

# A Newport freeport would create 24,000 jobs, says backers

A multi-site freeport in south east Wales could create at least 24,000 jobs for the area, claim its backers. Councillor Jane Mudd, leader of Newport City Council, speaking in the South Wales Argus, said expert research has found that the freeport status could create at least 24,000 jobs in the region.

These would not be one displaced from other parts of Wales but entirely new employment opportunities, she said. Newport City Council is leading the bid for regional freeport with Cardiff Airport as the core customs location.

The proposal – which is the only “inland” bid out of the [three bids](#) put forward – would also see complementary tax sites at the Welsh Government-owned Rhyd-y-Blew in Blaenau Gwent, Imperial Park in Newport and a third suggested site at Bro Tathan Enterprise Zone in Vale of Glamorgan.

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If successful, she said the site would be able to hit the ground running as Cardiff Airport would be immediately available to take advantage of freeport status. The airport has significant land around its terminal to accommodate freeport related developments, and freeport status should also significantly boost its air freight traffic.

She added that the economic zone could also make South Wales a global leader in the semi-conductor market, which is forecast to significantly increase in value by billions of pounds in the coming years.

“The Newport Regional Freeport is about scaling up, not starting up. It would be a catalyst for inward investment, economic growth and increased productivity in a region with some of the most deprived communities in Wales,” she said.

“We want businesses to get behind our bid as we work to persuade the government that they should back the only global Freeport bid in Wales.

She added: “Only our proposal has the potential to attract a greater range of national and international investment to Wales, providing many more jobs and training prospects for residents that will boost both the local and national economy for many years to come.”

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The other Welsh bids which are being considered by the UK and Welsh Governments include the Celtic Freeport bid, backed by Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire councils, which is based around accelerating separate plans for an offshore wind farm in the Celtic Sea alongside developing green energy projects. The consortium said the status could create 16,000 new jobs and generate £5.5bn investment to the area.

The Port of Holyhead, through its owner Stena Line, has also submitted a bid alongside Anglesey Council. Its backers have

said the bid could attract £1bn of much-needed investment and create 13,000 high-salary jobs across North Wales, as well as return Holyhead to pre-Brexit levels of trade.

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