

Public Question for Cabinet – 25 March 2025

Question from Mr Daljit Bassi

About Us:

My name is Daljit Bassi, and as the Director, I represent PRP Capital, an Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing (AEM) defence engineering company based in London, which was established in 2022.

Our Objectives:

We aim to acquire a site at The Innovation Park. To contribute to the Dorset economy, I propose to build a facility measuring between 45,000 and 65,000 square feet, constructed by a local firm in the South East of England. This development will generate revenue for the Council and create between 50 to 65 high-paying technical jobs in the early months. It will also have a significant positive impact on the local economy, driving additional contracting opportunities and supporting hundreds of local jobs related to the production of goods at our facility.

Location & Rationale:

The Dorset Innovation Park is a strategically vital location within the Defence sector, situated near other like-minded businesses in the same field. It benefits from a Local Development Order, allowing for expedited planning approvals, and is conveniently located near two universities and key military centers of excellence.

Current Status:

We have been engaged in negotiations for the past ten months, but progress has been limited. We are also discussing two additional sites separate from this one, one in Wales and the other in Scotland, each will serve distinct functions. However, we are now contemplating alternative locations for fulfilling the intended purpose of this site in Dorset.

What We Need:

In light of the UK Government's current and anticipated priorities in defence, we require an accelerated response regarding the potential sale of this site, which will enable me to invest in Dorset effectively. We have addressed inquiries regarding funding, capital expenditure, potential business prospects, sources of our funding, and our experience. I can confirm that we have satisfactorily answered all these questions. We have the capability to meet the objectives of the park's establishment: enhancing employment, boosting manufacturing, generating revenue for the council, and being sector-focused. Additionally, we will provide apprenticeships to individuals from Weymouth and Portland, creating essential job opportunities for engineering

graduates from Weymouth College, thus fostering local growth and encouraging the younger generation to stay in or move to Dorset.

Financial Commitment:

We are prepared to invest £30 million in capital expenditure for this site alone. Our plans will complement the Defence BattleLab and existing businesses, featuring a modern and innovative building design with an appealing façade on the north side of the main access road, enhancing the park's overall attractiveness.

Final Inquiry:

Are you interested in selling us the site?

**Response from Cabinet Member for Property & Asset and Economic Growth
(prepared post meeting)**

We will write to Mr Bassi within the next few days to respond to his question in Cabinet and other recent correspondence. It would not have been appropriate to discuss Mr Bassi's request in the Cabinet meeting, because of the commercial nature of his questions and because the report on the Cabinet agenda was about the overall management of the Innovation Park as a whole not specific land sales.