

CABINET

5 MARCH 2019

INNOVATION PARK MEDWAY MASTERPLAN – REQUEST TO ADOPT

Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Alan Jarrett, Leader Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships Councillor Jane Chitty, Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation
Report from:	Richard Hicks, Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation, and Deputy Chief Executive
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Summary

This report seeks Cabinet approval to adopt the Innovation Park Medway masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The Innovation Park Medway masterplan proposes a high quality, flexible scheme to encourage a wide range of high-value technology, engineering, manufacturing and knowledge-intensive businesses. Public consultation was undertaken and minor relevant amendments have been made to the masterplan as a result.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The Innovation Park Medway masterplan (2019) has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Medway Local Plan 2003 is the current development plan for the authority and therefore forms part of the council's policy framework. As it is intended to adopt the masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), this will be part of the development plan.
- 1.2 The masterplan was publicly consulted on for six weeks from 17 September to 29 October 2018. This report seeks approval to adopt the finalised masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Rochester Airport masterplan (2014) has been reviewed and refreshed as part of the Innovation Park Medway masterplan (2019).
- 2.2 The 2019 masterplan outlines a scheme that will deliver a high quality innovation park, with flexible plots to encourage a wide range of high-value technology, engineering, manufacturing and knowledge-intensive businesses.
- 2.3 In order for the masterplan to be adopted, in line with Cabinet decision number 110/2018, public consultation was undertaken for a six week period. The masterplan outlines the ambition for a prime regeneration site; an area of land currently in use by Rochester Airport Ltd. The masterplan also covers land leased to BAE, and Woolmans Wood Caravan Site which is privately owned. A small part of the BAE-owned site is also included.
- 2.4 The masterplan seeks to establish a clear policy context that sets parameters but allows for flexibility to support market interest and deliverability.
- 2.5 A number of supporting studies and surveys have been undertaken to establish and support the masterplan principles, including transport and ecology. Soft market testing has also supported the masterplan development, with further market testing to inform this in more detail.
- 2.6 A total of 42 responses were received through the public consultation. Two public events were held; one on a weekday evening and one on a weekend during the day. Only a small number of local residents/businesses attended. Comments are summarised in section 6 below.
- 2.7 Throughout the development of the masterplan, discussions have been held with Highways England in relation to the traffic impacts the scheme will generate, these discussions are ongoing and Highways England have responded to the consultation. Discussions have taken place with Kent Highways following the consultation. Further work has been undertaken to demonstrate the impact of Innovation Park Medway on the network, which links more closely to the Local Plan by considering committed development also. A sensitivity test was also undertaken to consider the impact of the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC). Key junctions affected by Innovation Park Medway mainly sit within Kent Highways and discussions have therefore taken place to address the key issues. It is envisaged a strategic approach is required which can be developed further through a Local Development Order. Highways England have not yet been able to confirm whether they are content with the masterplan and have suggested that Cabinet should be advised that final adoption will be subject to Highways England's response. As such, Cabinet is recommended that Cabinet agree to delegate authority to the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holders for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships and Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, to: address any minor issues raised by Highways England. Should any significant amendments be requested by Highways England, a further report will be presented to Cabinet.

- 2.8 It is recommended that the preferred option for taking forward the masterplan is a Local Development Order (LDO). This allows plots to come forward with speed and ease for developers and/or businesses. A separate report is presented to Cabinet (item 5) to seek permission to publicly consult on the Local Development Order, with the view to adopting this in July 2019.
- 2.9 Pace of delivery is essential at Innovation Park Medway to realise the benefits of the North Kent Enterprise Zone. The five-year window runs until March 2022 and provides incentives to businesses locating on the site.
- 2.10 The anticipated programme for the masterplan is set out below;

Process	Date
Medway Council Cabinet decision regarding adoption of the masterplan	5 March 2019
Tonbridge & Malling decision regarding adoption of the masterplan	19 March 2019

Local Development Order (LDO)

- 2.11 As set out in section 2.8, a Local Development Order (LDO) is the preferred route to bring forward the Innovation Park Medway site. An LDO provides a simplified planning mechanism for developers and/or businesses as the background work, studies and design principles are established through the LDO, Design Code and supporting Environmental Statement. A self-certification form therefore forms the basis of the application, which is fast-tracked through a 28 day planning process for prior approval.

3. Options

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Innovation Park Medway masterplan (2019) is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Once adopted, the masterplan forms the basis for the preparation of a Local Development Order, which is the appropriately identified planning mechanism to fast track development on the site and achieve a high quality result.
- 3.2 The alternative option is to adopt the masterplan but not proceed with the Local Development Order. This option requires more upfront work for potential developers and/or occupants of the site and will increase their investment in both time and cost, which would limit the viability for third parties. This could risk delivery within the Enterprise Zone and the attractiveness of the site and is not a recommended option.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 In order to meet the council's key objective of bringing forward regeneration at Rochester Airport through the development of Innovation Park Medway, the masterplan should be adopted as an SPD.
- 4.2 The masterplan includes principles for sustainable development which will be considered and detailed further in the Design Code and Local Development Order.

4.3 A Diversity Impact Assessment has been carried out for the project and is attached at Appendix B to the report.

5. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Privately owned or leased land not coming forward in line with the strategic ambitions for IPM	Woolmans Wood and land leased to BAE are included in the masterplan, as these comprise part of the North Kent Enterprise Zone. If these are not developed in line with the ambitions for IPM the site will become disjointed and will not have a clear identity.	The masterplan outlines aspirations for all land within the Enterprise Zone, but is flexible and does not tie third parties to development. Phasing is considered carefully to ensure the site can function without all privately owned or leased land coming forward in the short- or medium-term.	D3
Densities or parking standards not accepted	Parking standards are policy compliant, however future modal shift and sustainable transport improvements could decrease parking requirement and increase the quantum of development.	A Transport Assessment has been undertaken with a carefully considered Travel Plan. The masterplan allows for flexibility with the potential to fix the detail further at a later stage.	D3
Poor quality development	Without a formal adopted planning document, quality will not be assured on this high priority site.	The adoption of the masterplan establishes high quality parameters that must be adhered to.	E2
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council do not agree adopt the masterplan	Through the decision making process at Tonbridge & Malling it is decided not to adopt the masterplan at this stage.	Collaboration and engagement has taken place throughout the masterplan development at both an officer and Member level.	E1
Highways England are not supportive of the masterplan adoption	A revision to the transport approach has been undertaken in agreement with Highways England, to ensure the masterplan is aligned with the Local Plan. This provides a more robust basis for the Local Development Order.	Further work has been undertaken following discussion with Highways England to meet their requirements. IPM will have an impact on traffic but discussions are taking place with Kent Highways and Highways England to agree a suitable approach to be taken forward through the LDO.	C1

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The previous Rochester Airport masterplan (2014) was consulted on publicly, and this document has been used to inform the development of the Innovation Park Medway masterplan (2019).
- 6.2 Public consultation on the Innovation Park Medway Draft Masterplan was undertaken over a six week period from 17 September to 29 October 2018. Public comments have been taken into account when producing the final draft for adoption by both Medway Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council.
- 6.3 A mix of positive, negative and constructive feedback was received. In a number of cases, a completed questionnaire set out overall support for the principle of the redevelopment or a positive comment regarding an element of the proposals but went on to express a concern regarding a different element.
- 6.4 Concerns focused on highways, traffic and parking provision, impact on Rochester Airport, ecological impacts, impact on nearby residents, proposed heights and scale, community need (relating to jobs/use of the site), and noise and air quality. Positive comments related to the general principle of redevelopment, open space provision, and design principles. Overall, 42 responses were received.
- 6.5 The Consultation Statement is attached at Appendix C to the report.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The masterplan has been prepared within existing budgets, with funding from the SELEP Sector Support Fund (SSF) and match funding from Medway Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. If adopted there will be costs associated with delivering the proposals set out in the masterplan; the first phase of works is to be funded through the Government's Local Growth Fund round 3 (£3.7m) from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). However, development of the site will generate income through sale or lease of the site and business rates receipts.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 In order for the masterplan to be adopted, the document was publicly consulted upon for a six week period, after being approved by Cabinet for consultation.
- 8.2 As the site crosses the boundary with Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, the masterplan must be adopted by both Medway Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council.
- 8.3 If the masterplan is adopted, Medway Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council have the preferred approach of developing a Local Development Order in line with the masterplan, to support businesses looking to locate at Innovation Park Medway. This will be subject to the appropriate consultation at the relevant stage and subject to the relevant approvals.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 The Cabinet is asked to approve the adoption of the Innovation Park Medway masterplan (2019) as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), as set out in Appendix A to the report, subject to Highways England confirming they are content with the masterplan.
- 9.2 The Cabinet is asked to agree to delegate authority to the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holders for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships and Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, to:
- i) address any minor issues raised by Highways England; and
 - ii) approve minor changes to the Innovation Park Medway Masterplan (2019) document prior to publication for the purpose of presentation or improving clarity.

10. Suggested reasons for decisions

- 10.1 Adoption of the masterplan as an SPD formally sets a standard through planning policy for high quality development to come forward at Innovation Park Medway.

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Appendices (Please refer to Supplementary Agenda No.1)

Appendix A - Innovation Park Medway Masterplan: Final Draft (2019)

Appendix B - Diversity Impact Assessment

Appendix C - Consultation Statement

Background papers

Rochester Airport Masterplan 2014

https://www.medway.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2225/rochester_airport_masterplan_-_january_2014.pdf

Medway Statement of Community Involvement 2014

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningpolicy/scicommunityinvolvement.aspx>

Tonbridge & Malling Statement of Community Involvement

https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/173915/SCI_Final_Feb15.pdf

Section 9 of Appendix A refers to a number of technical summaries, which can be accessed here:

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=24321&PlanId=335>