



23 September 2022

**Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Project – Non Material Change
TR050006**

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed variation of the original Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Northampton Gateway as requested by SEGRO.

The Northampton Gateway project was granted on the basis it was to be a Strategic Rail Freight interchange (SRFI), and comply with the National Policy Statement for National Networks. This approach allowed it to bypass the local planning system and local objections and instead be approved at National level. The DCO clearly states 'a rail terminal capable of handling at least four intermodal trains per day ... **must be constructed and available for use before the occupation of any of the warehousing**'. Commercial activity was specifically prohibited until the rail link was operational.

SEGRO's assertion that no additional HGV traffic will be generated by this amendment is clearly wrong. For the warehousing to be active, goods must move in and out and if there is no rail terminal, it seems obvious this movement **must** be by road in both directions.

Given the additional warehousing which has recently been constructed in the area, I believe the original traffic surveys provided with the original application for Northampton Gateway is out-of-date and now incorrect. I suspect this amendment would create a large increase in traffic, noise and pollution in the surrounding area. This would be exacerbated when the M1 is congested and traffic diverted through the surrounding villages – this seems to occur on a more than weekly basis. I urge the traffic survey, noise and pollution data be updated and taken into account before any decision is made.

I do not believe this amendment is, or should be considered as, a non-material change, but as a material change. It seems to me SEGRO are pursuing this amendment for their own financial benefit. They will have been aware for some time of Network Rail's inability to provide the necessary rail connection, yet SEGRO's website clearly states units will be available for occupation Q4/2022, which is clearly at odds with the original DCO.

If this amendment is passed, I believe it will send the wrong message to other developers: that they can use this approach to breach national policy, bypass local planning and ignore their original commitments. There would also be no incentive for SEGRO to complete the rail terminal.

In light of the above, I strongly urge that this application be rejected.

Yours

R A McNair