

FINAL SUMMARY
ELMESTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL
8th March 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Elmesthorpe Parish Council has attended all hearings, either in-person or online.
- 1.2. Elmesthorpe Parish Council has made representations at every deadline as appropriate for consideration by the Examining Authority (ExA).
- 1.3. Elmesthorpe Parish Council has also engaged with the Applicant throughout every stage of the NSIP Planning Process.
- 1.4. The purpose of this document is to summarise all areas of concern that, despite the extensive examination process, have not been fully addressed. Due to the nature of this document, reiteration of previously made points will be prevalent.
- 1.5. We thank the Examining Authority for the opportunities to be heard, time and considerations extended to the Parish Council throughout the Examination so far.

2. Location

- 2.1. The applicant has consistently claimed that the HNRFI location is exceptional however to date, the Applicant has only managed to explain why the chosen site is exceptional when compared to the other sites explored within the very limited area set at the genesis of the project. The applicant has not been able to demonstrate why no other site nationally can deliver similar benefits as this site. It is considered that an alternative site elsewhere in the country could provide the same, if not enhanced benefits, to the HNRFI, without being proposed on a site so constrained and detrimental to local communities.
- 2.2. The Applicant has promoted connectivity of the East Midlands to Felixstowe as a prime benefit for HNRFI. East Midlands Gateway (EMG) (only 25 miles away from the proposed HNRFI) has several daily services connecting EMG to Felixstowe launched in 2021. There is also capacity for EMG to increase the frequency of services. EMG has capacity and appropriate infrastructure to deliver the benefits that HNRFI purports to, without overwhelming the surrounding infrastructure and communities.
- 2.3. Despite the ExA's questions at ExA1.7.25 the Applicant failed to answer and provide details of the current availability at SRFIs that are extremely close to the proposed HNRFI. We maintain that there is already sufficient RFI provision within this part of Leicestershire and wider scope should be considered to identify a more appropriate location.

- 2.4. When considering the limitations of this stretch of rail, National Rail has only been able to respond with 'aspirations' of improvement, but no firm plans for improvement.

3. Green Credentials

- 3.1. Elmesthorpe Parish Council are concerned that the Applicant's proposal to *limit* the production of renewable and sustainable energy is flawed and is purely proposed to avoid triggering the need for a separate NSIP application.
- 3.2. We uphold our profound disappointment in the error of the advertised benefits of the proposal. The Applicant claimed that the HNRFI would "remove 1.6 billion HGV kilometres annually" and this was advertised prior to Final Consultations, during Final Consultations, in subsequent materials and newspaper reports and was re-published in an article on the Applicants website in April 2023, shortly after the application was submitted to PINs (appendix 1). We accept that mistakes happen, however this figure was repeatedly queried with them during Final Consultations and the Applicant had ample opportunity to correct and address this much sooner. The Applicant was also aware of the disparity as the 83 million miles of HGV miles removed was available deep in the PEIR materials: this document was widely inaccessible in style to the vast majority of IPs. We are afraid that such a gross over-inflation of the high level advertised benefits of the scheme influenced the engagement of potential IPs during the NSIP process.

4. Employment and Sustainable Travel Strategy

- 4.1. Elmesthorpe Parish Council still remains concerned with regards to commuter traffic; both directly associated with the HNRFI site and indirectly associated due to re-assigned traffic as a direct effect of the HNRFI.
- 4.2. The Applicant has unrealistic expectations on how safely people can move by bicycle on the local roads. The roads surrounding the proposed site are narrow, fast, dangerous and undesirable.
- 4.3. In addition to this, when referring to appendix 4 Cycle Routes Options Tables **(6.2.8.1D Hinckley NRFI ES Appendix 8.1 Transport Assessment (Part 15 of 20) Sustainable Transport Strategy and Plan (Appendices) Rev 7)**
- 4.4. Enhancement Number 1: 'Toucan crossing over A47 [to enable] Safer access between Barwell and B4668.' The effect of introducing traffic signals could be significant when factoring in the large increase in additional traffic.
- 4.5. Enhancement Number 2: ...'Introduction of gateway feature to provide protection to cyclists rejoining carriageway.' As previously referenced, traffic on and around this roundabout stands to increase substantially with the introduction of the A47 Link Road, as a crucial part of the HNRFI route. Elements that could create potential delays and traffic queues on this roundabout need thorough assessment and modelling.

- 4.6. Whilst additions to the Sustainable Travel Strategy are welcomed to start to formulate a meaningful STS, they appear to have come far too late to be properly investigated, assessed and reformulated to reach a meaningful indicative strategy before the close of Examination.
- 4.7. Elmesthorpe Parish Council has raised concerns about staff parking in the village and walking in via the Burbage Common Road entrance on foot to avoid on-site traffic during shift changeovers. This exact behavior can be seen nationwide at sites that operate shift patterns close to residential areas. A similar example is Jaguar Landrover in Solihull. The applicant has stated that this will be 'monitored' by site management, but no information has been provided as to how. We believe more robust methods are required from the applicant to ensure this doesn't happen in the first instance to protect the surrounding communities that are being affected the most.

5. Visual Impact

- 5.1. The Parish Council maintains the view that there are different palette options available to the applicant that would render the appearance of the warehouses more sympathetically to the surroundings. The Applicant's main concern with regard to the colour palette of the buildings appears to be that they fit their company branding and there seems little willingness to genuinely consider how this will assimilate with the surrounding character and environment. It is not considered enough effort has been extended to integrating this development to its surroundings. For residents living in the village, and for those looking from well-known vantage points such as Croft Hill or Shilton Road, Earl Shilton, it is quite obvious that grey is an inappropriate colour and will stand out very clearly.
- 5.2. Elmesthorpe Parish Council have, once again, reviewed the information in **Residential Assessment document reference 6.2.11.6**. We, once again, note the 'Very High, Major, Long-term, Permanent, Adverse, Significant,' effects on nearly **all** residential properties in Elmesthorpe.
- 5.3. We question the choice of angles for viewpoints 18 and 48 and believe better angles could have been chosen by the applicant to provide genuine depictions of the current view and therefore meaningful comparisons.
- 5.4. Given the proximity of proposed HNRFI main site to residential properties, it would have been important to see photomontages of night-time views for viewpoints 18, 48, 49 and 50. These don't appear to have been provided.
- 5.5. We still remain deeply concerned about the visual impact of this proposal

6. Noise

- 6.1. In Elmesthorpe, the closest residential property is circa 250-300m from the northern wall of Unit 4. The closest horse stables are only 100m from the northern wall of Unit 4. The closest residential properties to the north-west of the Railport are on Billington Road East and are merely 250-300m away.

- 6.2. We understand that definitive pathways will not be confirmed until occupiers are found for the warehouses. However if assumptions were made for demonstrative purposes on the likely effect on Narborough, then the same should have been done in respect of the likely operational effect on the residents of Elmesthorpe.
- 6.3. Elmesthorpe Parish Council are concerned that without this information, it impedes our ability to inform our understanding regarding anticipated timing for peak train and operational noise; particularly at night. Therefore we have been unable to use this opportunity to properly represent our village in the effect of train noise on residents to the fullest of our abilities.
- 6.4. **18.13 Applicant's response to deadline 3 submissions [Part 9 – Noise].** The Applicant's Response Number 4 states: "For receptors to the north, noise from the rail freight interchange will influence the future noise climate. However, the existing noise climate in this area is dominated by road noise and rail movements. The proposed operations include HGV movements, rail movements and engine noise from reach stackers and gantry cranes, all of which are in-keeping with the existing noise climate."
- 6.5. Elmesthorpe is immediately to the north of the proposed site. The Parish Council rejects the assertion that the current noise climate is *dominated* by road noise and rail movement. The sounds in the area are birdsong and general peacefulness, with low levels of background traffic noise occasionally interjected with passing rail traffic. Engine noise from reach stackers and gantry cranes (along with other associated operational noise) are absolutely not in-keeping with the existing noise climate.
- 6.6. The Applicant suggested in their response to Parish Councils at Deadline 6 that Elmesthorpe Parish Council 'aligned' with their noise description. For the avoidance of any doubt, we do not concur with the Applicants description of the current noise environment.
- 6.7. Elmesthorpe Parish Council is deeply concerned there is very little that can be done in protection of the residents of Elmesthorpe against relentless construction noise for a period of 10+ years during construction and operational noise in perpetuity of the functioning HNRFI.
- 6.8. We still remain troubled about the impact of prolonged construction and 24 hour general operational noise, on the residents of the village and the effect upon their lives, educations, health and livelihoods.

7. Light Pollution

- 7.1. The introduction of a Rail Freight Interchange and associated new highways lighting will be unbearably stark and disruptive. When adding the new elevated light levels to the increased noise levels to be experienced at night; there is a very real worry about the effect upon quality of sleep and subsequent effect on residents abilities to perform well in their jobs,

educations, hobbies and vocations alongside valid concerns of effects on general well-being.

8. Flooding & Drainage Issues

- 8.1. Known problematic areas in Elmesthorpe are the pumping station in Bostock Close, the stream running along the back of Bostock Close, the crossroads at Billington Road East/West/Bridlepath Road and the main sewer line that runs parallel to the B581.
- 8.2. We still hold major concerns that issues with drainage and sewerage infrastructure locally will be exacerbated. The Applicant takes the stance that it is the responsibility of STW and no heed is given to the extra inconvenience residents will suffer as a direct consequence of this proposal.
- 8.3. Elmesthorpe Parish Council do not dispute that the public sewer system is the responsibility of STW. We wished to raise the frequent issues that we currently experience in the village, to highlight the fact that STW will need to do considerable work to ensure the system can accommodate the additional sewage/drainage requirements of the proposal.
- 8.4. The pumping station in Bostock Close is immediately next to residential homes. When the pumping station is being worked on by STW it causes direct disruption to residents and impacts those working from home, sleep and general enjoyment and amenity of homes and gardens.
- 8.5. The main sewer line that services the majority of the village runs parallel to B581 Station Road, from the A47 Clickers Way to Bostock Close pumping station, and is only accessible via entry to resident's rear gardens along Station Road. Any work required to the main sewer line will directly impact residents and include disruption and potential damage to private property.
- 8.6. Elmesthorpe Parish Council agrees with the Applicant that STW will need to undertake mitigation works to deliver an effective solution. We ask that the Examining Authority considers the extra disruption that residents will face as a result of the essential work that STW will need carry out, that will be directly associated with accommodating the HNRFI proposal should it be approved.

9. PRoW & Access to Burbage Common/Woods

- 9.1. Bridleway Users: the current 1.6km route will increase to 4.95km. The substantial increase in distance will impact the horse out before they even reach their desired hacking destination; the additional time implications involved in this impacts the frequency that equestrian users may be able to hack in their own locality. This is removing a key benefit and reason that many equestrian business and private owners chose Elmesthorpe for. It goes without saying that the amenity of the new bridle path provided is no substitute for the environment currently experienced.

- 9.2 Walkers: It is firstly considered the user group merely identified as 'Walkers' is a very broad group and doesn't identify the many different types of users who use this area as pedestrians. That aside, 'walkers' who use the current 1.6km PRow route experience a wide, level, quiet road (Burbage Common Road) that serves more as a path enjoyed by all types of people and animals, with immediate access to the amenity of surrounding countryside. It provides unimpeded access for all, should they choose.
- 9.3 All of the proposed alternative PRowS for pedestrians provide increased distances which will serve to alienate and exclude some users, including (but not limited to) those who currently walk with young children to utilise the newly upgraded children's play area at Burbage Common or those with mobility issues.
- 9.4 Elmesthorpe Parish Council provided the Applicant with details of the commonly utilised, and enjoyed, circular route by residents. The section of the walk along Station Road B581 is less than ideal but does not stand to be altered by the proposed development therefore is disregarded in this comparison. The current walk continues down a peaceful Bridlepath Road past the land settlement homes, through Burbage Common, returning back along Burbage Common Road surrounded by open fields on either side of you until you arrive back at Station Road B581. At appendix 2 you can see this route, at 4.13 miles/6.65km.
- 9.5 The Applicant has provided us with the details of the two alternative circular routes that will be available once the proposed RFI is completed.
- 9.6 The first alternative circular route is 5.45miles/8.77km (incorrectly annotated as 8.74km on their map). This route travels mostly down the A47 link road and is an undesirable route. The increase to the existing route is +1.32miles/2.12km
- 9.7 The second alternative circular route is 6.35 miles long/10.2km. This route is more comparable with the amenity experienced with the current circular walk, and would be more desirable in terms of the surroundings within the limitations of the new surroundings. The increase to the existing route is +2.22miles/+3.57kms
- 9.8 The increase in the length of the alternative PRowS is really quite long, and for some, now too long. As well as the decrease in amenity value of our PRow, they are now more inaccessible to those with mobility issues, small children, poor health or simply just the time constraints of daily life. A stroll through a SRFI site to an amenity area for a rest, is not considered a comparable replacement for what is currently enjoyed by all users.

10. Construction

- 10.1. Elmesthorpe Parish Council is concerned that there is very little reassurance, respite or protection for the residents of Elmesthorpe against relentless construction and associated noise for a period of 10+ years

- 10.2. During construction phase (10-12 years) the impact upon residents to access essential services such as doctors, schools, chemists, post offices and supermarkets will be severely impacted. The quantum of highways works that will surround Elmesthorpe in every direction and at almost every connecting junction will isolate villagers from amenities required. Residents do still have to get children to school and manage to reach jobs in time and these delays will be extremely limiting.
- 10.3. Dust and noise during construction period will affect resident's enjoyment of homes and gardens, and will affect independent businesses in the area too.

11. Highways and Traffic Issues

- 11.1. Elmesthorpe Parish Council welcomes the decision to move the location of the new proposed T89 uncontrolled crossing to further north along the B581.
- 11.2. Elmesthorpe Parish Council is troubled that no modeling has been undertaken regarding the impact of any potential closure of the A47 link road on Elmesthorpe and the surrounding road network.
- 11.3. Elmesthorpe's only alternative vehicular access into the village will be entirely removed and any incidents that prevent access along the entirety of B581 Station Road, or from either end of Station Road B581 will severely affect residents and emergency services. The only available detour will be significant. Add into this the substantial increase in traffic using and joining the B4668 and A47 as a result of the A47 Link road, and the cumulative effect on residents trying to go about their daily lives will be extensive.
- 11.4. The Parish Council remains critically concerned about the impact on the entire local road infrastructure.

12. HGV Route Management Plan and Strategy

- 12.1. 'Table 1: HNRFI HGV Route Management Plan & Strategy Commitments' Elmesthorpe village should be added onto the list of named prohibited B581 routes. We feel it is appropriate that Elmesthorpe should be categorically included in this table and specified as a prohibited route, and not just noted as the B581 through Stoney Stanton. This applies to both the 'To/from M1 J20 via:' and 'To/from Leicester via:' categories. The B581 through Stoney Stanton/Elmesthorpe is confirmed as a prohibited route at paragraph 5.16 and therefore perhaps this is just a typographical omission in Table 1.
- 12.2. We maintain that Elmesthorpe Parish Council must be included in the list Parish Councils who are provided with details for the Travel Plan Coordinator. Whilst we have noted that the contact details of this individual will be available on the HNRFI website, we feel it is essential, that the Applicant facilitates a direct relationship with the nominated individual working on behalf of the Site Management Company. Should the proposal be approved, the proposed HNRFI would create an enormous amount of disruption for the village of

Elmesthorpe, and a working relationship is of the utmost importance for all parties involved.

- 12.3. Para 5.53 'In addition, financial penalties will be incurred for those considered to be persistently or repeatedly breaching the strategy.' What number defines 'persistent' and 'repeated' breaches? It is still ambiguous what the quantitative parameters are for when an occupier will trigger a financial penalty. It is understood that an occupier would fall within the 'private penalty system' for quantities of 6-9 breaches per day (subject to GFA) however how many times can they repeat this behaviour before the penalty is actually actioned? Without this information, it is still unclear how effective this strategy will be.
- 12.4. Elmesthorpe is the closest settlement to the proposed HNRFI and we deem it appropriate that we are given necessary consideration. It appears to dismiss the impact of HGV breaches on Elmesthorpe residents, on top of the multitude of other major impacts that Elmesthorpe residents will have borne.
- 12.5. The HGV Management plan is absolutely essential to maintain safety within the villages and should be actively managed with vigour and interest that displays a genuine appreciation of the impact the HNRFI will have on the surrounding communities. We urge the Applicant to consider implementation of shorter reporting periods (currently quarterly), and more frequent reviews/meetings (currently annually, and currently only for first 10 years).

13. General

- 13.1. For the avoidance of any doubt, Billington Road East, Billington Road West and Bridlepath Road are **in** the village of Elmesthorpe. It is incorrect of the Applicant to state that these receptors (e.g. Billington Road East) are closer than receptors within the village of Elmesthorpe; they **are part of** the village of Elmesthorpe.
- 13.2. The stress and anxiety being experienced by residents of Elmesthorpe that the Parish Council communicated at OFH1 has been interpreted as being associated with the NSIP Planning Process. For clarity the stress, anxiety and other problems described during our oral representation are associated with the constant, overwhelming worry that residents feel at the possibility of living with the devastating effects of having a NRFI in their small, quiet village.

14. Concluding Remarks

- 14.1 Elmesthorpe Parish Council is not opposed to development and progression. The areas immediately surrounding the village are currently subject to a high quantity of upcoming large proposals and Elmesthorpe Parish Council engage willingly.
- 14.2 Throughout the hearings and many representations made so far, it is becoming abundantly clear that this proposal leads to a great many problems. Problems that are unable to be mitigated fully, or even meaningfully enough, to make this bearable for those living around it.

- 14.3 The Applicant should genuinely consider that the amount of issues having to be mitigated in order to force this 'square peg into a round hole,' should be a warning sign as to the improper and unsuitable location of such a development. As well as becoming an unbearable problem for the residents and communities around it, it will potentially become a catastrophe for the Applicant themselves.
- 14.4 Elmesthorpe will be heavily impacted and damaged by all associated negative effects (with the exemption of barrier downtime at Narborough Station). The numerous hearings, deadlines and continually evolving reports have not assuaged our sizeable concerns.
- 14.5 In addition to the devastating force of the negative impacts, HNRFI does not stand to benefit the community of Elmesthorpe in any way at all.
- 14.6 At this stage in the Examination, the Parish Council cannot stress enough how much Elmesthorpe will be harmed by the proposed HNRFI. Elmesthorpe will be permanently overshadowed by the enormous presence of the RFI and there will be absolutely no respite from it: visually or aurally; physically or mentally; day or night.
- 14.7 This is an entire village of people who stand to have their lives irreversibly altered, in a very detrimental way and we sincerely ask that the Examining Authority takes this into consideration with the weight that our residents deserve. This will crush our community.

Elmesthorpe Parish Council strongly opposes this application.

Appendix 1

26th April 2023

Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange one step closer to delivering thousands of jobs for local people following planning milestone

- Development Consent Order (DCO) for Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI) has been accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate
- HNRFI will create over 8,000 regional jobs and help decarbonise the UK transport sector by driving the intermodal shift from road to rail
- Thousands of local residents have been consulted prior to submission with changes made to the scheme following feedback
- The Planning Inspectorate will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport in 2024

Tritax Symmetry has had its application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI) accepted by the Planning Inspectorate, a project which represents significant investment into the Leicestershire area that could unlock thousands of new jobs.

The submitted application is for a rail freight interchange and distribution centre between the Leicester-to-Hinckley railway to the north-west, and the M69 motorway to the south-east. The proposal includes a new rail freight terminal as well as modern logistics warehouses, infrastructure improvements and landscaping.

The application will now be considered by the Planning Inspectorate over the course of 2023/24 and, if permitted, would create over 8,000 regional jobs.

The plans would also deliver over £70 million worth of infrastructure improvements to help manage traffic flow in the local area, including

new slip roads at Junction 2 and a new link road connecting the M69 to B4669 / A47 Leicester Road.

The project represents a significant step forward in delivering more rail freight infrastructure in the UK. HNRFI could run 16 freight trains a day with each train removing up to 76 lorries off the roads, meaning 1.6 billion fewer kilometres travelled by HGVs a year.

Sinead Turnbull, Planning Director at Tritax Symmetry said: "The acceptance of the application for Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange marks an important milestone in delivering significant investment in low carbon buildings and infrastructure for Leicestershire."

"The unique location, with excellent strategic connections, will mean it is one of the most important rail freight and infrastructure projects for the region's connectivity. It will generate new apprenticeships and skills for the region in a fast-growing and future-facing logistics industry – one that is the lifeblood of the economy and vital to our country's growth."

Thousands of local residents were consulted prior to submission, with changes being made to the scheme following feedback, including the provision of additional landscaping and ecological enhancements as well as a reduction to building heights and the provision of a footbridge at The Outwoods level crossing.

The Planning Inspectorate will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport whether to approve the project early in 2024.

Appendix 2

