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Subject: Ex Q3 3.1.1
Date: 05 August 2019 22:25:35

Ref 20015016

TR050005

Ref. Application by Four Ashes Limited for West Midlands Freight Interchange.

The Examining Authority's Third written questions and requests for information (ExQ3)

Re. Ex Q3 3.1.1

As the SRFIs "need to be located alongside major rail routes, close to major **trunk roads**". As the Department of Transport has now announced, through the Highways Authority, the M54 to M6/M6 Toll Link Road thus negating the need for the sections of the A449 and A5 between M54 J2 and M6 J12 to remain Trunk Roads. The rail route is also a branch of the MAIN West Coast line. Therefore, the two criteria for a SRFI have been negated and Planning permission does not have to be given by the Secretary of State.

As the warehouses are being built before the rail link, it no longer becomes a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and the plans do not need the approval of The Secretary of State. It should revert to a plan for Warehousing to be put to The Local Planners, i.e. South Staffs District Council.

It is very doubtful that the Rail Terminal will be built if it depends on the funding from "186,000 sq. m of the proposed warehousing to be built and occupied prior to the opening of the RT". As the Inspector has no doubt seen, the proposed site is where the railway passes through a cutting. To bring the Rail to "ground level" for the sidings would be a major undertaking and expense which is doubtful that can be funded by the lease of the Warehouses. It will also eat into more precious green belt.

I remain

Yours sincerely

David Evans