

Project Ref TR050005 Interested Party 20014193

Response to topics for Deadline 7

The Examining Authority raises points regarding rail terminal completion and what truly falls within the scope of branches of legislation. There remains strong local concern and suspicion that the rail terminal will never be completed and the ultimate objective is an industrial estate.

The application under this legislation is for the development of a SRFT of which the rail terminal is the fundamental component and will provide the bona fide evidence of any market demand for further development. If it becomes secondary or conditional on other issues such as dependancy on factors not covered by this legislation it cannot hold that fundamental status. It must stand on its own feet.

In this case the rail terminal is on the west side of the railway and includes named warehouse buildings e.g. Eidelweiss. There seems to be no reason why any work relating to road transport warehousing and manufacturing with no requirement to be associated with the terminal should begin on the east side until the rail terminal is operating to a level which shows a quantifiable demand for expansion.

A major point of concern is the building and operation of road warehouses and non associated manufacturing to generate funding to complete the rail terminal. This produces a risk factor in the shape of project dependency because if the required revenue is not generated then the rail terminal cannot be completed. Among many risks are those of an abandoned engineering eyesore and associated environmental issues.

Logic says that if capital expenditure required to build road warehousing is available it should be first applied to the kernel component of this application made under this legislation viz. the rail terminal which then should provide the income pot for any further warehousing. This would be a matter for the LPA to decide on such development and is open to the normal appeal procedure via the Planning Inspectorate at the right time with contemporary submissions.

Secondly in a previous response the applicant states that Network Rail will allow two passes per day along the loop line. Although the jargon word "passes" is not full understood it seems far short of the vaunted ten trains per day on which income to support so many further statements will depend. This is a major constraint which must be acknowledged from the outset. As a known high risk initial critical success factor it cannot be an acceptable future submission as beyond the applicant's control if the rail terminal in its own right fails to live up to required income and return on investment expectation. This is particularly so in the light of the present local application by Pentalver to expand their established road container depot into a multi modal transfer depot with rail sidings on brownfield land at Cannock Eastern Orbital.

The questions of belief or reasonable belief regarding factors outside of the applicant's control are far too subjective and need to be replaced by wording that requires quantifiable evidence of any discovered inability to complete the rail terminal within a defined period.