

## Stoney Stanton Action Group Summation of Cases and Signposting

Dave Harrold (Chairman, Stoney Stanton Action Group)

*The Examining Authority has stated that it considers that it would be beneficial both to it and to the Secretary of State for certain interested parties (and all IPs are invited to do this if they wish) to provide a document summarising their cases – essentially a summary and signposting document, being particularly beneficial if emphasis was given to areas which remain in dispute. This should be provided by Deadline 8 (Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024)*

The Stoney Stanton Action Group considers the following issues to be significant and unresolved (with the understanding that this does not mean other issues raised are not significant or that they have been resolved).

- 1. Unsuitability of the location:** For certain issues, no mitigation by the applicant is possible because of the unsuitable nature of the location and the sheer size of the development: The site chosen is at the approximate centre of a ring of rural communities, none of which are more than two miles from the proposed site, and some are less than one mile from the perimeter. These are: Elmhurst, Stoney Stanton, Sapcote, Sharnford, Aston Flamville, Burbage, Part of Hinckley, Barwell, Earl Shilton, plus the long established traveller settlement at Aston Firs which is immediately adjacent to the proposed site. The proposal, if it goes ahead, will completely change the nature of the area and have a major negative impact on the way of life, peaceful enjoyment of life, and wellbeing of more than 92,000 people living in these rural communities. (Point 4 in Stoney Stanton Action Group Relevant Representation RR-1311)
- 2. Proximity to a much loved local beauty spot which also contains two SSSIs:** This point has been raised by many people and organisations. No amount of mitigation can take away the fact that a massive industrial site (rail freight and warehousing) is proposed to be placed next to an important area (Burbage Common and Woods, with associated adjacent woods) which is used as an amenity by local people and people from a wider area for rest, relaxation, enjoying nature, and for their wellbeing. This proposal will have a massive detrimental effect in many ways including residents' peaceful enjoyment of their neighbourhood. (ref REP1-225 Section 7.1 and (for instance) REP1-064 and REP1-208).
- 3. Ecology and Biodiversity:** Concerns remain on how a Biodiversity Net Gain of ten percent will be achieved. Some of this will be offsite, the location of which is not made clear. Onsite, the applicant accepts that there will be a significant negative impact on biodiversity unless mitigation strategies are employed. Once these are in place, the applicant predicts that there will be no significant effect. However research has called into question the efficacy of some of these measures. More proof that these proposed mitigations will be effective is needed, especially in the light of the proximity to SSSIs. The whole of Section 7 of the Stoney Stanton Action Group written representation REP1-225 (TR050007-001388) highlights and expands these concerns. Also, for instance, CPRE Leicestershire representation REP1-083 section 4 (4.8 onwards)
- 4. Road Traffic:** Our major concern is that most of the road traffic issues raised in our WR were not adequately presented during the consultation period and in fact have not to our knowledge been settled with the relevant highways authorities to date. A road bypassing the

villages of Stoney Stanton and Sapcote was in the original consultation proposal and this may have helped, however it was excluded on the grounds that residents did not want it thereby leaving the problem unresolved (REP1-225 Section 5.14). Other proposed mitigations for traffic through these villages have not been consulted on, not shown to be effective and in at least one case has been discounted purely because it has been acknowledged to be impossible to do (the cross roads in Stoney Stanton – J38). Our opinion is that the applicant is trying to “brush these issues under the carpet” (e.g. REP1-225 Sections 5.1.12 to 5.1.17, 5.1.35 to 5.1.41, plus REP1-201 section 3)

5. **The proposed development is not needed.** The Stoney Stanton Action Group is still convinced that the proposed HNRFI development is not needed. In particular, due to the number of SRFIs in the area, and in particular because of relatively new ones such as East Midlands Gateway, West Midlands Gateway, Northampton (SEGRO) Gateway and expanding existing SRFIs, such as the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal and Birch Coppice near to Birmingham, it seems that the benefit to the country of bringing freight into the area by train (including from Felixstowe) can be achieved with less adverse effect on the countryside and to residents of rural villages and towns by using existing SRFIs for the additional freight traffic. (ref REP1-225 Section 2). The applicant makes a subjective response in REP2-065 that the benefits of building HNRFI outweighs the impact, but we disagree.
6. **A large concentration of NSRFIs in a relatively small area is contrary to the NPS .** Whereas the NN NPS does expect some clustering of SRFIs (which in our area already exists), it does point out that consideration should be given to proposals for SRFIs in areas where there is currently lesser provision. Continuing to build SRFIs in an area that is already crowded will tend to have the effect of reducing investment in areas where strategically they would be more beneficial. (REP1-225 Section 1.2 and Section 2.13 to 2.15, Draft NN-NPS Section 3.109)
7. **Airborne pollutants, particularly particulates:** (REP1-225 Section 6.1.3 and 6.1.4) The concern that ourselves and others have (e.g. Stoney Stanton Parish Council) is that Stoney Stanton is approximately 1.25 miles to the East of the HNRFI site and that prevailing winds (predominantly from the West) will carry airborne pollutants caused mainly by HGV diesel engines and tyres to our village, causing breathing and other health problems for residents. The applicant’s response in REP2-065 is to refer to REP1-018, but this document does not mention airborne pollutants or prevailing winds. We do not believe this has been dealt with.
8. **On the balance this development will be more detrimental than advantageous to the local community and to the country:** Putting such a large industrial development in the centre of a predominantly rural area (because it is convenient to the applicant), with all of the associated environmental, ecological and traffic issues plus the ruination of a local beauty spot will make life worse for many people and will change the nature of the area for ever. A lot of the gains that might be made can also be achieved by making more use of existing similar nearby facilities. It is our opinion that the adverse impact of the proposed development would far outweigh the benefits.