

Executive Summary

ETM Contractors Ltd and Manheim Auctions Limited are both long standing businesses on the Ashton Vale Industrial Estate/Cala Trading Estate. Though they do not object to the principal of the Development Consent Order they have continued to advance criticism of the modelling provided for the junction of the A3029 and Ashton Vale Road.

The level crossing at this entry point to The Estate passes adjacent to the signal controlled junction; between it and the business park. Currently, this line carries only freight traffic and closes typically no more than once a day. Whenever the level crossing is closed it severs The Estate from the adjacent highway infrastructure. Thus, preventing traffic from accessing or egressing The Estate, which becomes wholly landlocked for the duration of the closure (and subsequent clearance time) for queuing traffic. Any suggestion of increasing the frequency of such closures has potential for generating very significant impact on the ability of businesses within The Estate to continue to trade in a commercially viable manner.

It is submitted that the access serves a *Principal Industrial and Warehousing Area* (as designated by Bristol City Council), which is an important hub of industry, commerce and employment. In planning policy terms the application could not be supported because of the effect on the business within the Ashton Vale Industrial Estate/Cala Trading Estate and their ability to operate. The '*agent of change*' as set out in paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 is specific in stating that the proposed development (MetroWest) must demonstrate it can be successfully integrated with existing businesses and "*existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established*".

The submission advances that not only is the current modelling insufficient to demonstrate the current operation of The Estate will be unaffected by this proposal, it also sets out that future restrictions may be placed on existing businesses wishing to expand within The Estate because of the implications of the level crossing closures proposed by MetroWest (and its impact on the highway providing access to and from the Estate units). As a final point it is quite conceivable that on receiving consent MetroWest may seek to increase the number of train movements per hour, placing further pressure on the existing businesses.

As such the applicant should be required to demonstrate that not only will the proposed operation of MetroWest not have an impact on the businesses within The Estate's current operating model, the applicant should also clearly demonstrate that businesses within The Estate that wish to expand will be able to do so without the risk of any further restrictions being placed upon them.