

This Written Representation is from David Harrold and Diana Harrold, a married couple living in Stoney Stanton. We are very worried, and have serious concerns, about the proposed HNRFI development. An outline of our concerns is listed below:

Totally overwhelming the area: We have lived in this area since 1979 and moved here because of the easy access to countryside and the peaceful nature of the villages in this area. Such a huge development in a green field position close to Stoney Stanton and other villages will totally destroy the character of the area. The Burbage Common and Woods area is a local beauty spot of great importance to those living nearby. Putting a very large rail freight terminal right next to it will ruin the peaceful enjoyment of the area and nature in it for tens of thousands of people.

Traffic: Stoney Stanton and Sapcote already have problems with road traffic. The notion that 10,000 people can be employed in a location close to our villages without having a serious impact on traffic is totally absurd. The villages will become even more congested and this will cause safety problems for the schools, surgery, shops, pubs, churches etc. that all face onto the roads through the villages. On top of that, we cannot believe there will not be extra HGV traffic through the villages – either caused by re-routing existing traffic due to the M69 Southbound slip opening or due to congestion problems on the planned HGV routes. The combination of these factors will place an unacceptable additional burden on the villages. If the development does go ahead, then a proper bypass that completely bypasses both villages rather than go between them will be needed.

Proposed mitigations which will have an adverse effect for residents: We have found it very difficult to determine, from the huge amount of examination documentation, what is proposed and what is not. During the consultation it became apparent that features of our two villages Sapcote and Stoney Stanton (some mentioned above but also tight S bends with narrow footpaths) had not been taken into account. This was stated to the applicant during consultation and the result is that they are either proposing doing nothing (because they can't – e.g. at the crossroads in Stoney Stanton) or to add traffic lights and traffic calming measures (of an unspecified type). Proposed traffic lights near to the doctors' surgery and the local school in Stoney Stanton will probably cause even more problems. The village has not been consulted about this and should be before anything is agreed.

Airborne pollution: The effect of placing a very large Rail freight Terminal with Warehousing (and consequential large amounts of HGV movements) in an area surrounded by villages and a small town will inevitably lead to very large local increases in airborne pollutants, which will adversely affect the health of residents in the area. One of us is [REDACTED], so we expect that if the rail freight terminal goes ahead, our health will deteriorate as a direct consequence.

Environmental problems: such as noise, light pollution, vibrations. The site will be under construction for 10 years or more, and will, during construction and operation, require ongoing movements of thousands of HGVs, cranes, lifting - moving equipment and myriad construction activities. We also understand that lights will be on through the night, in some cases switching on and off as a result of motion sensors which will be disturbing for many people and animals. What is now a peaceful rural area will be transformed into a building site. This will affect people, wildlife, the ecology of the area all in very negative ways.

Threats to ecology, biodiversity and SSSI: The fact that the site of the proposed HNRFI is adjacent to Burbage Common and Woods (an SSSI) is of great concern. This is one of our favourite areas for walks and wildlife observations. The RFI would destroy the peace of the woods for the many visitors. The proximity could only have a negative effect on the biodiversity of the SSSI and on the area of the proposed development and its environs. Useful farmland will be lost and greenspace (including an area designated as “green wedge” in the Hinckley and Bosworth local plan) will disappear permanently. We understand that the type of ancient woodland we have is very sensitive to changes in the level of the water table. It seems inconceivable that such a huge development would not have a direct adverse effect – even if “temporary” – where temporary means many years. Once it has gone, it will be gone forever! We do not believe that any mitigations proposed are guaranteed to work – and in fact we know that studies have shown that some mitigations of the types proposed have been proven ineffective.

The need and purpose of the site: In this area we are victims of a concept created by the logistics industry of the “Golden Triangle” whereby most parts of the country can be reached by road (HGV journeys) within 4 hours. A consequence of this is that we now have far more warehousing per head of population than any other area of the UK. We also have a high proportion of Rail Freight Terminals in the area. This does not benefit the country or residents of the area - it benefits the logistics industry alone. The national strategy should not allow this gross distortion of piling everything into one small area, there should be a strategy of distributing these in a way that is more beneficial to the country

False claims about removing HGVs from the nation’s roads: The applicant has consistently misled the public by making grossly over-estimated claims about how many HGV miles (and consequentially reduction in CO₂ emissions) will be removed from the nation’s roads. The Tritax Symmetry website <https://tritaxsymmetry.com/projects/hinckley/> still claims, under “key benefits” that 16 freight trains a day will mean 1.6 billion (yes, billion) fewer kilometres travelled by HGVs per year. The examination documentation states 83 million miles fewer, the port of Felixstowe makes the claim that 74 trains a day will remove 100 million HGV miles per year, which equates to an equivalent of 22 million miles fewer for 16 trains per day. Even if the latter were the case, if the HNRFI proposal goes ahead then there will be a hugely higher concentration of HGV traffic, and hence CO₂, NO_x and Particulate Matter emissions in the local area, to the cost of all local residents. The development should not be allowed to go ahead.

Employment: From all that we have read, the level of unemployment in our area is lower than average. The creation of jobs, especially warehousing jobs, will not benefit the area. In fact most workers will need to travel in from further afield causing more traffic problems. If anything were to be gained from this, then a location where it could be seen to level up wealth and prosperity would be more suitable (as opposed to making these worse).

Conclusion: The Planning Inspectorate state that the purpose of the examination process is to weigh local impacts of a scheme against national need for such infrastructure. In our opinion, the irreversible local impact will far outweigh national need for another RFI in an area already overpopulated with them.

David and Di Harrold