



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Dyddiad/ Date 27th April 2023
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Ebost/ Email Chief.executive@npt.gov.uk
Cyswllt/ Contact
Eich cyf / Your ref
Ein cyf/ Our ref ChEx/MPCR270423

Christina Rees MP
Member of Parliament for Neath

Dear Christina

I am responding to your email to the Council Leader dated 20th April 2023.

Mr Richards is known to this authority and in the past 3 years has forwarded significant correspondence to officers and elected members. Some of this correspondence has been potentially libellous and I would draw your attention to a website www.walk-around-wales.com which provides an overview of the nature of correspondence and allegations which have been directed at officers and elected members. This has necessitated on some occasions referrals to South Wales Police.

The Council refutes all such allegations that have been made regarding alleged impacts of contaminated land in Glynneath, and this point has been clear, with evidence, to Mr Richards continuously. Mr Richard's comments concerning the Council's Head of Planning and Public Protection and elected members are both unwarranted and lacking any foundation. Mr Richards' concerns have been dealt with via the Council's Complaints Process and in 2021 reached the stage that the Council's Unreasonable and Persistent Complaints Policy was invoked and Mr Richards made aware that Council representatives would no longer correspond with him. Mr Richards has, I understand, also been advised of various avenues where he can complain further such as the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales, Audit Wales or even remedies available in the High Court but to date has not chosen to pursue these options or where he has there has been found no breaches of any obligations.

Turning specifically to the issue of land contamination at the site and whether the Council has historically contravened the Environmental Protection Act 1990, officers have advised me that this legislation no longer applies when a site is going through the planning process; by definition therefore the Council has not at any point contravened its duties under this legislation, as it is not relevant once the planning process has commenced. What is relevant however, is that through the planning process, the Council is required to address land contamination to ensure sites are safe and suitable for use after development has been completed. Officers have already quite rightly drawn Mr Richard's attention to the fact that these matters are routinely addressed throughout the process in consultation with the Council's specialist officers on land contamination matters, as well as in responses from

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www.npt.gov.uk

Natural Resources Wales (NRW). As part of ongoing consideration of planning applications, officers give full regard to all available information.

In conclusion, while it is appreciated Mr Richards is concerned about the development of the site in question, and wishes to ensure that matters such as contamination and wider impacts on amenity are appropriately considered, the Council is wholly satisfied that all matters raised have been considered.

I trust that the above will be of assistance for you. Given that we consider the complainant to be making unreasonable and persistent demands on the Council, you will understand that we will not be making available any further information to your office on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Jones', written in a cursive style.

Karen Jones
Chief Executive