

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Hinckley SRFI](#)
Subject: Response to HNFRI proposal. Interested Party Ref No: 20037705
Date: 03 February 2025 12:42:55

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I note the extended response date of 7 February 2025.

I object to the proposed HNFRI. I share local MP's view that 'this is a wholly inappropriate development and that the harms far outweigh the potential benefits'.

I also have huge concerns about the process. The Planning Inspectorate report highlighted significant concerns and recommended the Government reject the building consent application for said project. The then Transport Secretary stated she was 'minded to refuse' the application. Why it was then not finally refused I have no idea but given that insufficient evidence has been submitted as part of this application, key evidence not even asked for by the powers that be, one can only assume this is a 'fait accompli' and a political decision. The Chancellor's comments on 'prioritising' infrastructure applications merely underlines the political direction, which appears to ignore genuine democratic principles, the informed views and evidence of the Planning Inspectorate, local councils and communities, who have a genuine understanding of their local area.

The proposed HNFRI is NOT necessary - the East Midlands already has multiple rail freight interchanges. 4 Daventry terminals (18 miles away from the proposed HNFRI), 4 national rail hubs (within 45 miles), and an under-construction Northampton Gateway (31 miles away).

Key issues:

Safety

The existing roads and proposed infrastructure are totally inadequate to deal with the onslaught of traffic.

Safety Risks at M1 J21 and M69 J3

These areas are already congested at many times throughout the day, with frequent accidents in the vicinity. So why have inadequate models (e.g. LinSig) been used to provide data instead of more accurate methodologies, such as microsimulation? Could the answer be that this less accurate method results in a manipulation of traffic data by collecting it during periods of reduced traffic activity, such as holidays or lockdowns?

Increased highway safety risk at Sapcote

Submissions provided by the Applicant have worsened concerns about traffic impacts on Sapcote. This issue has been flagged by Leicestershire County Council. The Applicant has failed to address collision risks, narrow road geometry, and worst-case scenarios in their traffic and safety analyses. The removal of the proposed bypass for Sapcote increases risks, contradicting earlier mitigation assurances by the Applicant. Again, the Planning Inspectorate identified these shortcomings as critical failures in addressing safety and traffic flow.

Safety at Narborough Level Crossing

Issues raised have not been addressed.

Lack of sustainable travel planning.

There is a lack of sustainable travel planning. Network Rail's indication that reopening certain stations could be viable contrasts with the Applicant's apparent dismissal of such options.

The revised Sustainable Transport Strategy fails to adequately address the balance between rail and road freight. Living in the area I know full well the huge increase in road traffic and the ongoing problems with road capacity. There should be clearer commitments to reduce road freight in the area.

We need clarity on stricter enforcement strategies to ensure HGVs comply with routing plans. Who will monitor this? Who will administer and enforce penalties? There is a lack of accountability in the Applicant's proposals.

This is a major issue as there is already an increase in the number of HGVs that divert to smaller roads to avoid congestion on main routes. This is already having a negative environmental impact.

The letter from Blaby DC to the Secretary of State for Transport highlights the weakness of legislation concerning strategic rail freight interchanges - there is no requirement for goods to arrive or leave by rail. Clearly there would be a significant reliance on road transport, having a detrimental effect on surrounding areas, with increased air, noise and light pollution. I am concerned about the long-term social implications of inadequate planning and mitigation measures, including security risks linked to the development.

Environmental Impact

This is a major concern. Increased pollution from significantly higher emissions levels, noise and light pollution. Why is there no independent scientific analysis on the negative impact of the HNFRI on the health of the local population? Further consideration must be given to the cumulative effects.

Burbage Common, SSSI.

The Planning Inspectorate notes the 'substantial residual harm' to this vital SSSI. Not only during the 10 years of construction of the HNFRI but forever. The ExA concludes it would diminish its ecological and social value.

The impact of HNFRI on Burbage Common would be significant and disastrous. The proposed site is adjacent to Burbage Common which has SSSI status. The destruction of habitat would have serious implications for the flora and fauna of the area. Wildlife 'corridors' would be destroyed leading to the loss of wildlife across the area. What is now an area of beauty would become a hideous eyesore - with 35 metres high warehouses dominating a huge expanse of land.

Burbage Common is a place of solace, peace, fresh air, quiet and birdsong. A place to exercise and improve one's health. A place cherished and valued by the public. During the pandemic, more than ever, it was a place where we could remember loved ones, friends and family who had succumbed to Covid-19. A place where our mental health could be recharged. If HNFRI goes ahead that 'place' will no longer be a place of quiet, fresh air, peace and calm. It will be threatened by pollution in all its ugly forms - noise, air, light. An act of environmental vandalism.

The proposed development will be in operation 24/7. There will be an accompanying increase in pollution due to the significant increase in lorry traffic. There has been no attempt to reduce emissions from HGVs or diesel trains, which again will have a massive effect on local residents, families using Burbage Common and wildlife.

The severance of Public Rights of Way would create huge problems for those wanting to access Burbage Common. It could undoubtedly harm mental well-being.

Social Impact

Having experienced the building of the A47 bypass I know full well what this development would mean to the area. The disruption to life would be immense - road closures, pollution in its many forms and all borne by local communities for a minimum of 10 years. And then there would no doubt be the proposal for housing developments alongside new roads, although no one in their right mind would want to live in an area next to the HNFRI with increased pollution and accompanying poor air quality. So, where that leaves the proposed Earl Shilton SUE, goodness knows. Why would families want to live nearby a NFRI, with its accompanying pollution? Indeed, should housing and a school even be built in an area with such air, noise and light pollution, not to mention the hugely increased safety risks from traffic?

Mental health is crucial if we are to survive in today's world. The impact the whole process of HNFRI has had, and is having, on communities has already affected people's health and well-being. The thought of it becoming a reality is heartbreaking - for local communities and the wildlife that will bear

the brunt of this unnecessary and ill-thought scheme. I only hope common sense and not political agendas will prevail.

Alison Ford

