

EX6/04/01 and EX6/06/01

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Dear Kathryn

IAMP EIP

With reference to your e-mail dated 22 February 2017.

I note the Inspector has kindly invited me to attend various hearings scheduled for the Examination in Public.

As stated, I will make every effort to attend those hearings but if, due to other commitments, I cannot be present I hereby provide some background information and an overview in order to assist the Inspector and support the objection of 10 August 2016. I am happy for this information to be shared with all interested parties.

Background.

I was born in Ashbrooke, Sunderland and for the next 5 years lived in The Queens Head Hotel (opposite Bishopwearmouth Church), Low Row, Sunderland. I then moved to the Pallion Inn, Pallion, during the height of the shipbuilding era in that area. After 5 years I moved North of the river (Wear) and lived near to the old Usworth Aerodrome which is now the site occupied Nissan.

Whilst living here I commenced full time employment as a Quality Control Supervisor at Hepworth & Grandage Ltd, North Hylton Road, Sunderland, which employed 1,100 people. Other businesses in the near vicinity at that time were Plessey Telecommunications (employing 600 people), Homeworthy (employing 400 people) and Haskel Energy Systems Limited (employing 200 people), as well as the shipyards along the banks of the Wear, where some of the highest skilled and highest earning people in the UK worked.

In 1984, I commenced employment with Tyne & Wear County Council as a Trading Standards Enforcement Officer and after 2 years transferred to Gateshead Council due to the abolition of the Metropolitan Borough. During the 33 years I was employed as an Enforcement Officer I visited and conducted inspections at thousands of premises including factories (e.g. Vaux Breweries), shops, offices, warehouses, docks and industrial estates.

During the past 8 years I operated and administered the Gateshead Council Registered Trader Scheme which involved vetting, inspecting, monitoring and providing advice to a vast range of large, medium and small service sector businesses based in the North East to ensure they were suitable for registration on the Scheme.

An Overview.

From my experience of visiting many established industrial estates in the Tyne & Wear area I have always found a lot of spare capacity on each occasion I have visited one of these sites and therefore I cannot see the necessity or any exceptional circumstances for the proposed IAMP development on scarce and diminishing green belt land.

The title "IAMP" appears to be purely the product of a vivid imagination in an attempt to glorify the proposed development and disguise what is in fact just another stereotypical industrial estate, usually with vacant premises, which can be found anywhere in the region or the rest of the UK.

This poses the following questions:-

1. If the proposed development is "international", where and who are the multinational corporations pledging to invest billions of pounds ?
2. What is "advanced" about the technology to be located within the proposed development ?
3. What type of "manufacturing" is to be undertaken within the proposed development, what input have prospective manufacturers had to ensure it is bespoke and have they proven it to be uniquely placed in order to qualify as being exceptional to justify destroying the green belt ?
4. How can the description "park" be applied to an industrial estate when this is a contradiction in terms ?

In the absence of answers to the above points (1. – 4.), it must be concluded this is simply another stereotypical industrial estate which can be found right across the Tyne & Wear region where vacant premises have existed since inception. Many of these industrial estates are located in or near to old shipbuilding areas and pit villages to help regenerate the local economy of those communities after the cessation of those traditional industries. Many of these established industrial estates are occupied by manufacturers and suppliers of parts to Nissan and they are vital to the economic wellbeing of those communities.

A point to note is that approximately 20 years ago Sunderland Football Club proposed to build the "Stadium of Light" on the site of the proposed IAMP development. That proposal

failed to materialise because of an objection from Nissan who successfully argued that the increase in traffic congestion would affect their “just in time” production process.

During the past 6 months I have contacted Nissan on several occasions requesting their observations on the potential dramatic increase in traffic congestion caused by the proposed IAMP, which could affect their “just in time” process. To date I have not received a response from Nissan and as far as I am aware they have, conspicuously, not made any representations to the proposal which directly impacts upon their operation.

The only inference that can be drawn from Nissan`s silence on the proposal is there is an expectation that their current suppliers will either be forced or volunteer to relocate from the other industrial estates in the Tyne & Wear region to the proposed IAMP. Although this would marginally benefit Nissan`s processes, it would have a relatively catastrophic effect on the local communities and “spin off” businesses who rely on occupancy of their established industrial estates for economic wellbeing and to prevent former pit villages from becoming benefits dependent wastelands.

On the matter for the potential increase in traffic congestion caused by the proposed IAMP, which would add to the current peak time congestion around the Nissan plant, there is a proposal by Highways England for road improvements directly around that area. This would merely move the increase in traffic congestion, at peak periods, into the nearby villages and residential areas, as those minor roads could not cope with the more efficient transfer of the volume of traffic away from around the immediate locality of Nissan and the proposed IAMP.

In fact the Highways England road building proposal is archaic, as the proposed IAMP and Nissan should be served by a modern, integrated, sustainable public transport system e.g. Tyne & Wear Metro extension.

The destruction of the green belt will make the area less attractive and less aspirational for wealthy investors and highly skilled workers to live and also to create the essential high wage, high skill jobs required to produce sustainable economic growth to improve the quality of life for all of the community. Ultimately the continued destruction of the green belt will drive wealthy investors and highly skilled workers away from urban sprawl and will result in the downward spiral to a benefits dependent wasteland witnessed today in Sunderland and South Tyneside.

The proposal to include “out of town” retail development on green belt land within the IAMP, is a complete contradiction of planning use of such a site, cannot be classed as an exceptional reason for a change of planning use and will further accelerate the aforementioned downward spiral and ultimate decline of the traditional high streets in Sunderland and South Shields.

Conclusion.

On the basis that the proposal does not meet the required “exceptional circumstances” test, as it is not a bespoke development and is not a unique location tailored to a specific use, I submit that it is inappropriate, unsustainable and detrimental to achieving the much

needed higher quality of life required make the Sunderland / South Tyneside area an attractive place to live, socialise, invest, visit and work.

Should you have any comments, queries or require further clarification in respect of the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lounton