

## Re Planning Application TR050005

Dear Mr Singleton

I am writing with respect to the above planning application to build a Rail Freight hub at Four Ashes, Gailey, near Wolverhampton.

I object to this application on a number of grounds and made my objections clear in an email at an earlier stage of the planning process. At this time, I would like to address three particular issues that are of greatest concern to me:

1. Increased traffic and its impact on traffic flow in the area
2. Traffic pollution and its effects on health, particularly children's' health
3. The impact of the proposed development on wildlife and loss of Green Belt

### Increased traffic

It is estimated that an additional 18,000 + vehicles will be travelling into and out of the site each day. Most of these vehicles, depending on the direction they are coming from, will access the site from the M6 onto the A5, from the M54 onto the A449 or from the M54 onto the A460 and thence onto the A5. These 18,000 vehicles will be in addition to already heavy traffic flow in this part of South Staffordshire. We have heavy traffic on the M54 and A5 heading for Telford, Shrewsbury and on into North Wales. The section of the M6 from Junction 8, the M5 junction, to the A500 at Stoke on Trent is one of the busiest sections of motorway in Europe. Incidents on the M6 causing traffic to leave at junctions 10A and 11 are not infrequent. Local road users are accustomed to having to divert onto the back lanes to avoid snarl-ups on the A449, A5 and A460. Another Brewood resident, Nick Wiley, has sent you a screen shot of one day on which traffic diverted off the M6 caused a traffic jam along the A5 to Gailey island and thence along the A449 to Junction 12 at Stafford South. This is not an unusual occurrence.

The 18,000 vehicles mentioned do not include those vehicles used by those coming to the site to work. Unemployment in South Staffordshire is - and historically has been for many years - very low, well below the national average. Workers at the site will therefore not be local but will drive to the site from Wolverhampton, Cannock, Birmingham, Walsall and, further north, from Stafford and Stoke on Trent. To get to the site they will use the M6, the A5, the A449 and the A460 – the very roads which are already very busy and will also take the 18,000 vehicles a day bringing goods to and from the rail freight hub. With an estimated 10, 000 workers needed once the site is up and running, this is a potential 10,000 more vehicles each day travelling to and from the site at peak times.

The above leads on to my second concern.....

### Air pollution

I was a primary school teacher in Wolverhampton schools from 1987 until my retirement in 2013. During that time concerns were increasingly raised locally, nationally and internationally about the impact of traffic-created air pollution on the brain development of young children as well as on the overall health of children and adults, especially the elderly. Many of these health problems are of a pernicious and long-term nature, for example increased rates of asthma and other respiratory conditions. When I began teaching I didn't see a single child with an inhaler for at least 5 years. By the end of my career my desk drawer would contain 4,5,or6 inhalers for different individuals in my class. I am sure you will be aware of all these concerns, but for your information I attach several

recent internet reports, online news and newspaper articles that refer to the impact of air pollution on children (and adults) in some depth:

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/clean-air/what-are-health-effects-air-pollution-children>

<https://www.cleanairday.org.uk/air-pollution-and-children>

<https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/signs-of-breathing-problems-in-children/air-pollution>



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-47709074>

This latter article which is about increased levels of paranoia amongst teenagers in areas of high air pollution is particularly worrying given the current concerns about mental health issues in children and young adults.

There are numerous schools and nurseries within close proximity of the proposed development. Distances given for this first group are from the Four Ashes public house on the corner of Station Drive and the A449:

Lilliput Day Nursery, School lane, Coven 0.8 miles (close to the A449)

St Paul's C of E First School, Coven 0.9 miles (close to the A449)

St Mary and St Chad C of E First School, Brewood 2.4 miles

St Dominic's Grammar School, Brewood 2.4 miles

Brewood C of E Middle School, Brewood 2.4 miles

St Mary's RC Primary School, Brewood 2.5 miles

All the above Brewood schools lie in the angle created by the A449 and the A5 Watling Street

Stretton Lodge Day Nursery and Pre School 3.5 miles (close to the A5, Watling Street)

Havergal C of E Primary School, Shareshill 3.8 miles (close to the A460)

There are also the following Penkrudge schools. Distances given are from the Gailey roundabout, the junction of the A449 and the A5, Watling Street

Turtles Childrens Nursery 2.2 miles

St Michael's First School 2.5 miles

Marshmallows day care 2.6 miles

Marshbrook First School 2.6 miles

Princefield First School 3.0 miles

Wolgarston High School 3.1 miles

Penkrudge Middle School 3.1 miles

All the Penkrudge establishments are very close to the A449 as it passes through Penkrudge. In the case of the two day nurseries, they are located on the A449 itself.

Children who attend most of these schools will not only go to nursery or school in the area but will also live close by, so their proximity to areas of high traffic pollution will be 24/7. (St Dominic's Grammar in Brewood is the exception to this as it is an independent day school and its pupils are drawn from a wide geographical area.)

It was mentioned at the public meeting at the Molineux that the percentage of Penkrudge children who have asthma is high and I hope that someone has been able to get you the statistics on this that you asked for at the meeting.

## Wildlife and the Green Belt

I refer you to the link below which leads to an article on the UKs failure to meet targets relating to wildlife. I think the article speaks for itself. Loss of habitats is the main cause of reduced numbers of different species worldwide. This proposed development is in an area of, mainly, farmland where trees, hedges and fallow land provide habitats for a large variety of animals, birds and insects. These may not be on any list of endangered species but the loss of any wildlife is to be avoided and the loss of greenery will also contribute to the decline in air quality.

[https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/22/ukmiss-almost-all-2020-nature-targets-official-report-admits?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/22/ukmiss-almost-all-2020-nature-targets-official-report-admits?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

This and previous governments pledged not to encroach upon Green Belt areas but to look for Brownfield sites wherever possible. I am certain that a suitable Brownfield site could be found in an area of high unemployment where the possibility of 10,000 jobs would be welcomed. Unfortunately, as we know, Brownfield sites bring with them additional costs in sanitising the land to prepare it for reuse and this can be the reason why such sites are often rejected by potential developers because preparing the land before building will eat into the profits the development can accrue.

I have read on the Planning interface your questions to the Applicants regarding this development and I am heartened to see that you have been very searching in your requests for proof from them that this development should go ahead on this site. Your even-handedness at the Molineux meeting was also noted and appreciated by those attending.

I hope you will take into account the points that I and other concerned individuals have raised in your deliberations. This is not a case of Nimbyism, but a serious concern about the location of a development of this size in this location.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Elizabeth (Liz) Singleton