

## **Examination Presentation**

### **Open Session 2: 2 November 2023**

I speak on behalf of Stoney Stanton Parish Council, a very nearby parish and settlement that will be substantially affected by this proposal. I am Chair of the Parish Councillor, as well as the District Councillor for Fosse Stoney Cove (which include Stoney Stanton, Croft, and Potters Marston), and, having lived in Stoney Stanton for 4 years, have seen the impact that a number of various proposals have had upon the village and surrounding area. I think it would be fair to say that this proposal will have by far the greatest impact and has raised significant concern on a number of topic areas to residents. I will use the time today to seek queries to additional questions that have arisen during the course of events and matters to which Stoney Stanton Parish Council do not consider have been adequately addressed through the hearing sessions. Many of the outstanding concerns run to the heart of the proposal and its ability to accord with the National Policy Statement for National Networks, to which at present it is considered that the proposal should be rejected. To someone reviewing the proceedings to date it feels very much as though the application has been submitted too early and the applicant is simply looking to paper over and retro-fill gaps in their evidence base.

#### Highways

A fundamental issue is the highways modelling. I am somewhat dismayed that the modelling has still not yet been agreed, and yet we are all here at the Examination discussing matters. This matter simply has to be bottomed out, otherwise it becomes impossible for the impacts of the development to be truly analysed.

Our Written Representation outlined a significant concern in respect of the potential under provision still of the highway movements expected versus the staff levels on site during the AM peak. It is noted that it has been stated by the appellant that these are created using different approaches, but shouldn't the two systems roughly correlate? Our analysis suggests that the highway movements may be mis-represented by as much as 74% (SSPC WR paras 1.6 – 1.7). Any comment the applicant has on this matter would be welcomed.

A pre-requisite of the site selection process is the ability to utilise the Strategic Road Network (NPSNN para 2.45). Much has been made about the importance of the location of the application site and its ability to connect directly to this network. Yet it has simply been stated by the applicant that key nodes on the SRN is over capacity and no mitigation is proposed. Importantly this includes the M69/M1 interchange, resulting in the traffic modelling rerouting vehicles onto lower order roads. This flies in the face of the aims of national infrastructure projects and the locational justification for this specific site.

Reference was made to there being a mitigation scheme prepared for the M1 Junction 21 but this has never been discussed with any of the Statutory Highway consultees. Why has this not occurred, as it should be the first option towards mitigation of the impacts from this development?

With no mitigation to the motorway interchange, it has led to the model showing a number of junctions on the lower order highways operating over capacity. Many junctions, even though expected to operate over capacity, are simply being ignored. As an example of this, I refer to the roundabout in Stoney Stanton – junction 38 in the applicant's assessment. With rat running vehicles, it is expected that highway movements through this mini roundabout will increase significantly, yet no mitigation is proposed. How can this be considered a robust solution? This is not an isolated solution – many junctions have not been assessed or mitigation proposed. The highway solution is simply flawed.

### Alternative Options and Need

Paragraphs 4.26 and 4.27 of the NPSNN sets out a requirement for applicants to undertake an appropriate alternatives and options appraisal. Discussion was undertaken through the hearing sessions about options principally being considered in Leicestershire given the economic report published to support a rail linked logistic park. However, it was also stated verbally by the applicant that sites further to the west, north and south were considered. Where is this evidenced within the submitted information, as it seems to be missing?

It has been stated verbally that the proposal will not compete with DIRFT, as it serves a different type of function, with DIRFT serving a European base for more rapid turnover products, whereas Hinckley Hub will serve a worldwide deep seaport transporting larger/slower goods. There are however many other rail linked logistic parks in the Midlands, including East Midlands gateway, Birch Coppice (Tamworth) and Hams Hall rail Terminal (Colehill). Clarification on whether there will be any competition with these other centres would be useful to understand.

Finally on need, it has been indicated that this will act as a hub location, serving the local industrial manufacturers as well as a centre to combine rail freight from other locations...what other rail freight locations is Hinckley Hub expecting to service in this manner?

### Renewable Energy

Much debate has been undertaken in respect of the incorporation of a CHP plant and the provision of only 49.9 MW of renewable energy on site. It seems clear that there is additional roof space to be able to increase the level of on-site energy generation? Why has this not been increased, and would the applicant be willing to have an appropriate regulation attached allowing this to be reviewed and increased?

Clarification as to why there is a back-up reliance on out-dated CHP system needs to also be provided. There are numerous options for modern renewable systems allowing it to essentially operate as an off-grid scheme of truly net zero credentials. Why has this not been proposed?

In terms of the growing need for energy on the site, through the rapid growth of electric cars, and potentially commercial vehicles in due course, has the expected extra energy demands for charging vehicles been robustly incorporated into expected energy demand? If not, then the reliance on the CHP will increase.

Failure to maximise renewable energy generation is contrary to NPSNN paragraphs 4.26 – 4.47 and thus the Inspector's need to be confident that all options have been thoroughly explored by the applicant.

### Visual Impact

It is considered that many of the issues in respect of the scheme are generated by the proposal simply including too much development. Landscaping has needed to be marginalised, protective fences increased in height due to the proximity to noise sensitive receptors, footpaths on site are marginalised creating environmental concerns over their use, shortage in biodiversity gain, and issues over flood risk and drainage due to additional structures within the flood plain reducing storage capacity and affecting the flow of waters (to name but a few). It is recognised that there

needs to be a minimum quantity of development provided to justify the level of investment proposed? Has this viability assessment been undertaken to identify the minimum floor area required, and if so, is this the underlying factor that has driven the layout and proposal tabled?

It is considered that a smaller scheme may well address many of the concerns highlighted in respect of the proposal. It would not however overcome the in principle objections considered to occur due to the gaps in the evidence base, or the incomplete highway assessment.