

From: [REDACTED]
To: [West Midlands Interchange](#)
Subject: West Midlands Interchange
Date: 07 February 2020 22:06:41

Dear Sir

I wish to express concern at the late representation by the applicant regarding the WMI planning application.

When the project was initially proposed and consultation sought with local residents, questions were raised about the need for the rail freight and the warehouses.

It was apparent that the Strategic Rail Freight application could be used as a method of avoiding a local planning application to build warehouses on greenbelt land. This would have been refused by the local council. The local residents were assured that the rail freight was essential and that there were already several parties interested in taking on the warehouses who would fully utilise the rail freight, which is how the 8500 jobs would be created. The other selling point from the applicant was that the rail freight would drastically reduce pollution and congestion throughout the country by moving goods by rail.

It now seems there are no parties interested in transporting goods by rail, thus the reluctance to build the rail freight until the warehouses are established. However, if as we were originally told the occupiers of the warehouses required the rail freight, hence the application for a strategic rail freight being made to the planning inspectorate, then surely the rail freight should be built first. The warehouses may then be developed as the demand for the rail freight expands. It should be noted that the Telford rail freight sees one train a week on a good week, which given the number of warehouses in that area indicates that there is little demand for transporting goods by rail on a large scale. The WMI would have similar demand, which seems to be accepted by the applicant as they now want to build the warehouses first and change the wording of the Rail Freight 'must' be built to 'should' be built.

The reality is that the if planning permission is given for warehouses without the requirement for the rail freight to be built first, then the rail freight will never be built and the benefits outlined by the applicant in the original application will not be realised. This then reduces the strategic rail freight application to an application to build warehouses on greenbelt land which should be refused. The government policy of protecting and enhancing the greenbelt would surely not allow this volume of warehouse development on greenbelt land in isolation.

Additionally, the fact that the applicant wishes to change the phrase regarding the rail freight from 'must be built' to 'should be built' changes the whole perspective of the project. It also give some insight as to the applicants real objectives. The work 'must' in this context is essential if the rail freight is ever to be built.

I hope that the Secretary of State will view this application for what it really is, an application for warehouses on greenbelt land which I trust would be looked on unfavourably.

Kind regards

Sue Worrall

Sent from my iPad