Proposed Battery Plant, IAMP Statement of Community Involvement

Envision AESC UK Ltd 23 July 2021





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1.0 Introduction

Background

- This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Envision AESC UK Ltd ('the applicant') to accompany a full planning application for the development of land to the west of International Drive and north of the A1290 at the International Advanced Manufacturing Park ('IAMP'), Washington.
- 1.2 The description of development is as follows:

"Erection of industrial unit to be used for the manufacture of batteries for vehicles with ancillary office / welfare floorspace and associated infrastructure provision, accesses, parking, drainage and landscaping."

Context

- Envision AESC is a world leading manufacturer of lithium-ion batteries for the automotive industry and has been producing highest quality batteries in Sunderland for the Nissan LEAF electric vehicle for 9 years. The business is headquartered in Japan, but also has manufacturing sites in the United States, China and here in Sunderland where over 300 people are employed.
- As the demand for electric vehicles is forecast to grow significantly over the coming years, supporting the transition to a net zero carbon future, additional capacity for battery manufacturing is needed. To meet this increased future demand, Envision AESC is proposing to invest in a new manufacturing facility that will be capable of producing batteries for more than 100,000 electric vehicles per year.
- This is a unique and most exciting opportunity to help Sunderland and the UK become one of the best international locations for automotive and advanced manufacturing. The proposals will help ensure that Envision AESC, the IAMP and Sunderland are at the forefront of innovations in battery technology and are playing a critical role in leading the de-carbonisation revolution through the promotion of clean energy and new energy electric vehicles.
- The proposals are to relocate the 300 jobs from the existing battery plant at the current Envision AESC facility to a new larger state-of-the art facility, which will employ a total of 1,000 staff (including the existing staff). Subject to planning permission, it is proposed that construction would start in early 2022, with the first battery production in 2024.

Purpose of the Statement

- 1.7 Following the introduction of the Government's Localism Act in 2011, greater emphasis has been placed upon increased community involvement throughout the planning process. Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (revised July 2021) promotes sustainable development through the creation of high-quality and beautiful places which reflect the community's needs and wellbeing. The NPPF further states that early engagement in the planning process has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.
- 1.8 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF confirms that:

"Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot."

In consideration of the above, this Statement sets out the pre-application engagement that has been undertaken in relation to the development proposals, together with the feedback received and the response to the feedback.

Structure of the Statement

1.10 This Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the engagement process and exercises which have been undertaken to
 ensure that the local community have had the opportunity to view and comment on the
 proposals;
- Section 3 presents the findings from the engagement exercise and provides a response to the feedback received from the local community; and
- Section 4 summarises the findings and concludes the Statement.

The Process of Engagement

Sunderland City Council Statement of Community Involvement

- The Sunderland City Council Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI') sets out the way in which the Council aims to involve residents, businesses, community groups, investors and other stakeholders on planning matters. The document sets out the strategy to widen access to planning to ensure communities have a voice in shaping places and spaces throughout Sunderland. The Council adopted the SCI in June 2020.
- 2.2 The SCI stipulates that applicants are expected to engage with the local community on major applications as part of the pre-application process. By doing so, local communities are enabled to raise any concerns and help influence development proposals at an early stage.
- 2.3 Where pre-application engagement is undertaken, the Council's SCI confirms that applicants should prepare a report to summarise the type of engagement carried out, the key issues raised, and how the scheme addresses these issues. The report is then to be submitted with any subsequent planning application.

Coronavirus Pandemic

- 2.4 On 14 May 2020, the Government introduced temporary regulations to supplement the existing statutory publicity arrangements for planning applications, listed building consent applications and environmental statements for Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') development in response to the coronavirus pandemic. This involved temporary changes introduced through the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure, Listed Buildings and Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 to support timely decision-making, and avoid delays to development as a result of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, while maintaining public participation in the decision-making process.
- 2.5 The Government published Planning Practice Guidance ¹('PPG') to accompany these regulations to highlight what alternative publicity local planning authorities and applicants could undertake. The temporary publicity requirements still require local planning authorities (and in the case of certain applications for EIA development, applicants or recipients of further information) to publicise planning applications so that those with an interest can make representations and effectively participate in the decision-making process.

IAMP Engagement

2.6 Several engagement exercises have previously taken place on the IAMP, which are summarised below.

IAMP Area Action Plan

In 2015, Sunderland City Council and South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council began the first of a series of engagement exercises in respect of the preparation of the IAMP Area Action Plan and its progression through the public examination process. The engagement documents set out the policy and development principles for the IAMP; the most appropriate location for, and size of, the IAMP and the proposed changes to the AAP following examination. Through the adoption of the AAP, the principle of a development of automotive and advanced manufacturing uses on the application site was established.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance Reference: 15-035-20200513

Development Consent Order

- 2.8 Between November 2016 and January 2017, IAMP LLP consulted on the IAMP when it was the entirety of the IAMP (that is, comprising both 'IAMP ONE' and 'IAMP TWO'). Initial plans and thoughts were shared with the public at exhibitions held at points across Sunderland and South Tyneside, with the purpose of seeking initial views on the Project to begin to inform what the Project might look like. This was the first engagement undertaken on the Development Consent Order ('DCO') (stage 1) and was a non-statutory exercise.
- 2.9 Between March and May 2019, IAMP LLP undertook statutory consultation on IAMP TWO to seek views from the surrounding communities on IAMP TWO, including the preliminary environmental information, a draft Design Code and event materials. Following this date, further discussions have taken place with some parties. The findings and results of the consultation are being considered and recorded in a Consultation Report for submission as part of the DCO process.

IAMP ONE

- In December 2017, IAMP LLP undertook engagement on IAMP ONE, with the purpose of gaining feedback to inform the 2018 IAMP ONE planning application, with support from the LLP's development partner HBD. This engagement was undertaken following the IAMP splitting into two Projects (IAMP ONE and IAMP TWO). A total of five feedback forms were completed on the day with a further one submitted via email at a later date. Additionally, two letters were received from owners of land within IAMP TWO.
- In early 2018, the Council consulted the landowners, businesses and residents in the area to seek comments on the 2018 IAMP ONE planning application. In response to this engagement, eight letters of representation were received, consisting of one letter of support from Nissan and four objecting to the application (three letters from one owner of land within IAMP TWO, two letters from another owner of land within IAMP TWO, as well as a letter each from the British Horse Society and Plantlife UK).

IAMP ONE Phase 2

- Given that extensive engagement has been undertaken in relation to the IAMP, it was agreed with the Council that rather than undertake a further drop-in engagement event, a leaflet could instead be circulated in the local community to provide details of the proposed development and to seek feedback.
- Approximately 2,800 leaflets (which included a questionnaire for recipients to complete and return via a free-post address) were distributed in the local area on 7th February 2020. The community was given until 21st February 2020 to respond. In response, a letter and an email were received from planning consultants acting on behalf of two land owners within IAMP TWO, whilst three comments forms were completed and returned.

Envision AESC Battery Plant Engagement

- As part of the preparation of the detailed planning application for the proposed battery plant, and in accordance with the updated legislation, PPG and given the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, it was agreed with Sunderland City Council to undertake a similar engagement exercise as that undertaken for IAMP ONE Phase 2 in February 2020.
- 2.15 A leaflet drop was carried out on 8 July 2021 to publicise the proposed development.

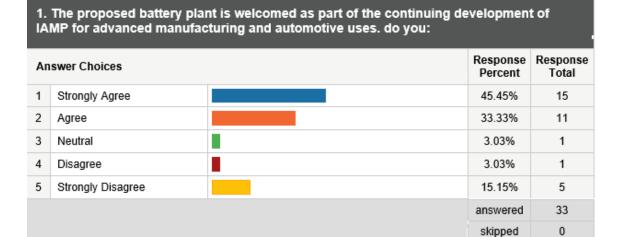
 Approximately 2,800 leaflets were distributed amongst businesses and households located within a defined consultation zone. This zone is shown on the image provide at Appendix 1. This

- is the same consultation zone as that used for the IAMP ONE Phase 2 engagement. The engagement leaflet is provided at Appendix 2.
- 2.16 The leaflet provided details of the proposed development and included a questionnaire for recipients to complete and return via a free-post address. The questionnaire comprised a series of structured questions and included a comments box to allow respondents to submit detailed feedback.
- 2.17 Recipients of the engagement leaflet were advised to submit their questionnaire responses and any other comments by 19 July 2021, at which point the engagement exercised concluded. In total, 33 respondents submitted a questionnaire via free-post.

Findings from the Engagement

- 3.1 This section of the Statement provides an analysis of the feedback and responses from the public engagement exercise.
- 3.2 In total, 33 feedback forms were completed during the engagement period. The overall feedback is summarised below:

Question 1. The proposed battery plant is welcomed as part of the continuing development of IAMP for advanced manufacturing and automotive uses



79% (26/33) of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed battery plant is a welcome continuation of the IAMP development for advanced manufacturing and automotive uses. 3% (3/33) of respondents answered neutral, and 18% (6/33) respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement.

Question 2. The site is a suitable and sustainable location for this development

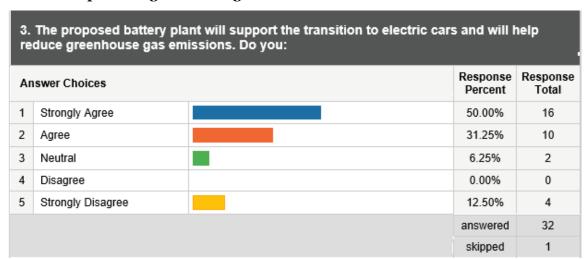
2. The site is suitable and sustainable location for this development. Do you:			
A	nswer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree	51.52%	17
2	Agree	30.30%	10
3	Neutral	0.00%	0
4	Disagree	0.00%	0
5	Strongly Disagree	18.18%	6
		answered	33
		skipped	0

82% (27/33) of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the site is a suitable and sustainable location for the development. 0% (0/33) of respondents answered neutral, and 18% (6/33) respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement.

3.3

3.5

Question 3. The proposed battery plant will support the transition to electric cars and will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions



81% (26/32) of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed development would support the transition to electric cars and would help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. 6% (2/32) of respondents answered neutral, and 13% (4/32) respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement. 1 respondent did not provide an answer to this question.

Question 4. The proposed battery plant will create/sustain a substantial number of local jobs in the area

4. The proposed battery plant will create/sustain a substantial number of local jobs in the area. Do you:			
Aı	nswer Choices	Respo	
1	Strongly Agree	60.6	1% 20
2	Agree	21.2	1% 7
3	Neutral	6.06	6% 2
4	Disagree	0.00	0% 0
5	Strongly Disagree	12.1	2% 4
		answ	ered 33
		skipp	ped 0

3.6 82% (27/33) of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed battery plant would create/sustain a substantial number of local jobs in the local area. 6% (2/33) of respondents answered neutral, and 12% (4/33) respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement.

General Comments / Concerns

- 3.7 In total, 15 general comments were submitted via the comments box included at Question 5 of the engagement feedback form. Reviewing the submitted comments provided further insight on the above results, with 6 positive comments, 7 negative and 2 neutral.
- 3.8 The positive comments are provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Positive Comments

Positive Comments

- Brilliant for our area! Well done!
- · Brilliant addition for high-tech engineering and manufacturing to this area
- Full support get it done asap
- Great news
- This is a very welcome investment in the North east which will go a long way in sustaining the livelihood of the community and the UK economy at large
- This is what we want not ridiculous incinerators
- Grouping the negative and neutral comments by theme revealed the key issues and concerns raised by the local community. These are summarised in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Concerns / comment raised by the community and responses from the project team

Concerns / Comments	Responses
Principle of the Development	
Destruction of green space between	This is an allocated employment site. The principle of the
Sunderland and Washington.	loss of this green space was considered through the
	preparation and adoption of the IAMP Area Action Plan.
Destruction of Green Belt.	The proposed development lies on an allocated
	employment site. As the Green Belt lies to the north, the
	proposals will not destroy the Green Belt.
	As this is an allocated employment site, there is no
Brownfield sites should be prioritised.	planning requirement for alternative sites to be
	considered at this stage. Alternative sites were
	considered as part of the preparation of the AAP.
Factory should be built elsewhere.	IAMP was identified as the most appropriate location
	for a large-scale development of advanced manufacturing
	and automotive uses to meet identified needs.
Creation of a concrete jungle over the last	It is recognised that new development has taken place
52 years.	over time to meet the needs of both the economy as well
	as the needs of communities for more housing.
Traffic / Highways	
It is hoped the A1290 will be widened to	Minor widening of the A1290 has already taken place as
accommodate the increase in trucks and	part of the first phase of the IAMP ONE development. No
cars.	further works are necessary to deliver the proposed
	battery plant; however, the A1290 needs to be dualled
	before any further development could take place.
Increased traffic and disruption which will	The Transport Statement and Access & Transport Chapter
massively increase when the plant opens.	of the Environmental Statement (ES) demonstrate that
	the increase in vehicle movements will not have any

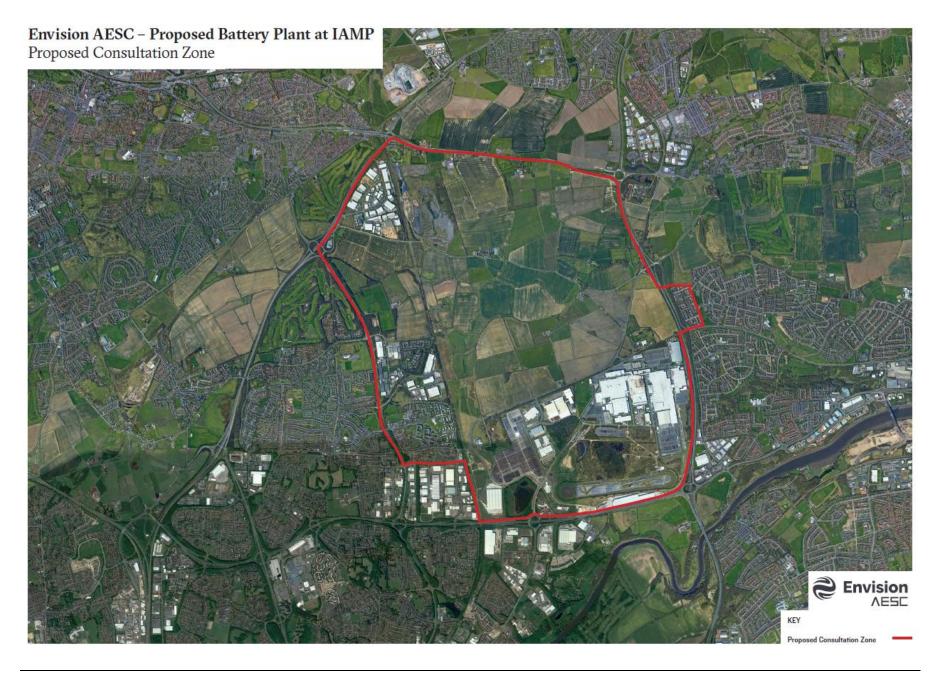
Concerns / Comments	Responses
	significant adverse effects and can be accommodated
	on the highway network.
Biodiversity	
Development should provide net	A biodiversity net gain calculation has been undertaken
biodiversity gain.	which demonstrates that the proposals will provide net
	biodiversity gain.
In view of the decline in Swift numbers,	The ecological survey work has not identified the
some provision for nesting for these birds	presence of swifts; however, Envision AESC has agreed
would be appreciated.	to provide a series of swift boxes in response to this
	comment.
Raptors have regularly been recorded and	Opportunities for including a Kestrel box will be
provision of some "facility" for nesting on	investigated.
the building would be welcome.	
Provision for birds is important and has not	The proposals include swift boxes. A separate planning
been fully taken on board in recent years	application is being considered for the demolition of
and modern building design to exclude	West Moor Farm. The proposals include the erection
nesting birds is at least party responsible	of three barn owl boxes, at least 30 days prior to any
for the decline in populations of raptors	demolition; one in a mature tree a short distance away
and swifts.	and two within Hylton Bridge Farm (stables and barn). The
	two boxes at Hylton Bridge Farm have already been
Daduatian in tamitana faula alam	installed.
Reduction in territory for local and	The Biodiversity Chapter of the ES considers the impact of
migrating wildlife.	the proposals on wildlife. It is considered that appropriate
Climata Changa	mitigation is provided for wildlife.
Climate Change	This is a said as issue and is set a sectorial asset described
Concerns that the economy is not green given that products like batteries are	This is a wider issue and is not a material consideration in
IDIVED TO ALL DECODER OF THE CARE	
1-	the determination of this planning application.
mined for their components. This has	the determination of this planning application.
mined for their components. This has effects on greenhouse gas emissions.	
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Concerns / Comments	Responses
Less trees and shrubbery will lead to	The proposals include tree and shrub planting as discussed
more soil erosion.	in the landscape strategy section of the Design and Access
	Statement.
Washington is a town in its own right.	We recognise that Washington is a town in its own right.
Electric vehicles are unaffordable but	This is not a material consideration in the determination
people are being forced to buy them.	of this planning application. The prices will drop once
	their production increases.
Electricity is becoming unaffordable.	This is not a material consideration in the determination
	of this planning application.

4.0 Conclusion

- This Statement of Community Involvement has summarised the engagement process undertaken in relation to the proposals for the development of land at IAMP in Washington for a proposed battery plant. The engagement process has been carried out in such a way that meets the requirements and recommendations of the Localism Act, the NPPF and the Council's own SCI.
- 4.2 The engagement exercise produced the following headline results:
 - Approximately 2,800 leaflets were distributed to residents and businesses in the local area;
 - A total of 33 comments forms were returned;
 - The majority of the 79% (26/33) of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed battery plant is a welcome continuation of the IAMP development for advanced manufacturing and automotive uses. 3% (3/33) of respondents answered neutral, and 18% (6/33) respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement;
 - In total, 15 general comments were provided. Of these, 6 were positive comments, 7 were negative and 2 provided neutral comments;
 - The positive comments supported proposals and the investment in the economy; and
 - The concerns raised generally related to the principle of the development, the loss of green space, increased traffic on the A1290, increased noise and disturbance, the impact on biodiversity and the implications on climate change.
- 4.3 A response to the comments and concerns is provided in Section 3.0 of this report.
- The next stage of the engagement process will comprise a statutory exercise undertaken by the Council upon validation of the planning application, whereby the local community and other interested parties will have a further opportunity to comment on the development proposals.

Appendix 1 Consultation Zone



Appendix 2 Engagement Leaflet

ENVISION AESC PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT ON IAMP

PUBLIC CONSULTATION



Envision AESC is a world leading manufacturer of lithium-ion batteries for the automotive industry and has been producing highest quality batteries in Sunderland for the Nissan LEAF electric vehicle for 9 years.

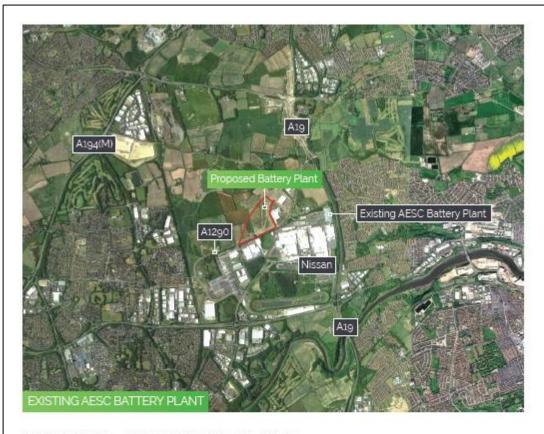
The business is headquartered in Japan, but also has manufacturing sites in the United States and here in Sunderland where over 300 people are employed.

As the demand for electric vehicles is forecast to grow significantly over the coming years, supporting the transition to a net zero carbon future, additional capacity for battery manufacturing is needed. To meet this increased future demand, Envision AESC is proposing to invest in a new manufacturing facility that will be capable of producing batteries for more than 100,000 electric vehicles per year.

The business is seeking planning permission for this facility, and we would welcome your views on the proposal.







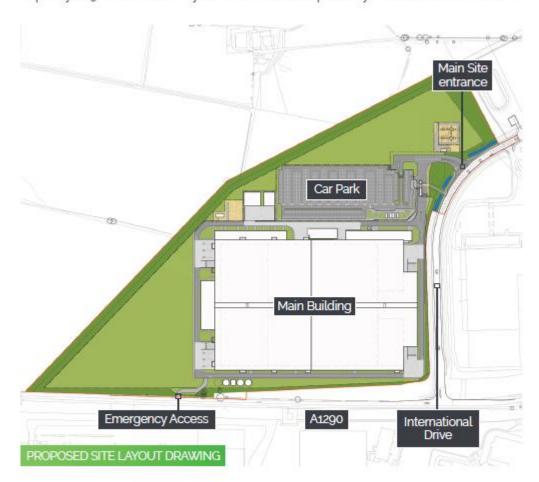
LOCATION - IAMP, SUNDERLAND

The site lies to the north west of Nissan and the current Envision AESC plant within IAMP at Washington, Sunderland. The site already has planning permission for automotive and advanced manufacturing uses and three bespoke manufacturing buildings have been completed.

The proposal will help ensure that Envision AESC, the IAMP and Sunderland are at the forefront of innovations in battery technology and will help Sunderland and the UK become one of the best international locations for automotive and advanced manufacturing.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for Envision AESC UK Ltd., the applicant, to invest and build a new battery plant. The manufacturing plant would have a maximum annual production capacity of 9Gwh. The battery modules would be primarily used in electric vehicles.



The planning application will be accompanied by a range of documents including an Environmental Statement and Transport Assessment, as well as drawings of the site layout and the building itself.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Envision AESC UK Ltd. is proposing to invest £450m in the facility, and the key headlines for the project are as follows:



Capacity to produce 9GWh of batteries per year



Construction is planned to start in early 2022, with the first battery production in 2024 (subject to planning permission)



Once operational the site will employ over 1,000 people, of course drawing on the significant skills and experience of the existing workforce



Facility to be powered by 100% renewable energy, including a proposal for on-site generation from solar panels



Confirms Sunderland as the heart of automotive electrification activities in the UK, building on both Nissan's and Envision AESC's initial investments in LEAF and the current battery plant



Provides opportunities for the materials used in battery production to be sourced from local suppliers, further enhancing the benefits for the North East and UK economies



The factory would be situated on the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP), in Sunderland – adjacent to the Nissan site, and less than 1 Km from the current Envision AESC battery plant

WE WANT YOUR VIEWS	
We would like to hear your views on the proposal. Please complete the questionnaire below, cut along the dotted line and return the form by Monday 19th July 2021 using the freepost address overleaf.	
The proposed battery plant is welcomed as part of the continuing development of IAMP for advanced manufacturing and automotive uses. Do you:	
○ Strongly Agree ○ Agree ○ Neutral ○ Disagree ○ Strongly Disagree	
The site is a suitable and sustainable location for this development. Do you: Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree	
The proposed battery plant will support the transition to electric cars and will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Do you: Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree	
The proposed battery plant will create / sustain a substantial number of local jobs in the area. Do you:	
Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree	
Any other comments:	
Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Limited ("Lichfields") is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (registration number Z6193122). Your responses will be analysed by Lichfields on behalf of our client: Envision AESC UK Ltd. It is not envisaged that any personal data will be supplied by virtue of completion of the survey, but in the event that any personal data is supplied, it will be disregarded and deleted without undue delay. Responses to this consultation may be made publicly available.	

Business Reply Plus Licence Number RTZH-AJTC-TTBH

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