

From: Alan Walgate [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 September 2019 20:38
To: Northampton Gateway <NorthamptonGateway@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Roxhill (Junction 15) Limited

Dear Sir

Planning Application by Roxhill (Junction15) Limited

I fully support many of the objections already submitted to you regarding the Northampton Gateway Planning Proposals and wish to reiterate my main objections to the proposals for this unwarranted Rail Freight Terminal as follows;

1. Traffic;

The daily lorry movements generated by the proposals and the high number of employee car movements (some 12,000 per day) will only add to the existing serious traffic congestion that occurs at peak times on the A508, the A45 and at junction 15 of the M1.

The A508 is already approaching practical capacity during the morning and evening peak hours. While the A45 has such high existing traffic flows that heavy congestion and periods of stationary traffic are regular features on the section of the A45 from the M1 (Jct. 15) as far north as the junction with the A43 east of Northampton.

Currently South Northants has a very low unemployment rate (less than 1%) so the vast majority of the employees would be commuting from further afield along the major road arteries. With so many additional commuter trips each day into and out of the proposed site, the inevitable increased congestion on the main routes will lead to the creation of 'Rat Runs' on the rural roads through the villages of Blisworth, Gayton, Rothersthorpe, Milton Malsor, Collingtree, Quinton and Roade.

I also believe that the proposals put forward for improvements to Junction 15 of the M1 Motorway would prove to be totally inadequate to cope with additional traffic that the site would generate, thereby leading to even more serious congestion than there is at present.

2. Planning Precedent;

This development would create a major precedent for development on the south west side of the M1, which would actively encourage further development on that side of the Motorway. At the present time the Motorway forms a logical divide between the urban and commercial landscape of Northampton and its surrounds, with that of the rural nature of the countryside and villages on the opposite side of the Motorway. Any such precedent would almost certainly lead to further ribbon development along the A508 and A43 corridors.

These proposals are clearly contrary to the Local Core Strategy and refusal should be forthcoming for that reason alone.

4. Pollution;

The traffic generated by these proposals will greatly affect the air quality in the area. The lorry movements alone will add many thousands of tons of CO2 to the atmosphere every year. The daily 12,000 employee car journeys (mainly from outside the district) will of course add significantly to this pollution and where the local villages are used as 'Rat Runs' this will be blight the lives of those village residents.

A development of the size proposed, which together with the suggested 24 hour working will inevitably lead to significant light pollution and this would have a serious adverse impact on the surrounding rural area.

The Noise generated by the site would also have an adverse impact on the adjoining area. It is not just the noise from the site during day time that will have an adverse impact on local residents, the fact that the local rail network is currently close to working capacity with additional demand likely in the near future, the proposed freight train journeys will probably only be possible at night thereby causing unacceptable night time disturbance as well.

5. Need;

Two of the main objectives of Government Policy on Strategic Rail Freight Terminals are;

a) To reduce road congestion

b) To reduce carbon emissions

These proposals will not meet either of these objectives as they will actually increase local traffic congestion and significantly increase Carbon Emissions not just locally but over a wider area due to the high volume of HGV movements and the long distance employee commuting that will ensue.

Local levels of unemployment are very low so the perceived need to create new jobs in this locality are somewhat tenuous.

Additionally in terms of a national network of Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges I believe that there is no proven need for such a facility at this location. The major RFT at Daventry (which is currently being significantly extended) is only about 17 miles away north up the M1 and to have two such large facilities so close together surely fails to comply with a strategy to have them evenly spread around the country.

The Northampton local area already has an extensive amount of warehousing space mainly located at Brackmills, Grange Park and Swan Valley, with an additional new complex in the course of construction near Kislingbury on the A4500 adjacent to Junction 16 of the M1. So clearly there is no proven case of need to provide the massive amount of additional warehousing contained within these proposals.

Conclusion

The applicant considers that the proposals are a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project but they are clearly not in the National Interest as they would be damaging to the environment, (eg; untenably traffic congestion, unacceptable pollution, loss of valuable farmland etc). The proposals are purely of a commercial nature as there is no proven need for this development in this location.

The application should be refused.