

## **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 4: 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 inspection on Wednesday 15 November 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 highway conditions within certain villages. This was to consider and gain a further 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).

#### **Wednesday 15 November 2023 (11:30 – 15:00)**

The weather was bright, sunny and dry providing clear visibility. That said, surface water at certain observed locations provided evidence of rainfall over the previous days.

The ExA began on foot from Acorns Coffee Shop at Burbage Common Road. It travelled through Burbage Common via PRoWs U51/4, U51/3 and U51/2. Following this, the ExA proceeded to walk around Elmesthorpe Plantation via PRoWs U52/6, V35/2 and U50/2. It then took PRoW U50/1 through Burbage Wood, noting Smenell Field from vantage points along Smithy Lane. The ExA then turned northward and travelled along PRoW U49/5 and crossed under the railway line via PRoW U52/4. It then proceeded through Sheepy Wood via PRoW U55/1 and returned to Acorns Coffee Shop across Burbage Common.

The ExA travelled by car to Elmesthorpe via the B4668, the A47 and the B581. It proceeded along the B581, turning south at Bridle Path Road to view the area around its junction with Billington Road East. The ExA then returned to the B581 via the same route and, noting the operation of the junction of this carriageway with Wilkinson Lane and Bridle Path Road, proceeded south east. Parking at an off-street space close to Leighton Crescent, the ExA continued to travel south east on the footway along the B581. It noted the junctions of The Roundhills and Bostock Close with this carriageway before proceeding through Bostock Close to PRoW 89/1. Walking along this footpath, the ExA crossed the railway line and returned to the B581 via a gate broadly opposite to the Wentworth Arms (given the presence of on-going utilities works at this part of the PRoW). It then walked north west along the B581 to return to its parked vehicle.

The ExA proceeded by car along the B581 through Stoney Stanton to the junction with Coventry Road. It then travelled north east along this carriageway, turning along Broughton Road to drive through Croft, finally parking at Croft Cemetery. The ExA proceeded on foot from this location along Huncote Road and nearby footpaths to the top of Croft Hill (PVP30 as illustrated on the Applicant's Environmental Statement Figure 11.9 [APP-293]). Long distance, elevated, views towards the Application Site were observed. The ExA then reverted back to its vehicle via the same route.

Following this, it travelled to Sapcote, parking at an off-street space along Leicester Road. The ExA then walked eastwards along this carriageway to the junction of Leicester Road, Stanton Road, Church Street and Hinckley Road. The location of proposed off-site highway works, shown on Sheet 8 to the Applicant's Highways and Junction Improvement Plans [APP-232], were observed. Overall highway conditions in this village were also noted, including HGV manoeuvrability along Leicester Road.

Following returning to its vehicle, the ExA travelled out of Sapcote and along Coventry Road and Leicester Road through Sharnford. It then proceeded to travel along Aston Lane, Hinckley Road and Sharnford Road through the northern section of Aston Flamville. Crossing the M69 via Aston Lane, the ExA proceeded to the junction of Aston Flamville Road and Sapcote Road (B4669) where it turned westwards into Burbage. The ExA continued to travel south through Burbage via the B578 until it turned eastward along Lynchgate Lane. Following this carriageway, it again crossed the M69 and proceeded to the southern part of Aston Flamville. Turning around here, the ExA returned to the B578 in Burbage. It continued southward along this carriageway to its junction with the A5. Highway conditions at this junction were noted and the inspection was concluded.

**End of USI4**