

**From:** [Chris Carr](#)  
**To:** [A1 Birtley to Coal House](#)  
**Cc:** [Eleanor Cockbain](#); [Andrew Softley](#)  
**Subject:** A1 Birtley to Coal House  
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### **FAO Dean Alford (Case Officer)**

Further to your consultation letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> November I am contacting you to provide an update on Gateshead's Local Plan.

Gateshead Council adopted parts 1 and 2 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan) in March 2015.

The Council submitted Part 3 of the Local Plan, Making Spaces for Growing Places (MSGP), which consists of development management policies and land allocations and designations, to the Secretary of State on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019. Public hearing sessions relating to the MSGP Submission Plan took place between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

Following consultation on Main Modifications from 27 July 2020 to 18 September 2020, the Council received the Final Inspectors Report and Schedule of Main Modifications on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – the report can be found at <https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/10990/MSGP-examination> in the latest examination news section. The report concludes that MSGP provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the borough, provided that a number of main modifications are made to it. The Council is in the process of making these modifications, and it is intended that the Plan will be adopted in January 2021.

MSGP includes policies which will be of relevance to the A1 Birtley to Coal House scheme, notably policy MSGP18 Safeguarded land for transport improvements, which includes MSGP18.5 A1 Birtley to Coalhouse. A summary of previous comments on EIA scoping referred to:

- **Flood Risk and Drainage, Water Quality** - Regard should be given to Draft Plan Making Spaces for Growing Places (MSGP) Policies 30, 31 and 32. The effect of the scheme on water quality should be considered during the construction and operation, including impact of surface water runoff, and opportunities to improve the quality of the existing surface water runoff and appropriate mitigation measures should be put in place.
- **Flood Risk** - Regard should be given to Draft Plan Making Spaces for Growing Places (MSGP) Policies 30, 31 and 32. The effect of surface water and fluvial flood risk to and from the scheme should be considered during the construction and operation. Appropriate mitigation measures should ensure that the scheme does not increase flood elsewhere within the River Team catchment. The flood risk assessment should also consider the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (October 2017) (which includes the identification of flood zone 3b within the junction 67 area) and latest Lead Local Flood Authority data (including historic flooding records, flood management assets including culverts and details of ordinary watercourses). The assessment should cover the sequential test and exception test, should the scheme be located within flood zone 2 and 3. The risk of groundwater flood risk to the scheme and the effect of the scheme on groundwater flows may require a hydrogeological assessment. The scheme should include

appropriate surface water management arrangements, including the use of SuDS.

Subject to limited modification Policies MSGP30-32 are considered to be effective.

- **Green Belt** – The Scoping Report acknowledges that most of the land which includes and surrounds the site footprint is designated part of the Tyne and Wear Green Belt. The existing and proposed roads cross diagonally the strategic Green Belt gap between the Tyneside conurbation to the north (represented here by the outer edge of Gateshead) and the Washington/Chester-le-Street/Birtley conurbation to the south (represented here by the northern and eastern edges of Birtley). Policy CS19 of the adopted Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne Core Strategy follows earlier development plans in specifically identifying prevention of the merging of Gateshead with Birtley or Washington as a principal purpose of the Tyne and Wear Green Belt in accordance with national policy. The effective functioning of this gap as Green Belt is thus highly vulnerable to significant adverse impact from any reduction in its openness. Whilst the effect of the proposed scheme will be limited, the Scoping Report should explicitly recognise the importance of minimising diminution in the openness of the Green Belt, including temporary diminution during construction, and of returning any land which is surplus to highway requirements to other, open uses by the completion of the scheme.

MSGP includes minor revisions to the Green Belt boundary but not in the location of this scheme.

- **Public Open Space** - The extent of the proposed scheme includes an area of open space at Longacre Wood. It is not yet clear whether this land will be developed as part of the Improvement Scheme. However, the EIA Scoping Report appears to have appropriate regard to the potential impact of the development on open space, as addressed within the Landscape and Visual and People and Communities sections of the report.

Policy MSGP40 as proposed to be modified is considered effective in terms of protecting valuable open space.

Please note that as a result of deleted and additional policies the policy references/numbers will change in the final version of the Plan.

I hope the above is helpful but please advise if any additional information is required.

Regards

Chris

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