

As a resident of Burbage, having grown up in the village of Sapcote, and as a regular visitor to Burbage Common and woods, I am really concerned about the local and environmental impact of this proposal.

The impact on local roads will be significant and detrimental, in terms of congestion, pollution and disruption. I understand the rationale for rail hubs such as these is to cut down on the use of heavy road freight, but the impact on this locality will be to increase it significantly with many thousands of extra vehicle movements per day including many HGV movements as well as thousands of commuter journeys to support the running of the hub. This will lead to a reduction in air quality and an increase in noise.

Although I see from the plans that extra roads will be built, the main routes to and from the hub will run through Sapcote, Stoney Stanton, Burbage and Hinckley. None of these routes were designed for high volumes of freight traffic. Of particular concern is the main road through Sapcote where local residents already often struggle to cross the road in the village centre. Hundreds of school children have to cross this road each morning or catch the bus to schools in Hinckley and beyond, and elderly people need to cross safely to access the local shops.

I am sure an argument will be made that the new roads will mean most traffic goes straight on to the motorway or to the main trunk roads. If that is indeed the case, then the location of the hub is hardly serving the local area, and there are several other hubs in the area which already fulfil that need.

Moving on to the impact on Burbage Common and woods, I am deeply concerned that precious wildlife will be impacted through noise, emissions and light pollution. Great Britain is already one of the most wildlife depleted countries in Europe, and this development will be another nail in the coffin of British wildlife. How much more of our green space are we will to sacrifice? There is a growing appreciation of how interdependent we are as humans on the flora and fauna which clings to existence around us.

Added to this is the human impact. The ancient common land of Burbage Common and woods is an accessible pocket of relative wilderness in an otherwise built up area. The presence of a busy rail freight terminal, however well screened, will detract from the sense of quiet and tranquility which the woods offer, and which is so important for the mental health of local residents and visitors alike.

I strongly urge the Government to reject this unnecessary, intrusive and damaging proposal.