

The Planning Act 2008

Application for Development Consent for Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange

Case Ref: TR050007

Examining Authority's Note of an Unaccompanied Site Inspection (USI)

Inspection 1: Environs of the application site and wider area

This note is a brief record to inform the Applicant, Interested Parties and other parties of the actions taken by the Examining Authority (ExA).

The ExA undertook an unaccompanied visit across Tuesday 8 August 2023 and Wednesday 9 August 2023. Its intention was to visit certain routes and viewpoints identified within the Applicant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and the Relevant Representations received. It included public footpaths, together with specific highway junctions and level crossings. This was to consider and gain an appreciation and understanding of the context of the application site and its surroundings. All inspections took place from a highway or public right of way (PRoW).

Day 1 – Tuesday 8 August 2023 (12:00 – 17:00)

The weather was intermittent light rain, becoming brighter and dryer as the day progressed.

The ExA began at Woodhouse Farm and travelled on foot south west along PRoW U50/2. It then continued south east along PRoW V35/1 to residential development at Smithy Lane. Returning along PRoW V35/1, the ExA then proceeded north west along PRoW V35/2. It continued broadly north along PRoWs U52/7, U52/8 and U52/9, crossing the railway line via a bridge along Burbage Common Road and passing through Bridge Farm. The ExA then returned to Woodhouse Farm via Burbage Common Road, noting the locations of nearby pedestrian crossing points over the railway line.

From here, the ExA drove north west along Burbage Common Road, stopping to view part of Burbage Common Woods and associated recreation areas close to the junction with the B4668 Leicester Road. Following this, it travelled through northern Hinckley and Burbage to a parking area along the B4669 Hinckley Road, to the south of Aston Firs. The ExA proceeded eastward on foot, crossing the large M69 Junction 2 overbridge roundabout, to reach PRoW V29/4 (close to Averley House Farm). It then walked northwards along this PRoW and PRoW V29/5 adjacent to the M69 to access a pedestrian footbridge (PRoW V29/6) that crosses the motorway. Views towards the main part of the Application Site were noted from this elevated vantage point. Returning to its vehicle via the same route, the ExA completed a full circulation of the above mentioned overbridge roundabout.

The ExA proceeded by car to Elmesthorpe. Amongst other things, it observed The Grade II listed Wortley Cottages, the Grade II listed Church of St Mary and

the adjacent Elmesthorpe Church Scheduled Monument by foot. Following this, the ExA travelled to Barwell. Elevated, long distance, views across the Application Site were noted from vantage points along Shilton Road, together with the immediate setting of the Grade I listed Church of St Mary.

The ExA then travelled to the junction of A47 Normandy Way and A447 Ashby Road in Hinckley, observing this junction and surrounding carriageways by foot. Following this, the junction of the A47 Normandy Way/Leicester Road, the B4668 Leicester Road and The Common and the location of the proposed junction of B4668 and the A47 Link Road were viewed.

Day 2 – Wednesday 9 August 2023 (9:00 – 12:00)

The weather was largely sunny during this part of the visit.

The ExA travelled along the A5 and the A47 to junction 21A of the M1, where it viewed the operation of this strategic highway infrastructure by car. Following this, it drove to the level crossing at Narborough Station. The ExA observed multiple barrier closing and opening cycles for passenger and freight trains, together with line cleaning vehicles. Effects on adjacent carriageways during such cycles were noted.

The ExA proceeded to Stoney Stanton, where the junction of the B581 Station Road/New Road and Hinckley Road, together with junctions along the B581, were observed on foot. Following this, it travelled south west along Hinckley Road and Stanton Lane by car. The junction of B4669 Hinckley Road and Stanton Lane was observed on foot. Subsequently, the ExA proceeded to Sapcote, where pedestrian and vehicular environments were noted along Hinckley Road and Leicester Road. Lastly, the ExA proceeded to observe highway conditions at both the junction of B4114 Coventry Road and B581 Broughton Road and the junction of B4114 Coventry Road and Croft Road south west of Narborough.

End of USI1