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Issue Specific hearing 2 on Need and Operations

Written Submission of Oral Submission on 21 March 2019

I would like to take this opportunity to firstly quickly point out that this race to the bottom is simply not true according to Kent Economic Indicators 2018¹.

Thanet ranks most strongly in employment rate, and Thanet **ranks above the national median**. Over the last five years (ie since the airport closed) Thanet's ranking has improved in the following indicators: employment rate, 3-year business survival rates and stock of businesses ². The model-based unemployment rate **has dropped from** 10.1% (just after the airport closed) to 4.4% (2018)³.

Turning to Need –

RSP have repeatedly stated that its big difference is state-of-the-art facilities for freight addressing many of the alleged current difficulties experienced by freighter operators. I still don't know what this statement actually means.

To industry players state-of –the-art means large scale robotics, and automation. Amazon Fulfillment centres⁴ – for example at Tilbury some hours away – have Robotic Strategic Platforms which accommodate Amazon Robotics automated storage and retrieval systems – and I am pretty sure they are not talking about people here.

¹ *Kent Economic Indicators 2018*, August 2018, Strategic Business Development & Intelligence, Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

² *Ibid* Page 25-26 Since 2015, just after the airport closed, to 2018 - Median Gross Weekly Workplace Earnings have risen, Employment Rate has rise, Stock of businesses has risen, 3-year Business Survival Rate has risen, Percentage of NVQ4+ has risen.

³ *Ibid* Page 25-26

⁴ Bloomberg November 6 2018 *Inside Amazon's Robotic Fufillment Centre*

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-11-06/inside-amazon-s-robotic-fulfillment-center>

However, RSP has assured us that it won't use mechanization⁵.

However, today we heard from [REDACTED] of the Applicant - that the Applicant could be looking at the market Amazon,/Alibaba/Amazon Fulfilment centre as their sole market.

What is the Truth?

⁵ Applicant response to S.E.1.3 at **REP3-200**