



**The Planning Inspectorate  
National Infrastructure Planning  
Bristol BS1 6PN**

**October 2018**

**Northampton Gateway SFRI Proposal**

**Your reference: TR05006**

**My Reference: 20011452**

**Dear Sirs,**

I am opposed to the Northampton Gateway SFRI proposal because I do not believe it would deliver any of the claimed economic benefits. On the contrary it would distress the local population, severely harming their health and wellbeing and destroy vast tracts of unspoilt country side, causing the loss of thousands of priceless old trees, valuable agricultural land and wildlife habitat. In short, to allow this proposal to go ahead would be an act of environmental vandalism.

The developer's claim that this is a strategic location for a rail freight terminal is false, because the requirement to transfer freight from road to rail is already fulfilled by DIRFT, which is close to this location and has plenty of scope for further development.

The developer's claim that this project would bring thousands of new jobs to the area is also false, because there is full employment here, so the large labour force required to operate the site would have to drive in from outside, significantly increasing the congestion on an already overloaded road network.

The objective of transferring large amounts of freight from rail to road is unlikely to be achieved here, because there is little spare capacity on the Northampton line. It is probable therefore that the Northampton Gateway would become just one more Warehousing facility and the goods stored there would be moved in and out mainly by road. Given the massive Swan valley warehousing complex just a few miles away, which is still being extended, there is surely no justification for creating more of the same on the proposed new sites at Collingtree and Milton Malsor/Blisworth.

The enormous increase in road traffic would have a seriously detrimental impact on air quality, increasing pollution, posing a health threat to the local population, especially the elderly and those suffering from asthma and breathing difficulties.

The constant noise and light pollution caused by the 24 hour operation of the road/rail terminal would pose another health risk to the local population, inhibiting their ability to sleep and rest.

Covering this vast site with concrete and buildings would increase the risk of flooding in the Nene valley, creating a difficult and costly challenge to the water authorities.

This proposal is opposed almost unanimously by the local community, so it would be undemocratic to allow it to proceed unless the developer can come up with a cast iron case to demonstrate that it is an essential infrastructure project and in the interests of the whole nation. So far they have failed to make such a case and I firmly believe that the interests of the nation are best served by protecting the environment and preserving as much as possible of our countryside, so that wildlife can thrive and we can all breathe clean unpolluted air.

Yours faithfully,

Barry Steer