



Legal and Democratic Services
Head of Service: Mike Lovelady LL.B

Our Ref: 5/2009/0708
Please ask for: Ms L J Young
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Date: 26th October 2009

The Owner/Occupier

Dear Sir/Madam

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

APPEAL BY: Helioslough Ltd

SITE AT: Land in and around Former Aerodrome, North Orbital Road, Upper Colne Valley, Hertfordshire

I refer to my letter dated 27 August 2009 informing you that an appeal had been lodged by Helioslough Ltd against the refusal by St Albans District Council on 20 July 2009 of planning permission for the following:

“outline planning application (approval of means of access, siting and landscaping only) for the development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange comprising intermodal area, distribution buildings (Class B8 use) and other related floorspace (Class B1/B2 use) up to 331,655sqm with a maximum height of 20 metres together with associated road, rail and other infrastructure works including parking for up to 1602 cars and 617 lorries with earth mounding, tree planting and a new Park Street/Frogmore relief road. Includes additional landscape and other works on further sites to provide public access to open land and community forest. The overall proposals involve some 419 hectares (Ref. No. 5/2009/0708).”

Date and Venue for Planning Inquiry

I now write to you concerning the date and venue set for the Planning Inquiry. This date is now confirmed and the Inquiry will commence at **10.00 am on Tuesday 24 November 2009** in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 3JE. The Inquiry is currently scheduled to sit for 16 days, those days generally being Tuesday to Friday.

The Inquiry will be open to the public. Due to the anticipated public interest in this Planning Inquiry we are arranging for a live webcast* of the opening speeches of Counsel on the first day which you will be able to view from a PC with internet access using this link <http://www.stalbans.ukcouncil.net/site/> The final day of the Inquiry will also be webcast, and the details of the programming will be published on the Council's web page, as to when the final day of the Inquiry is likely to be. In addition, there will be a web link on the Rail Freight homepage of the Council's website www.stalbans.gov.uk. People with access to an appropriate computer with internet access will be able to view the proceedings of the opening of the Inquiry without needing to attend in person. .

* Please view the online help & FAQ page if you experience any problems with the webcast - <http://www.stalbans.ukcouncil.net/site/help.php>

If you are attending the Inquiry and have a disability then please contact the Programme Officer. She can reserve a seat in advance in the Council Chamber. There are 3 marked parking bays reserved for blue badge holders in the service road near the Council Offices. You can contact her via email (pins.appeals@stalbans.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01727 819304 (there is an answerphone option for out of office hours) or mobile 07920 823637 (where you can call, text, email or leave voicemail), or by writing to her direct at the Council Offices.

Inspector/Recovered Inquiry Procedure

The appeal will be determined by the Secretary of State.

The Inspector nominated to hold the Planning Inquiry, Mr Andy Mead, will prepare and forward his report to the Secretary of State for his determination.

Request to Speak

Any member of the public will have the opportunity to speak at the Inquiry at the discretion of the Inspector. Should you wish to do so you must register with the Programme Officer, Ms Lesley Young. You will need to provide her with your name and contact details (e.g telephone number, email address) so that she can inform you when the Inspector has set aside a time in the proceedings for third parties to have their opportunity to speak.

You may wish to know that STRiFE are calling witnesses to represent Napsbury Park Residents Association, Napsbury Lane Residents Association, St Stephen Parish Council, Park Street Residents Association, Chiswell Green Residents Association, Bricket Wood Residents Association, the Radlett Society and the Green Belt Association.

In order to assist in the programming process prior to the commencement of the Inquiry, would all those who wish to speak please submit their request to the Programme Officer, via email (pins.appeals@stalbans.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01727 819304 (there is an answerphone option for out of office hours) or mobile 07920 823637 (where you can call, text, email or leave voicemail), or by writing to her direct at the Council Offices. It would be helpful if you could submit your request as soon as possible. All requests will be responded to by your preferred method of communication. The Programme Officer can be contacted during normal office hours of 8.45 am – 5.15 pm Monday to Friday. Any queries out of office hours can be left via email, voicemail, text or answerphone, which will be monitored and responded to the next day.

Inquiry Programme

The Inquiry is currently scheduled to sit on Tuesday to Friday each week, normally commencing at 10.00 am on each day. At present 16 sitting days have been reserved for the Inquiry.

The Inspector will **not** be holding the Inquiry on Thursday 10 or Friday 11 December 2009.

The Inquiry programme is at the discretion of the Inspector and is subject to change. Full details may be found on the Council's website at www.stalbans.gov.uk and then clicking on the Rail Freight link.

The Inspector will set time aside during the Inquiry for member(s) of the public to speak. The sessions for public speakers will be announced after the commencement of the Inquiry and the date will be placed on the Council's website. If you have registered your wish to speak at the Inquiry then the Programme Officer will contact you direct.

Parking

For those travelling by car to the Council Offices you should note that the Council car park in Bricket Road is closed to members of the public on week days. However, parking is available in nearby City centre car parks located in Drovers Way (behind Bhs and Marks and Spencer), Victoria Street (The Maltings) and London Road.

In my letter dated 27 August 2009 I attached a copy of the Council's Reasons for Refusal, numbered 1 – 14. Following a further meeting of the Council's Referrals Committee on 14 October 2009, the Council has clarified its Reasons for Refusal.

I attach for your information an extract of Minutes of Meeting No. 3 of the Planning Referrals Committee held on 14 October 2009 setting out the Council's current position.

Witness Evidence

A set of all Proofs of Evidence (excluding Highways Agency evidence), summaries of Proofs and Statements of Common Ground will be available for inspection at the District Council Offices from Monday 2 November 2009.

Any Highways Agency evidence will be available for inspection at the District Council Offices from Tuesday 10 November 2009.

Anyone wishing to view these documents, during normal office hours, should make arrangements with the Programme Officer to do so. It should be noted that these documents are for inspection only and will not be available to remove from the Council offices.

Summary Proofs of Evidence

All witnesses are expected to provide a summary Proof of Evidence where their main Proof exceeds 3000 words. It is intended that the summaries will be available for viewing on the Council's website at www.stalbans.gov.uk and by clicking on the Rail Freight link as from 2 November 2009.

Inquiry Website

As detailed earlier in this letter, the Council will be establishing a dedicated web page for this Inquiry which you will be able to access at www.stalbans.gov.uk and clicking on the Rail Freight link.

The web page will be updated on a daily basis (or as and when new information is received) to provide constant updates/information as to the progress of the Inquiry, the Inquiry Programme and documents submitted.

If you would like a copy of the decision on the appeal please request this by writing or emailing the Planning Inspectorate at The Planning Inspectorate, Room 4/04 Kite, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN (quoting reference APP/B1930//09/2109433/NWF) or to sarah.banwell@pins.gsi.gov.uk.

Should you have any queries regarding this letter or the programming of the Inquiry then please contact the Programme Officer, Ms Young, direct on 01727 819304, pins.appeals@stalbands.gov.uk, text/call/voicemail to mobile 07920 823637 or by writing to her direct at the Council Offices.

Yours faithfully

M Lovelady LL.B. (Solicitor)
Head of Legal and Democratic Services