Twitter Thread by JefimVogel



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LEEDS LEADS CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

8 hours and 1000 flawed arguments and biased procedures later, Leeds City Plans Panel voted 9-5 for airport expansion and the false promises of economic growth. For “what Leeds needs is a premier-league football club and a premier-league airport”

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1/ There was a lot of "I do care about climate change, BUT" – followed by a lot of blah blah. Blah blah economic growth. Blah blah connectivity. Blah blah competitiveness. Blah blah Manchester. Blah blah Westminster. Blah blah offsetting. Blah blah electric planes. Blah blah blah

2/ Also a lot of "I do have sympathy for residents suffering from planes flying over their roofs at night, BUT" - followed by more blah blah.
One councillor kindly offered his advice: “the way to less noise is more planes”. Right, Sherlock. Want to try that in your backyard?■■■■

3/ The true sympathies were revealed at the end. The Panel's priority was not the well-being of those living under the flight path, nor the lives and livelihoods of threatened by climate breakdown. Their priority was a bigger, noisier airport, with a terminal in bronze-champagne.

4/ First declaring your sympathy for people’s suffering and then supporting a development that directly aggravates their suffering, is a proper kick in the face for those suffering the consequences. Like first declaring a climate emergency and then aggravating climate breakdown.

5/ When you see queues at food banks and homeless people at every corner. When you walk through neighbourhoods with >50% child poverty. When you cycle amidst 1000 cars on that “cycle path” at the confluence of two 4-lane highways. Dont you think "what Leeds needs is more planes"?

6/ Never mind that 2/3 of all comments refuted the application. Never mind that locals, community groups, NGOs, students, climate scientists, economists, public health experts and legal experts voiced their objections. No, it's the Panel members that knows what’s best for people.

7/ Most councillors did not listen to the people of Leeds, but to the voices of business. Like the chamber of commerce. Like Northern Powerhouse. Like AMP Capital. AMP Capital? Yes, that Australian investment management company that really, really cares about the people of Leeds.

8/ This Australian company just so happens to own this airport. And they only want to make it bigger, noisier and more polluting because they genuinely deeply care about the people of Leeds, their livelihoods and well-being. Please don't think this is anything to do with profits.

9/ Ok... There’s a lot to be done here. The dirty play must be stopped, and the dirty players must be held to account. But of course, it’s dirty play in a dirty game. So it’s also about challenging and changing the rules of the game.

10/ It’s about challenging subjugations to “the economy”, false promises of economic growth, myths of the technological saviour. It’s about policy, starting with a national moratorium on airport expansion, and equitable reductions in flying. It’s about building real alternatives.

11/ It’s about removing the dependence on “batshit jobs”, and providing decent, green, socially useful jobs for everyone. It’s about a serious and socially just approach to tackle the climate and ecological emergency. And so much more.

12/ While some names certainly entered the book of shame and the history books of climate breakdown on Thursday, and while some will have to answer difficult questions, I want to applaud those who tried to stop this madness, those who struggled for climate and social justice.

13/ It was inspiring and encouraging to present my objection amidst 23 brilliant, committed, caring locals, students, campaigners, legal experts, scientists and economists. Their speeches were passionate and well-informed. Those were heartwarming moments on a disheartening day.

14/ I applaud the 5 Cllrs who refused the expansion: @CllrWalshaw for holding the beacon of the climate emergency; @al_garthwaite & Cllr David Blackburn for powerful interventions; @petercarlill for a stellar summary statement; and @OYLibDems for coming down on the right side.

END/ Finally, a huge shout out to @GfAoLBA & all the others who have done incredible work in mobilising people, empowering communities & bringing different groups together around this struggle. You know who you are. It's not over yet.

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