

Mr J D Exley

IP reference: 20010773

23 / 2 / 2019

Dear Sir or Madam,

I write as an Interested Party regarding TR050006 Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange: Response to ExQ 2.0.1

***As the date for Britain's (probable) departure from the European Union draws near (Brexit), the ExA would welcome views on its possible impact in terms of the Proposed Development with regards the scheme's underlying economic/commercial justification, ports and domestic intermodal movement of goods, employment levels and funding implications.***

- The National Policy Statement for National Networks recognises the particular challenge in expanding rail freight interchanges to service London and the South East, such a challenge it would seem that two proposal, not in those areas, are under examination with the Planning Inspectorate.
- DIRFT, the UK's largest SRFI is only 15 miles away from the proposed Northampton Gateway, does this make commercial or economic sense for either the existing or the proposed.
- At present many HGV companies do NOT have a plan in place post Brexit, Operation BROCK is far from complete and significant challenges for the transport sector still exist, this will have economic ramifications.
- Due to its central location Northampton Gateway would actually hamper the East West and North South existing flow of goods, a point made in the representation by England's Economic Heartland,

*This representation advocates the need to consider the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange in light of England's Economic Heartland's strategic rail priorities and our wider economic growth aspirations of the East-West corridor.*

*Capacity restrictions DIRFT to Wembley, including at Northampton, are well documented. Locating a new terminal in the middle of these well documented restrictions makes no sense. The limited rail connectivity of Northampton Gateway and Rail Central does not lend itself to exploiting alternatives to the Channel and Thames Ports. The best prepared port is Felixstowe, where the operator continues to invest in additional capacity at pace. When combined with the recent investments by Network Rail in the Felixstowe to Nuneaton route (F2N), both SRFI proposals in Northamptonshire appear to be poorly located. By contrast, Hinckley NRFI seems to be ideally located to benefit from any gains made by the Haven Ports.*

- South Northamptonshire has one of the lowest unemployment rates along with many bordering counties. It is therefore likely that the ( circa ) 6,500 jobs will not be new and will not be filled by local workforce, this will create job migration not job creation. The situation could potentially worsen if EU nationals currently in employment in the logistics sector are forced to return to home countries.
- Both Rail Central and Northampton Gateway have limited rail connectivity and do not lend themselves to alternatives such as the Thames and the Channel ports. Felixstowe is still the best expanding port where operators continue to invest in additional capacity.