

From: [REDACTED]
To: [West Midlands Interchange](#)
Subject: Fwd: TR050005 West Midlands Interchange - Written submission.
Date: 05 April 2019 20:56:33

5th April 2019

Dear Mr Singleton,

In addition to my oral submission below, I also submit my written submission in opposition to the proposed West Midlands Interchange.

In addition to my previously raised issues, which all remain valid and to be treated equally to my new points in this letter (previous points are the suitability of the current road network and assessments carried out regarding traffic, sustainability of public transport in the area, actual rail use for the adjoining warehousing and also future plans for other similar projects in the vicinity), I request you to also acknowledge my below comments.

Alternative Site Study

I believe the level of study into alternative sites carried out may have been influenced by the status of one of the directors of Four Ashes Ltd. The principal landowner where this proposal will be constructed is one of the stakeholders of this project and has a vested interest and opportunity for personal gain should the project go ahead. Based on this, I question the thoroughness of the alternative site survey - could this have been carried out in such a way to appease the process by considering sites which were never in line to be proposed or considered, given the ownership of the preferred site? I firmly believe there are suitable sites in alternative locations which have not been given due attention for this reason.

Warehouse size.

The proposal has been promoted as a setup for regional distribution centres. However, the proposed warehousing is more along the scale of a national distribution centre, which is not how the WMI has been explained. Is there any reason as to why the warehouses need to be this size if the intended use is at RDC level?

Vicarage Road Access

Station Drive is a road which currently is currently struggling with the current level of use. Throughout the process I have requested that access to the site from Vicarage Road be removed, so as not to negatively impact the existing industrial estate as well as residents on Station Drive. The current traffic proposals suggest an increase in overall traffic on Station Drive, and I feel that this additional access point via a local road is totally unnecessary.

Destruction of Greenbelt Land.

As I am sure you are aware, Greenbelt Land is in decline as urban sprawl spreads. The proposal to destroy hundreds of acres of Greenbelt, when there many brownfield sites which could be considered - albeit perhaps requiring a little more work, should not be permitted until all brownfield site options have been exhausted.

Lack of detail for residents / lack of knowledge of experts.

Throughout the project we have requested information from the developers as to how myself and my family, living on the border of this project, will be affected. We have raised these issues in terms of sound pollution, light pollution, dust and other debris levels during construction and air pollution levels to name some examples, as well as the perceived short and long term impacts on our lives. The answers received have been severely lacking in detail. On more than one occasion the experts behind the proposals have been unable to describe the impact. For example, a moderate increase in noise is anticipated on my property, however when I questioned what that noise would actually be i.e. continuous or stop-start, nobody could provide an answer, and the environmental report still cannot answer. Another similar scenario with an equally lacking answer was raised regarding the lights on the cranes, which will be well above the banking being provided. The lack of knowledge of the experts behind the proposals is of great concern to me, and I believe should be to the secretary of state.

Unemployment levels and continued expansion of I54

South Staffs has extremely low levels of unemployment. This means that many workers for newly created jobs come from outside the local area. This has been seen, and will be seen further, at JLR on I54, a complex which in itself is expanding further into the greenbelt near coven. Given the expansion of this site, along with WMI, I would be interested as to whether the proposed projects have been assessed independently of each other or whether the impact of one has been acknowledged on the other and the possible effects.

I thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kind Regards

Gareth Minton
[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gareth Minton** [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 13 Mar 2019, 18:12
Subject: TR050005 West Midlands Interchange - Written record of oral submission.
To: <WMInterchange@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

Gareth Minton
[REDACTED]

13 March 2019

Dear Mr Singleton,

Following on from my attendance at the preliminary open meeting on the evening of the 27th February, please find below a written record of the key points I made during the meeting. A further written submission covering my other points shall be made in due course.

The points raised in the meeting centred on the following points:

The current road network surrounding the proposed site is inadequate for the volume of traffic expected to be brought to the area by the scheme. Living on Station Drive, it is apparent when any closures or delays are happening on the three major trunk roads surrounding the site, namely the A5, A449 and M6, as Station Drive bears the brunt of the rat-running. At present this is worse around regular peak times. However, the proposal and nature of 24 hour shift work will add a further 3-6 peak periods throughout the day. The current road network barely copes and no significant improvement to infrastructure has been suggested.

I also have significant misgivings regarding the quality of the traffic survey carried out by FAL. On surrounding roads during the survey, tyre strips were laid on surrounding roads such as Vicarage Road, the A5, Lawn Lane in Coven and more besides. I however was extremely concerned to see no sign of survey equipment on Station Drive, which on multiple occasions prior to the survey taking place, I had advised Mr Frost that this road is often the busiest compared to its size in the area. On multiple occasions Mr Frost also experienced the congestion I mentioned. Upon further enquiries I learnt that Station Drive had been allocated a camera to monitor the junction with the A449 for one day only, as opposed to the week plus survey in place with the tyre strips. I therefore see this traffic survey as extremely flawed, and when I questioned as to why it was carried out in this way, I was refused an explanation by Mr Frost on multiple occasions. I would be grateful if, in your role as inspector, you would be able to provide further explanation to the validity of this assessment.

A further point I raised was concerning the provision and use of sustainable transport to get to and from the site. Being a resident of Station Drive for over 25 years of my life, it is clear that the public transport links in the area are poor, but those which do exist are woefully underutilized. This is true for the current Four Ashes industrial estate, and also for the new I54 development. Given the extremely low levels of unemployment in the local area, as well as the continued expansion of the I54, this means that workers will be more likely to drive in from afar, rendering the principal motive of the site as moot.

I also make comment regarding the suggestion made by the representative of FAL who indicated that the overall plan is to have more SFRI's and therefore reduce the catchment area of each one. Based on these comments, and existing concerns behind the true motive of the incorporation of a rail freight terminal, I am very concerned that, once established, the onus will be on warehousing rather than the rail aspect, which is the reason the application is before PINS.

At all stages the applicant has been unable to offer any guarantees that occupants must use the terminal, indeed with most warehouses 1/4 a mile away, and some warehouses sited 1/2 a mile away from the terminal itself with the only access being via public highways, the use of rail seems to be far from guaranteed. It is widely understood that without the rail aspect, this proposal would have been reviewed at a local level only, subject to the strategy of SSDC, which it would contravene on many counts.

I thank you for your attention and look forward to the next stage of this process.

Kind Regards

Gareth Minton