

Submission ID: 25862

This submission would have been read out at ISH6 Agenda item 4 (Rail connectivity), but due to time constraints and rapid progress through this part of the agenda, the chairman asked for this submission to be made in written form.

Intended submission (not read out) to ISH6 on January 24th 2024, relating to Agenda item 4

Dave Harrold (Chairman, Stoney Stanton Action Group)

The Stoney Stanton Action group is not convinced that the problem of trains slowing down to enter the rail freight terminal, and also gradually speeding up as they exit the rail terminal, has been adequately accounted for. This issue was raised in the Stoney Stanton Action Group Written Representation *document TR050007-001388 subsections 4.1.8 and 4.1.9*. Specifically, we do not believe that the applicant has shown that the proposed rail freight terminal can accommodate 16 freight trains per day entering and leaving the site when interleaved with existing traffic.

The applicant's Rail Operations Report (*TR050007-001893-6.2.3.1A HNRFI ES Appendix 3.1 Rail Operations Report*) refers to speeds of 15mph within the rail port and a safe and appropriate speed of 25mph for entry to the railport, however these are likely to be maximum speeds, not the actual operational speeds. As the railport is designed for speeds of 15mph, then it is likely that the entry speed will be no more than 15mph. Also, trains are slowing to a halt, therefore the average entry speed of a 775m long train is likely to be considerably less than 15mph. If the average speed is about 7.5mph for instance, then the entry time may be 4 to 5 minutes. For trains leaving the railport, times are likely to be longer as the train will be slowly accelerating. We could not see a quantitative assessment of this, just a subjective comment in section 4.5 of the Rail Operations Report based on a statement that 25mph is safe and appropriate.

Assuming at least a 5 minute gap between trains for safety, then there will be something like a 15 minute or more obstruction on the Westbound track for Westbound trains entering or leaving the terminal, and potentially 15 minutes or more on Westbound and Eastbound tracks for Eastbound trains entering or leaving.

Taking this into account, it seems to us that this would cause problems for the existing level of combined rail freight and passenger traffic, and certainly would not be compatible with any increase in passenger services which have been talked about in the press.

For reference:

Taken from Stoney Stanton Action Group WR document TR050007-001388 items 4.1.8 and 4.1.9

4. Rail Traffic

4.1.8 The most difficult obstacle will be trains requiring access or egress from the HNFRI site.

Eastbound trains will almost certainly be slowed to a stand or 5-10mph before entering the site. That access will then require a prolonged obstruction of both eastbound and westbound lines until the train is fully clear of the main running lines. Egress will require similar line obstruction and a similar delay whilst the train accelerates to its line speed.

4.1.9 The same problems will affect westbound trains, which will not obstruct the eastbound line, however restarting a 1,500-tonne train on a 1 in 162 gradient, particularly in adverse rail conditions, will require extended signalling section occupation. This will cause considerable problems on a line which is as restricted and busy as the Wigston <> Nuneaton line is.