

## **West Midlands Interchange at Gailey, South Staffordshire**

### **Written Representation prior to Examination Timetable Deadline of 5th April 2019**

1. This submission follows up my representation dated 31st October 2018. Destruction of Green Belt which is better used for growing food than importing, and damage to the Environment through increased pollution with consequent health issues, are major factors which have caused well over 1000 individuals and respected local organisations to object in strong terms to what they see as an ill-judged proposal. I strongly agree with this and I now wish to elaborate on movement of freight by rail, and of freight, people and servicing by road.

2. Rail connection would be into the Midlands loop of the West coast main line, not the main line itself. This is one of the most congested sections of the national rail network and one of the least suitable for access to East coast ports. Because of the volume of passenger trains on this route, rail freight movements would have to be overnight. To the South in particular, trains would have to pass through built up areas in and around Birmingham. Noise disturbance for many residents must be added to the list of compelling reasons for abandoning this proposal. It is a factor which has received scant consideration by Four Ashes Limited.

3. The impact of increase in road traffic has been discussed, but has been seriously underestimated. Additional HGV freight on its own would add significantly to congestion problems on the three major roads which would either give direct access to the site, or act as feeders. These roads are already heavily trafficked causing regular delays and aggravation to drivers. To this congestion would be added the effect of movement by road of people who would work at the site and vehicles which would provide services to the site. Within the developers' documentation there is comment about the availability of public transport to the site both by rail and bus. Stafford, Penkridge, Cannock and Wolverhampton are all mentioned. Anyone with local knowledge can vouch for the absurdity of such statements. Has any thought been given to building a passenger station at the site and if so, have discussions been held with the relevant train operators? I doubt it. The only realistic way of getting people to and from the site without using their own cars would be by private bus hire. This would be difficult to arrange and unpopular. It would not be possible for vehicles needed to service the site. The additional main road congestion would cause drivers to seek alternative routes through nearby villages. Brewood is an example and one where the impact would be particularly disastrous.

4. Much time, effort and cost has been put into a commercial development which is in about the worst possible location in the UK, and which is unacceptable in many ways. This is no reason to continue with the project. A brownfield site with good transport connections should now be investigated. An even better solution to the desirable objective of moving freight transport from road to rail would be to develop ports such as Grimsby or Hull

5. There is nothing within this submission that I would wish to remain confidential. I am a registered 'Interested Party', Ref: WMIDS-112 and I am a member of the public with membership of several village organisations.

Mrs Eleanor Carless, [REDACTED]

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