer from riverbanks and linking to the wider River Don GI corridor are supported, with the need to balance recreational access with the risk of harm to ecological features.

Question 36: Do you have any other comments on the approach to the green infrastructure policy?