

Application by Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Ltd. (Tritax) for an Order Granting Development Consent for a Rail Freight Interchange (RFI).

SUMMARY

1. I am a resident of the village of Barwell. I am also a retired civil servant who has worked in national social and health care policy fields. My particular field of interest has been mental health and wellbeing. I have also had a lifetime interest in ecology and environmental matters.
2. My property affords excellent views from the east side of the village across towards Lutterworth. This view is rural and includes Burbage Common and all of the proposed site. The site is approximately 1.5 miles from my property and almost completely fills the width of the view at this distance. Even with the reduced height of the warehousing it also fills a significant proportion of the depth of the view.
3. This view is also enjoyed by a number of other properties in my vicinity and by many hundreds of people who pass the junction of Shilton Road and Red Hall Drive every day.
4. I am a frequent visitor to Burbage Common (the Common) and the villages of Elmesthorpe, Earl Shilton, Stoney Stanton, Sapcote and Burbage as well as the town of Hinckley. I have also until recently been a frequent user of the rail line travelling both west and east from Hinckley and am still a frequent user of the A47, and the Leicester and Ashby Roads in Hinckley.
5. I currently derive great benefits to my health and general wellbeing from the views of the area from a number of points in Barwell and other places and from my use of Burbage Common and its environs. I know that many others do also. My house is situated within both sight and sound of the proposed RFI site and also the A47 between Earl Shilton and the lower part of the perimeter road towards the Ashby Road.
6. I believe that Burbage Common is a site of special local ecological, historical and recreational interest. I enjoy its rich variety of flora and fauna. It is the only such site within many miles.
7. I have read the consultation and application documents and attended many of the public consultation meetings where I discussed the proposals with Tritax staff and with other attendees. I also attended one of the 'Zoom' consultation meetings.
8. In my view the proposed Rail Freight Interchange poses a real and severe direct and indirect existential threat to the Common and adjoining fields and a significant threat to the health, welfare and wellbeing of people who live near it and to the far wider population that use it, including myself.
9. The development brings with it severely adverse impacts to my and others' health and wellbeing and to the ecology of the area without bringing any local and few (and questionable) regional and national benefits.
10. I do not believe that this development meets the criteria for being a nationally significant infrastructure project under the terms of the Planning Act (2008). I therefore also believe that it should not fall under the planning processes contained within that Act and associated guidance.
11. In my view the proposed rail freight interchange appears to be a huge speculative road-based logistics warehousing development onto which a rail port has been

added as a means of avoiding local planning mechanisms. The rail aspects of the proposal are significantly under-researched and under-developed and form only a small part of the proposal as a whole. This is reflected in many aspects of the proposals including the intention to begin development of the rail link relatively late in the site development and the absence of the container handling infrastructure in the 'artist's impressions' of how the development might look.

12. This is further demonstrated in the supporting document from the proposed operator of the facility who cites their experience elsewhere that companies will be attracted by the warehouses and then may consider some use of the rail port (or not).

Tim Birtwisle