



Old Washington Road, Sunderland, SR5 3HZ

Kathryn Stule  
Room 3.64  
Civic Centre  
Burdon Road  
Sunderland  
SR2 7DN

Dear Kathryn,

**International Advanced Manufacturing Park Area Action Plan**

I write on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the North East Land and Sea and Air Museums in respect of the independent examination of the Area Action Plan in relation to Matter 3.

The letter from the Independent Inspector on matter 3.3 asks the direct question;

“Does the plan provide adequate and soundly-based guidance on the future of the North East Land Sea and Air Museums? Is the proposed modification to paragraph 91 of the supporting text of policy S1, in respect of the museums, necessary for the plan to be sound? Are similar references in policies S5 and /or S6 necessary for the plan to be sound? “

The Board have reviewed the changes to paragraph 91 which merely state that the museum is “anticipated to remain”. On the basis of this the plan cannot be seen to give adequate or soundly-based guidance on the future of the museum.

It is further noted that there is no mention of the museum in policy S5 Objective 9 which is to promote and enhance Sunderland and South Tyneside Heritage and Culture. Equally there is no mention of NELSAM being an existing heritage asset under paragraph 121, despite the fact it has been a museum for over 40 years..

All of these factors lead to the impression that the word changes to paragraph 91 have no real substance and provide no clarity. They therefore do not support the view that the plan is sound.

The museum has an existing lease with a short number of years to run. This lease has a clear condition for renewal for a further 35 year term which the museum satisfied many years ago. The trustees have been in discussion with Sunderland

County Council for 8 years to action the lease renewal. The original draft AAP simply stated that the future of the museum is under review. This review was carried out through an Options appraisal organised by the Council.

This clearly supported the continued existence of the museum on its current site. Alongside this the museum was granted planning permission for a change of use on two areas of land that would increase the museum footprint to 5 acres. The Board have been verbally advised by officers of the council that due to IAMPS this permission will not be allowed to proceed.

The Board have engaged with officers of the council on a monthly basis since the summer of 2016 to move things forward. The Board have commenced a self-funded development plan over the next six months to re-orient parts of the collection to move the museum forward.

The museum Board are also engaged in the Arts Council England funded Future Proof Museums Programme which is due to complete at the end of 2017. This programme is open to Accredited Museums and NELSAM are the first volunteer led museum to be invited to take part in the programme. This programme will give the Board the skills to develop a long term sustainability programme with full local community engagement and a strong educational base.

As a Board we have spent 40 years developing a heritage asset for the region. Our passion is to inspire future engineers to encourage them to make a difference, and to go forward to add to the rich local living engineering traditions. IAMPS is all about engineering employment and we feel we are an important part of encouraging this through training and engineering awareness.

So in summary, It is the Boards opinion that SCC have not taken into consideration many key factors regarding the long term future of NESLAM, and further clarification and rectification of the current situation needs to be in place before the programme can be deemed to be sound. The Board respectfully request the inspector to consider this and find the plan for NESLAM to be unsound.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Charles', is written on a light blue background.

David Charles MSC, BSc (Hons)

Vice Chair NELSAM Board of Trustees