

<b>TITLE</b> <i>Name / description of the issue being assessed</i>	Innovation Park Medway
<b>DATE</b> <i>Date the DIA is completed</i>	01/12/2020
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b> <i>Name, title and dept of person responsible for carrying out the DIA.</i>	Lucy Carpenter, Senior Regeneration Officer Richard Carden, Regeneration Delivery Programme Manager

### 1 Summary description of the proposed change

- *What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed?*
- *How does it compare with the current situation?*

Medway Council is refreshing the Rochester Airport Masterplan (2014) and it is recommended that the Innovation Park Medway Masterplan is adopted. A Local Development Order (LDO) has also been prepared for adoption.

Enabling infrastructure development for new plots for employment as part of the technology park.

### 2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

- *E.g.: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user records etc.*
- *E.g.: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile*

An initial screen DIA was carried out on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2013 on the Rochester Airport Masterplan (consultation draft). The DIA was then reviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016. This has also been updated in 2018 and 2019, with revisions to the most recent version to account for the finalised Innovation Park Medway masterplan following public consultation. This version also reflects the Innovation Park Medway LDO consultation and the recommendation to Cabinet and Full Council to adopt the LDO.

The Rochester Airport masterplan is a land use and design framework that promotes opportunities for improved airport operations, aviation heritage facilities and new employment. These opportunities are open to all. Formal public consultation took part from 22<sup>nd</sup> July to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Leaflets were sent to 7,300 households and businesses in the local area and 222 people attended an exhibition which was held over two days. During the consultation period a total of 908 responses were received.

The Innovation Park Medway masterplan builds upon the Rochester Airport masterplan to set out more detail regarding the proposed employment uses on the site and forms part of the relevant planning policy when adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The masterplan provides a flexible framework that encourages development to come forward within B1 and B2 use classes (replaced with E(g) and B2 in 2020 use classes update). A Local Development Order, Design Code and Environmental Statement have been consulted upon and it is recommended to Cabinet and Full Council that the LDO is adopted to provide further resolution on the design and form the planning process by which development can come forward.

Consultation on the Innovation Park Medway masterplan took place over a six week period from 17 September to 29 October 2018. 42 responses were received. Two consultation events were held and the draft masterplan was made available at Gun Wharf, Innovation Centre Medway, Chatham Community Hub, Rochester Community Hub and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council's offices as

well as online. Consultation was in line with both Medway and Tonbridge & Malling's Statements of Community Involvement.

Consultation on the Innovation Park Medway LDO took place initially from 7 June to 19 July 2019, with a number of responses being received including responses that required further action from Statutory Consultees. A series of amendments and updates have since been made, with a further consultation on the new information from 26 October to 27 November 2020.

Medway was ranked as the 118<sup>th</sup> most deprived Local Authority of the 326 authorities (1<sup>st</sup> being the most deprived) in England in the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation. This is a relatively worse position than that shown in the index in 2010, when Medway was ranked 132<sup>nd</sup> most deprived of 326.

In July 2017 Medway's unemployment level was at its lowest for the last ten year period, indicating a rejuvenation of Medway's economy since the downturn in 2008. Unemployment levels in Medway still remain higher than those of the South East and Great Britain as a whole. This indicates that whilst Medway is following the national trend of economic recovery since the downturn, it is doing so at a slightly slower pace than the wider South East and Great Britain.

Compared to the South East and Great Britain, Medway has a higher percentage of both economically active people seeking work and economically inactive people that would like to find a job.

Evidence identifies several factors that influence unemployment levels in Medway. Medway has a lower job density than the rest of the South East and Great Britain, meaning that there are fewer jobs per person available. Medway also has lower academic attainment levels than the South East and Great Britain that would result in a barrier to employment opportunities both inside and outside of Medway.

Current population projection figures and low job density levels in Medway indicate that more employment opportunities will need to be generated in Medway over the next 20 years in order to keep future unemployment levels from spiking.

Job density describes the level of jobs per resident aged 16 - 64. Latest ONS figures from 2016 show that Medway has a lower ratio of jobs per individual than the regional and national average. Medway has a ratio of 0.6 jobs per individual aged 16 - 64, compared to 0.88 in the South East and 0.84 in Great Britain.

Estimated figures from the Department of Education identify that the percentage of 16 to 18 year old NEET's in Medway has increased from 7.3% in 2014 to 9.8% in 2016. The percentage of NEET's in the South East has also increased from 4.2% in 2014 to 6.4% in 2016.

In Medway the greatest proportion of NEET's is 17 year olds with 12.1%, followed by 16 year olds at 7.2%.

### 3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to :

- Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't?

(insert ✓ in one or more boxes)

Protected characteristic groups	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age		✓	✓
Disability		✓	✓
Gender reassignment			✓
Marriage/civil partnership			✓
Pregnancy/maternity			✓
Race			✓
Religion/belief			✓
Gender			✓
Sexual orientation			✓
Other (e.g. low income groups)		✓	✓

### 4 Summary of the likely impacts

- Who will be affected?
- How will they be affected?

The Masterplan is a land use and design framework that promotes opportunities for improved airport operations, aviation heritage facilities and new employment. These opportunities are open to all. Consideration of specific issues regarding access will be addressed through further detailed site

design; this will help to advance and foster good relations for equalities. Design will consider equalities and encourage good relations with regards to all protected characteristics. Initial design through the masterplan encourages an open and accessible site for use by all, which is built upon further in the Design Code by recommending material palettes and proposed high level design guidance to be considered in the design of public spaces, buildings and all areas of the site.

These plans should assist to advance and foster good relations for equalities in relation to all protected characteristics, as they will be available for all to take advantage of. From the evidence shown above particular groups are the young and those on a low income to improve job prosperity and training opportunities.

**5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?**

- *Are there alternative providers?*
- *What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?*
- *Can demand for services be managed differently?*

There are currently no adverse impacts; equality and access will be reviewed at each stage through subsequent Diversity Impact Assessments (DIA).

**6 Action plan**

- *Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence*

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Adopt Innovation Park Medway masterplan	Project team	March 2019, December 2020
The Local Development Order and Masterplanning process for Phase 2 will require a number of surveys and assessments to be undertaken	Project team	December 2018 to December 2020
Local Development Order adoption	Project team	December 2020
Review DIA at each planning stage	Project team	Ongoing

## **7 Recommendation**

*The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be:*

- *to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate*
- *consider alternatives*
- *gather further evidence*

*If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.*

To implement the action plan and proceed with the proposed Masterplan, LDO and development.

## **8 Authorisation**

*The authorising officer is consenting that:*

- *the recommendation can be implemented*
- *sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned*
- *the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored*

**Assistant Director**

Dawn Hudd  
Assistant Director - Physical and Cultural Regeneration

**Date**

4 December 2020