

## **International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP)**

### **Initial Public Transport Strategy**

**31.10.19 – updated April 2024**

#### **1. Context**

- 1.1 To support the preparation of the Joint IAMP Area Action Plan (AAP), the two local authorities of Sunderland and South Tyneside undertook a number of studies in relation to public transport provision for the site. These concluded that IAMP will be a significant employment destination and that public transport will play an important part in providing access to the site. The key focus was to be on providing access for new bus services to the site.
- 1.2 Policy T3 in the AAP identifies that “to promote sustainable transport, development must include... (i) provision of enhanced bus services between IAMP and (a) surrounding residential areas; (b) Heworth and Sunderland multi-modal transport interchanges; and (c) Hebburn, Jarrow, South Shields and Washington centres.” It also identified a number of design measures within the site that development will need to address to appropriately support bus accessibility.
- 1.3 In response to the policy requirements within the AAP, IAMP LLP has established the IAMP Public Transport Working Group (PTWG). This comprises Nexus and local authority officers from Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead, with the objective to ensure that development of the wider IAMP site (including IAMP ONE and IAMP TWO) takes appropriate account of public transport. This relates to two principal matters<sup>1</sup>:
- i) the actions to discharge conditions 28 and 38 within the IAMP ONE planning permission; and
  - ii) the longer-term plan for bus provision at IAMP, to be included within the Development Consent Order (DCO) for IAMP TWO.

#### **2. IAMP ONE**

- 2.1 The first stage of development at IAMP was the granting of planning permission for IAMP ONE in 2018 (application reference 18/00092/HE4 and hereinafter referred to as the 2018 IAMP ONE permission). The permission contained a condition (no28) which stated:

---

<sup>1</sup> For the avoidance of doubt, the PTWG has been focusing purely on the plan for bus service provision within IAMP. It is aware of the ongoing work by both Councils through the North East Joint Transport Committee, the Northern Powerhouse and Department for Transport to secure the funding necessary to extend the Metro network to IAMP. This is a vital piece of strategic infrastructure that, when delivered, will ensure that IAMP is truly connected to the communities of Sunderland and South Tyneside. However, this will require significant capital investment from Government and is out-with the scope of IAMP LLP.

*“No building shall be brought into use until initial details of a Public Transport Strategy are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in liaison with the Local Highway Authority and Highways England and be implemented in accordance with the approved details”.*

- 2.2 This condition has been repeated on other planning permissions for developments within IAMP.
- 2.3 The purpose of this document is to set out the ‘initial details of a Public Transport Strategy’ for submission to the local planning authority as part of the planning application for AESC Plant 3. It is ‘work in progress’ and sets out the key elements of the strategy and the ongoing tasks being undertaken in its implementation.
- 2.4 Several conditions within the 2018 IAMP ONE permission (22 and 23) required the implementation of physical infrastructure on the A1290 to support bus services within the development. The works consist of the following:
- i) North bound stop adjacent to West Moor Farm and southbound stop opposite West Moor Farm:  
**Bus stops to be decommissioned.**  
West Moor Farm has been demolished.  
The approved Gigafactory development which sits adjacent to/to the north of A1290 and West Moor Farm does not include any public or staff access into the site at this location.  
As such these bus stops would no longer serve any active destination and are surplus to requirement.
  - ii) South bound adjacent to Nissan signals:  
**Bus stops to be improved.**  
Replacement of the existing bus shelter with a Nexus approved shelter and associated improvements to existing footway;
  - iii) North bound adjacent to Nissan signals:  
**Bus stops to be improved.**  
Replacement of the existing modular bus shelter with a Nexus approved shelter and associated improvements to existing footway;
  - iv) South bound and north bound, adjacent to Follingsby Lane:  
**Bus stops to be improved.**  
Relocation of existing bus stops to suit the new highway layout, including locations of controlled pedestrian crossings.  
Replacement of the existing flagpoles with Nexus approved shelters and associated improvements to existing footways;
  - v) South bound and north bound adjacent to Downhill Lane:  
**Bus stops to be decommissioned.**  
The existing bus stops are considered to be too close to the A19/A1290 junction.  
The IAMP project does not propose or allow for any active frontage or site access local to these stops.
- 2.5 These works have been agreed with the local planning authority and the works were programmed to take place in July 2020. Due to the covid pandemic and associated restrictions a decision was taken in 2020 to defer these works and for them to be completed as part of the A1290 dualling/improvement scheme. This is due to commence imminently (May 2024).

2.6 In August 2023, planning permission was granted for the Early Infrastructure and Northern Development Area applications by Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils (ref. 21/02807/HE4 and ST/1722/FUL) (hereinafter referred to as the EI and NEA applications). These applications included the A1290 dualling works and the northern spine road which will link International Drive to Follingsby to the north west. The proposal is for these bus stop improvements to be delivered as part of the next phase of IAMP. The A1290 dualling works are due to commence in spring 2024 and be completed in late 2025.

2.7 Condition 38 of the 2018 IAMP ONE permission requires IAMP LLP to prepare a report assessing the feasibility of a demand-responsive bus (drb) service for workers at the development and, if viable, identify proposals for a pilot service and how that could transition to a permanent drb service. The condition requires to be discharged before more than three units are occupied. There are two elements to this work:

i) A research study to establish the key criteria that underpin viable drb services. **This has been completed** and the summary findings are:

- a drb style service could be developed to address IAMP related staff travel requirements, but viability will be dependent on an operator maximising vehicle utilisation throughout the full day, not just at IAMP shift changes.
- fundamental to success will be the need to form partnerships with neighbouring employment sites/facilities and other stakeholders, whose users could benefit from a drb style service.
- pooling of resources between IAMP LLP, NEXUS, a public transport operator and potentially other local businesses, is likely to give rise to an operation which can be well resourced, targeted in an effective way to intended user groups and well integrated with local public transport.

ii) The next stage is to establish the commerciality of a drb service at IAMP ONE. Several drb operators (that engaged and supported the preparation of the above study) have indicated a strong interest in developing and operating a drb service at IAMP ONE.

This element of the strategy will identify a preferred drb operator, who will engage with the businesses on and adjacent to IAMP ONE, to develop a business case for a pilot drb service and its potential viability.

A brief has been agreed between the PTWG partners for this work and a procurement process was programmed to commence during March 2020.

Due to the covid pandemic and associated restrictions on public transport travel a decision was taken in 2020 to defer this procurement exercise.

This does not conflict with the conditions relating to the 2018 IAMP ONE planning permission which requires implementation before more than 3 buildings are occupied. There are presently 3 buildings complete and a 4<sup>th</sup> with planning permission for a gigafactory for AESC who will manufacture batteries for electric vehicles (application ref: 23/01542/VA4). The gigafactory is currently under construction and will become operational in 2027. Of the 3 completed buildings, only 2 are occupied and in their final use (by SNOP and Faltec).

This procurement exercise is now planned to be progressed as part of this next phase of IAMP.

2.8 The commitment to minimise single occupancy car trips to the site and facilitate and promote public transport is enforced by the Framework Travel Plan for IAMP ONE, which was submitted and approved as part of the planning application. Furthermore, Planning Conditions 25 and 53 of the 2018 IAMP ONE permission requires full Travel Plans for each specific plot and end occupiers. The Framework Travel Plan sets out that each end

occupier will incorporate site specific measures to encourage travel by sustainable modes, including public transport, so that users are aware of the services available and their benefits. The Framework Travel Plan identifies an initial modal split target of 5% for travel by bus to/from IAMP ONE.

- 2.9 To ensure the Travel Plan is delivered successfully, a robust management strategy will be in place to urge the travel planning process forward – this will be overseen by the Travel Plan Co-ordinator role. The role and responsibilities of the Travel Plan Co-ordinator is set out in the Framework Travel Plan and the Highways Operational Management Plan (HOMP) and includes liaising with human resources to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Travel Plan are disseminated to staff from the outset as part of the induction process. Staff will also be made aware of the opportunities to access the site by public transport and the availability of discounts and incentives. Sunderland City Council Travel Planning and Sustainable Transport team have been appointed as site wide Travel Plan Co-ordinator and continue to work with site occupiers and local businesses to develop appropriate site wide and developer bespoke sustainable travel plans. Travel Plans have been approved for SNOP and Faltec.

### **3. IAMP TWO**

#### **3 Emerging Public Transport Strategy for IAMP TWO**

- 3.1 Existing bus transport (services 50 and 56) will serve the IAMP site from existing and improved infrastructure along the A1290 corridor. The longer-term aspiration is for bus services to access the IAMP site using the new/proposed highway infrastructure and ultimately for a demand responsive service to operate between IAMP and appropriate offsite destinations.

- 3.2 The PTWG partners (with the support of the IAMP team) have been successful in securing funding through the first tranche of the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF). This complementary funding has been used to improve the quality of the highway between the Wardley area and IAMP, along Follingsby Lane, thus improving the future potential for bus connectivity into IAMP. The IAMP team has supported this through:

- Securing planning permission for the provision of an extended spine road within the IAMP TWO site as part of the Early Infrastructure & Northern Employment Area (EI & NEA) applications (application references 21/02807/HE4 and ST/1172/FUL).
- Examining the opportunity to enhance Follingsby Lane and Downhill Lane (within the IAMP boundary) to connect with the IAMP ONE spine road near the A1290, to facilitate a bus connection into IAMP. This could potentially be delivered, if an operator for a bus service is identified by the TCF team prior to the new northern IAMP spine road being completed.

- 3.3 South Tyneside Council commenced work in January 2020 to implement the TCF scheme. The road from Wardley to the IAMP western boundary, which is within the TCF scheme, forms part of the IAMP long-term public transport route and those works will therefore support the implementation of the IAMP public transport strategy.

- 3.4 This approach is supported by the PTWG, demonstrating that IAMPs public transport proposals are in accordance with the AAP providing an integrated transport solution and can be developed further to support the EI & NEA applications.

- 3.5 In addition to the above, current work in progressing the IAMP Public Transport Strategy by the IAMP team includes:

- The preparation of a brief for a bus demand study – this will assess the financial viability of operating traditional bus services into IAMP TWO and the need for any revenue subsidy. This will review the previous work undertaken by Nexus in 2015, in terms of identifying the preferred bus routes/services to best serve IAMP. Work has commenced on this with Nexus and Systra (on behalf of IAMP LLP) preparing the terms of reference for the work. The intention is that the work will be undertaken by the PTWG partners itself, given the experience and knowledge of the members.

#### **4. Summary and next steps**

#### **4 Summary**

4.1 The Public Transport Strategy for IAMP has been prepared by IAMP LLP in conjunction with the PTWG partners and is in the process of being implemented. Progress can be recorded as follows:

- The review of drb opportunities for IAMP ONE has been completed;
- The work on IAMP ONE in respect of physical infrastructure to support bus provision has been agreed with the Local Highways Authority and Nexus and is taking place as part of this next phase of IAMP, specifically the dualling of the A1290 with work due to commence in Spring 2024. On completion of this work, conditions 22 and 23 of the 2018 IAMP ONE permission can be fully discharged.
- Planning has been granted for the IAMP TWO northern spine road as part of the EI & NEA applications.
- South Tyneside Council has completed the TCF works, which improve Follingsby Lane to the immediate west of IAMP TWO to enable bus services to use that route in the future.

4.2 The next steps include:

- The appointment of a drb partner for IAMP pilot drb viability analysis and to work with the IAMP ONE occupiers.
- The completion of this analysis will require the occupation of the first 2 to 3 units at IAMP ONE, to enable engagement to be undertaken with those occupiers. Two of the first units are occupied, whilst the third, unit 6 which was a speculative build by Sunderland City Council was vacant at the time of preparing this note. It is expected that the analysis will need to follow on from the full occupation of the existing units.
- A brief is in the process of being prepared to assess the viability of main stream bus services, to update and provide additional detail in respect of the 2015 Nexus work.

4.3 It is important to note that implementation of the strategy is not the sole responsibility of IAMP LLP. The LLP, as the developer of IAMP, will progress the feasibility studies and analysis discussed above, with the physical infrastructure having been approved as part of the EI & NEA applications to support that which will be provided within IAMP ONE. It will be for the market and the PTWG partners to also support the identification and promotion of bus services to IAMP as part of wider public transport proposals and measures in the local area.