

# BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

## Clarification of Issues raised at the Environmental ISH 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018

**2018.12.01** MDS Transmodal have stated that without the investment in the strategic rail network, the amount of warehousing that can actually be effectively served within the current capacity constraints is limited (roughly) to the volume to be built at DIRFT 3. This capacity constraint is a view also expounded in all freight studies completed over the last 5 years, but greatly at odds with the Applicant's assessment of multiple **theoretical** paths being available. As stated in NPS 4.8, investment in SRFIs need to take account of corresponding investment in the rail network, of which there is none committed to on the West Coast mainline. The SRFI proposed at Hinckley would take advantage of such committed investment on the F2N route into the midlands and beyond. Hinckley and DIRFT would more than satisfy the requirement for rail served warehousing in the Midlands (as stated in MDS Transmodal's GBFM).

**2018.12.02** The NPS requires there to be a local pool of labour. The Applicant's consultant drew figures from a wide study area in which there are tens of millions of square feet of warehousing either available to let or being built. There will be intense competition for workers that the Applicant assumes will travel to Northampton Gateway despite there being job opportunities far closer to home. The headline figures provided are misleading as only 8% of the workforce nationally chooses to work in logistics. This adjustment was missing from the consultant's calculation. Also the 25% that it is claimed will be displaced from other locations will still have to be replaced from whence they were displaced: the jobs do not just disappear.

**2018.12.03** Whilst GRIP 2 was stated to be the norm for such projects we would contest that where there are two developments attempting to access the same section of railway with possibly significant technical issues, a higher degree of certainty should be a necessity. The feasibility of both running concurrently has still not been established.

**2018.12.04** The Applicant failed to clarify to what level of increased rail usage the statements relating to the fact that there was 'adequate capacity' and 'there would be no detrimental impact on passenger services' were applicable. Do these statements relate to the minimum four trains that Roxhill seem content to prove or maybe four trains from each of Northampton Gateway and Rail Central? Or are they applicable to the full 16 aspirational paths from each development? Do they take into account DIRFT traffic? Do they consider the potential West Midlands Interchange traffic (an SRFI proposal also on the WCML)? Do they take into account the additional passenger trains from the East West rail connection (which are likely to be significant)? Do they take into account increased passenger services to Northampton? The statements have been made without any verification or clarification. This should not be acceptable.

**2018.12.05** There is no way to enforce weight restrictions on local roads; this was conceded by Roxhill's consultants at the public exhibition. It was suggested that concerned members of the public would have to contact someone (not specified who) and inform them. What happens then is anyone's guess. Weight restrictions are not enforceable. There are also no measures to prevent Gateway traffic from using the local villages as cut-throughs and rat runs. The routes that would be used in both normal circumstances and in times of perturbation on the M1 are clearly detailed in Blisworth PC's written representation. There is no way that traffic from a development the size of

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this will not overspill onto local roads especially given the regularity of interruptions experienced on the M1. Additional traffic through villages is a serious safety issue regardless of its impact on quality of life.

**2018.12.06** On a final point, when questioned, Alan Kapur (Roxhill's rail consultant) stated that it was highly unlikely any train would stop at Northampton Gateway on their way to DRIFT (i.e. two stops). When making his case for the location of Rail Central (in a past liaison group meeting), Nick Gallup (of Intermodality) stated the opposite view. One of the main constraints on the use of rail freight is the difficulty of filling full trains to make them economic. Mr Gallup claimed that this could be overcome by trains stopping twice. Sometimes it is difficult to know who to believe.