

CONSULTATION FROM THURROCK BOROUGH COUNCIL ON AN APPLICATION BY P & O AND SHELL UK LTD TO DEVELOP A MAJOR ROAD AND RAIL LOGISTICS AND COMMERCIAL CENTRE ON THE FORMER SHELL HAVEN OIL REFINERY, CORRINGHAM, THURROCK.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Implications of on time Planning Applications

- 1.1.1 This report seeks Members views on the implications of outline planning applications to develop a major road and rail logistics centre on the former Shell Haven oil refinery at Corringham.
- 1.1.2 The total site application area for the proposed development is 582 hectares (1438 acres) with the industrial/business park elements covering 319 hectares (789 acres). The plans include substantial road improvements and a new freight rail link from the business parks to the Southend to London Line.
- 1.1.3 Thurrock Council has received two identical applications accompanied by Environmental statements. This means that the period to make a determination is extended from eight to sixteen weeks. The implications from the submission of duplicate applications is that the applicants may have in mind appealing after the sixteen week period expires, for non-determination. It is understood that the expiry date is the 28th May 2002.

2 IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 Clearly this is a major development proposal that will have significant implications for a wide area of South Essex.
- 2.2 From a regeneration perspective in broad terms and leaving aside other issues for the moment, there is no doubt that the proposal has the potential to generate many thousands of jobs.
- 2.3 The supporting information accompanying the application suggests that five years into construction, around 6,035 jobs would exist and after 10 years this would rise to 11,257. When fully operational, the logistics and commercial centre would provide about 14,535 direct jobs.

- 2.4 In addition, it is estimated that the fully operational development could generate a further 5,986 off-site full time equivalent jobs. Of these, about half would be generated within a 30 minute drive time of the site.
- 2.5 Whilst on the face of it, Rochford is a long way from the application site, it is considered that the impact of the development on South Essex will be considerable and it is essential that the traffic/transport implications in particular, are fully examined before a formal decision is reached.
- 2.6 There are two key areas of concern. First, the movement of heavy vehicles to and from the site. It is noted that the scheme includes a proposal for a new freight rail link but it is not clear whether this would realistically be the main conduit for freight given the fact that it must inevitably link to the congested Southend to London Line. The concern must be that large numbers of vehicles will add to the already congested conditions on the roads in South Essex.
- 2.7 Second, the number of workers travelling to and from the site must also worsen conditions on the roads. It is noticeable that the proposed new rail link is intended for freight only and it is not clear why this should be the case since a passenger rail link could help to reduce congestion on the roads.
- 2.8 Notwithstanding the 16-week expiry date, it is understood that Thurrock Council is seeking to appoint consultants to examine the traffic and transport implications in some detail. Given the concerns over this aspect of the scheme, it is considered that Rochford should raise these matters with Thurrock Council as a response to the consultation.
- 2.9 This is a scheme that could have major benefits for South Essex, but it is essential that the traffic/transport implications are fully understood.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That, subject to additional comments from Members, Thurrock Council be informed of the Council's concerns about the traffic and transport implications of the London Gateway Logistics and Commercial Centre (HPS).

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Background Papers:

London Gateway Logistics and Commercial Centre – Outline Planning
Application 2002

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