

Annette Feeney, Programme Officer
Thanet Draft Local Plan Examination
4 March 2019
[By email]



FAO Mr Birkinshaw & Mrs Lucas

Dear Mr Birkinshaw & Mrs Lucas

We have now had the opportunity to review the letter from RPS and to seek advice from the Council's Local Plan Counsel.

It is the Council's view that there is no reason to delay the Local Plan Examination, and it would not be in the public interest to do so.

The Council notes the comments made by RPS regarding the timing of the two processes. However, the two processes are completely independent and the draft Local Plan makes provision for the DCO process and its possible outcomes. The Local Plan Examination therefore does not prejudice that process in any way. The draft Local Plan does not, as suggested by RPS (p2), include a proposal for a new settlement at Manston Airport.

The Council also notes the comments by RPS about resourcing, but the Council has committed resources to both processes on the basis that they are independent. Neither does the Council consider that the Local Elections are a reason for delaying the Examination.

As the Inspectors will be aware, the Secretary of State in his recent intervention letter (dated 28th January 2019) made it clear that there should not be further delay in local Plan preparation. On this basis, the priority must be to progress the draft Local Plan.

There is no need, or justification, to delay the process further in deference to a DCO process that has no certain outcome and which would not in any event be prejudiced by the Local Plan as currently drafted. In addition, there are many other social, environmental and economic imperatives that need to be addressed in the interests of the proper planning of the area generally.

The Council therefore considers that there should not be an adjournment of the Local Plan Examination.

Yours sincerely

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