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4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This Chapter of the ES sets out in summary form the planning context for the Proposed Development. A more detailed Planning Statement¹ is also provided in support of the detailed application.

4.1.2 The following plans and guidance are primary material policy considerations relevant to this detailed planning application:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019 and as amended).
- Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014) and as amended.
- The Adopted Development Plan, comprising:
 - Sunderland Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 (CSDP), adopted January 2020; and
 - International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP), Area Action Plan (AAP), adopted November 2017.

4.1.3 Following the approval of IAMP ONE Phase 2 application in June 2020, SCC has undertaken consultation on a number of policy documents, including the Allocations & Designations Plan (ADP). It has also undertaken consultation on the following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

- Draft Development Management SPD.
- Washington Meadows SPD Scoping Report.
- Local Wildlife Site Report.

4.1.4 These aspects are considered further, below and are set out in more detail in the Planning Statement, which accompanies the planning application and ES.

4.2 Planning History

4.2.1 Both the outline planning application (ref. no. 20/00556/OU4) that was submitted for the Site in 2020 and this detailed application form part of the wider planning base for the delivery of the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP).

4.2.2 On the 15th September 2015, the Secretary of State (SoS) gave a direction that the

¹ International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) Planning Statement, IAMP ONE Phase Two, Henry Boot Developments, March 2020 (Lichfields).

IAMP should be treated as a project of national significance, for which development consent is required under *Section 35(2)(a)(ii) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended)* and *Regulation 2 of the Infrastructure Planning (Business or Commercial Projects) Regulations 2013 (Original Direction)*.

- 4.2.3 Detailed information on the planning background to the overall development of IAMP is included in Section 3 of the Planning Statement for the (consented) 2018 IAMP ONE development. In summary, in order to bring forward and meet the demand for early development on part of the IAMP site, an area (known as IAMP ONE) was taken out of the DCO process and made subject to consent by means of a planning application. Part of that IAMP ONE area (Phase Two) was not included within the planning application for the development due to the need for updated ecology surveys and as the former West Moor Farm (now demolished) was still present within that parcel of land and still occupied at that time.
- 4.2.4 The 2020 outline planning application was submitted to ensure that the whole of the IAMP ONE area could benefit from a planning consent and deliver the benefits anticipated at the outset of the process. Planning consent was approved in June 2020.
- 4.2.5 Subsequent to receiving planning consent, amendments have been proposed; thereby necessitating the submission of a new application.

4.3 National & Local Planning Policies & Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.3.1 The current NPPF was published and came into effect in February 2019. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England, and how these should be applied. It provides the framework within which local development plans are produced but does not contain specific policies for nationally significant infrastructure projects.
- 4.3.2 Achieving sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF, through the use of economic, social and environmental objectives; a presumption in favour of sustainable development forms the core principle of the NPPF.
- 4.3.3 Section 6 of the NPPF addresses economic expansion and delivery of economic growth and productivity and sets out the ways in which planning policies should seek to promote this.
- 4.3.4 Section 9 of the NPPF relates to the promotion of sustainable transport, noting that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and

development proposals, so that potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed. Opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use should be identified and pursued; and environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure identified and addressed.

- 4.3.5 Section 12 relates to quality of design and achieving well designed places, including the use of design guides and codes to provide a framework for creating distinctive places.
- 4.3.6 Section 14 relates to supporting the transition to a low-carbon future, planning for and meeting the challenge of climate change (including flooding).
- 4.3.7 Section 15 relates to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, through protection (at international, national and local level) and through the development of improved networks of habitats and green infrastructure, including across local authority boundaries.
- 4.3.8 Section 16 addresses the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, recognising that, where a development would adversely affect a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement is required, having regard to the scale of loss and significance of the asset. Developers should be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset to be lost, in a proportionate manner.

4.4 National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

- 4.4.1 On 6th March 2014, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched a planning practice guidance (NPPG) web-based resource. The NPPG covers a wide range of topics including design, climate change, EIA, the historic environment, travel plans / transport assessments and statements, water and waste.

4.5 Adopted Development Plan

- 4.5.1 As noted above, the relevant parts of the adopted development plan are the Sunderland CSDP and the IAMP AAP.

Sunderland Core Strategy & Development Plan 2015-2033

- 4.5.2 The CSDP was adopted in January 2020 and consists of three parts:
 - Part One – Core Strategy & Development Plan (CSDP) sets out the overarching strategy, strategic policies and strategic allocations and designations for the future change and growth of Sunderland, as well as local policies for development

management purposes.

- Part Two – Allocations & Designations Plan (A&D Plan) sets out local policies including site-specific policy designations and allocations for the development, protection and conservation of land in the city in order to deliver the strategy set out in the CSDP.
- Part Three – International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) Area Action Plan (AAP) 2017-2032 sets out the site-specific policies for the comprehensive development of the IAMP.

4.5.3 The CSDP notes (para. 1.6) that it and the IAMP AAP have superseded saved policies of the Sunderland Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1998 and its 2007 Alteration (No. 2). Some saved UDP policies will, however, remain as part of the UDP until the A&D Plan is adopted and are required to be read alongside the CSDP.

4.5.4 The following are the main CSDP Policies that are relevant to the Site and its immediate surroundings:

- The IAMP ELMA is designated as Green Belt and as an Ecological and Landscape Mitigation Area under IAMP AAP Policy S1. The River Don and its tributary (Usworth Burn) are designated as Local Wildlife Sites under AAP Policy EN2. The Wildlife Corridor adjoins the western boundary of IAMP, but does not extend into IAMP. It is Saved UDP Policy CN23.
- Nissan is also allocated as a Primary Employment Area under Policy EG1 of the Core Strategy
- The application site is allocated as part of the Southern Employment Area within IAMP under IAMP AAP Policy S1. The ELMA is designated as Green Belt under IAMP AAP Policy S1

4.5.5 IAMP and the wider area is identified as falling within a 250m buffer for surface coal under Core Strategy Policy M1 Minerals Safeguarding Area

IAMP Area Action Plan

4.5.6 The IAMP AAP was adopted on 30th November 2017. It provides the planning policy framework for the comprehensive development of approximately 392,000 m² of floorspace for uses related to the automotive and advanced manufacturing sectors, delivered on a 150 ha site that has been removed from the Green Belt. The adjacent land to be retained for ecological and landscape mitigation (ELMA) (110 ha) remains

in the Green Belt.

- 4.5.7 Of this land, the IAMP ONE Phase Two site comprises 25.08 ha and the remaining area forms part of the IAMP ONE site (which is 61 ha, overall, and includes 4.9 ha of onsite ELMA land).
- 4.5.8 The AAP's vision for the IAMP (AAP para. 2.6) is '*A nationally important and internationally respected location for advanced manufacturing and European-scale supply chain industries. A planned and sustainable employment location that maximises links with Nissan and other high value automotive industries as well as the local infrastructure assets, including the ports, airports and road infrastructure.*'
- 4.5.9 Para. 2.7 of the AAP states that the type of place the Councils are seeking to create is '*an attractive working environment that creates the conditions in which businesses can establish and thrive and where people choose to work. A unique opportunity for increased job and business creation and the promotion of regional prosperity whilst taking advantage of natural assets and green infrastructure including the River Don corridor.*'
- 4.5.10 The AAP sets out a broad range of policies addressing development within the AAP. In addition to policies setting out how development is to be taken forward (Policies S1, S2 and S3) are policies addressing aspects such as design, the public realm, transport infrastructure and parking, flood risk, landscape, ecology, green infrastructure, and securing mitigation.
- 4.5.11 The Planning Statement prepared as part of this detailed planning application describes these in more detail.

4.6 Emerging Development Plan Documents

Allocations & Designations Plan (ADP)

- 4.6.1 The ADP forms the final part of the Sunderland Local Plan (once adopted) and will cover the 2015 to 2033 plan period. It contains a range of allocations and designations covering housing, retail, heritage, the natural environment, transport, wind energy and minerals. According to the Local Development Scheme (June 2020), the ADP is due to be adopted in 2022.
- 4.6.2 The Policies Map within the ADP identifies the Site as being within the IAMP AAP area, which is the principal policy document for assessing this application. The ADP also contains Policy SS9 'Washington Meadows', which is an urban extension to

Washington and is located immediately to the west of the application boundary. The Washington Meadows extension is intended to become a sustainable community, with the delivery of 1,500 homes (of which, 15% will be affordable homes), green infrastructure and public transport connectivity.

Development Management SPD

4.6.3 The Development Management (DM) SPD was adopted on 16th June 2021 and sets out additional planning guidance that will aid the preparation and determination of planning applications. The DM SPD is subdivided into five sections, as follows:

- Section 1: Introduction and policy context. This section provides an introduction and overview of policy context that the SPD builds upon.
- Section 2: Household extensions, alterations and development. This section contains planning and design guidance in relation to extending or altering a dwelling house, including guidance on good design, visual attractiveness, respecting the location's surrounding and the local environment, as well as protecting residential amenity.
- Section 3: Residential design. This section sets out the guidance to assist developers and design professionals for the delivery of high-quality and sustainable residential developments within Sunderland.
- Section 4: Transport and parking standards. This section sets out the revised car and cycle parking guidance for both residential and non-residential developments.
- Section 5: Advertisements. This final section sets out the guidance in relation to the regulation of advertisements.

4.6.4 Of these five sections, Section 4 is the most relevant. This states that the emphasis of the 'Non-residential Parking Standards' is on "...providing a level of parking to suit the needs of the development and accessibility for public and sustainable transport based on location". It also states that "...to future proof development, proposals should provide an appropriate level of electric vehicle parking and charging infrastructure (...) to suit site specific requirements".

Washington Meadows SPD Scoping Report

4.6.5 SCC's aspiration is that Washington Meadows becomes a "...sustainable new development set within an attractive, well-planned and well-designed settlement. A natural expansion to Washington, the new village would provide much needed new,

high-quality sustainable family homes”. In order to help achieve this, it is stated that an SPD will be prepared to “...expand policy or provide further detail and support of policies in a Development Plan”. The Washington Meadows SPD Scoping Report marks an initial stage in the preparation of the SPD, serving as an “...opening consultation paper to discuss the relevant issues, themes and potential format”.

- 4.6.6 The Scoping Report reiterates that the Washington Meadow’s extension is allocated within the Draft Allocations & Designations Plan; namely within Policies SP12 and SS9.
- 4.6.7 The SPD covers the following key strategic issues: natural environment, built environment, social infrastructure, access and connectivity, utilities, pollution, flood risk and drainage, contamination, infrastructure requirements and costs, as well as phasing and delivery.
- 4.6.8 The Council will also gather the necessary evidence base to assess the cumulative impact of the development.

Local Wildlife Sites Report

- 4.6.9 The National Planning Practice Guidance defines LWS as “...areas of substantive nature conservation value and make an important contribution to ecological networks and nature’s recovery. They can also provide wider benefits including public access (where agreed), climate mitigation and helping to tackle air pollution. They can be in rural, urban or coastal locations, can vary considerably in size, and may comprise a number of separate sites”.
- 4.6.10 The IAMP’s AAP identifies the following LWSs within its boundary: Elliscope Farm East/Hylton Bridge and River Don East House, Usworth Burn and the River Don corridor. Subsequent to the adoption of the IAMP AAP, a comprehensive review of Sunderland’s LWS was prepared to inform the preparation of the Draft Allocations & Designations Plan. This has resulted in the production of a Local Wildlife Site Report, issued in December 2020. The report states that there are currently 63 designated LWSs in Sunderland, with the report recommending minor boundary amendments to 22 of these sites and major boundary amendments to 28 of these sites. The Report has also identified 18 new sites to be designated as LWS. The IAMP’s AAP had already designated the Usworth Burns and River Don LWS, but only for the area within the AAP. As well as these previously designated areas, the report also designates the sections of the Usworth Burns and River Don corridors outwith the IAMP allocation.
- 4.6.11 As well as the LWS identified with the IAMP AAP, of particular note to this planning

application is the proposed extension to the boundary of the existing Severn Houses LWS, which lies across the A1290 to the south of Washington Meadows.

4.7 Analysis of the Relevant Planning Policies

- 4.7.1 The analysis of the relevant planning policies against the findings of the EIA is set out in the Planning Supporting Statement, prepared by Lichfields and included as part of the detailed planning application for the Site. This information is, therefore, not repeated here.