

**Rt. Hon Heidi Alexander,
Secretary of State for Transport**

cc Planning Inspectorate

cc Department for Transport

Friends of Narborough Station



Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange
Submission to the Secretary of State for Transport.

For completeness we open this submission by noting in black, our original submission to Tritax Symmetry and the Planning Inspectorate. Everything else in red is our submission post your predecessor's response, whereby she instructed that further information and evidence is required from interested parties.

FONS is a pro railway group and has considerable knowledge and experience of the operation of the South Leicestershire Line and the East Midlands Rail Network generally, however you will see that using this knowledge and experience, we have set out quite clearly why this massive proposal should not take place.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Friends of Narborough Station is a group of people, whose main aims as defined in our Constitution, are to;

1.2 Act as a User Group and provide support for the Station Adoption Scheme, currently promoted by East Midlands Railway.

1.3 Promote and protect the interests of Users of Narborough Station, with an objective of ensuring that better services are provided by Train Operating Companies – TOCs.

1.4 Work closely in a constructive and responsible manner with TOCs, the Department for Transport and local councils at all levels. This includes Narborough Parish Council as Stakeholder and Blaby District Council whose area the station serves.

1.5 Monitor demographic changes in particular new housing and commercial developments in the Blaby District Council area and the impact these will have on the station's capacity and the ability of the surrounding area to cope with such changes.

1.6 Liaise with other public and private bodies, with an interest in rail travel and other associated travel arrangements.

1.7 Take an interest in the Narborough Station Buildings and their surroundings, including the Station Garden and Signal Box.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 There are at least ten Existing, Proposed or Planned Competitive Warehouse and Container Facilities already within 50 miles of Hinckley, these are at:

- Northampton Gateway
- Wellingborough
- DIRFT
- Coventry
- Hams Hall
- East Midlands Gateway
- Magna Park
- Birch Coppice
- Landor Street, Birmingham
- and now proposed at Hinckley

2.2 The developer argues that the project will bring jobs to the area and that employees will not have to travel any significant distances between home and work. This is not true as the unemployment rate in the area, is well below the national average and one of the lowest in England.

2.3 The site would be situated in what is already a heavily polluted area, with the additional road journeys by employees over a 24 hour period making the area even more polluted.

2.4 Light and Noise Pollution would be tremendous with local residents having to suffer at all times of the day and night. This is in addition to the noise of cranes, lorries and train movements coming into and from the site itself.

2.5 Local people would lose the enjoyment of their long-standing conservation and leisure areas, such as Burbage Common and Aston Firs.

3. RAIL ACCESS TO THE SITE

3.1 Firstly it has to be discussed that the railway line at the entrance to the site is at present on a 1:162 gradient. Railway Rolling Stock unless properly braked can "Run Away" on a gradient of 1:330. This tends to happen in private yards but thankfully not often on running lines, but there have been plenty of instances where it has happened.

3.2 We raise this matter as the Rail Accident Investigation Branch has indicated its concern in their latest Annual Report. Such incidents happened at Clitheroe in Lancashire as recently as 2020 and at Toton in Nottinghamshire in 2021.

3.3 Will there be a guarantee that a locomotive will always be attached to a train during container handling, and will there be a clearly specified procedure that the fixed brakes are always applied to the train at all other times. Will the Operator or Network Rail be responsible for ensuring that the running lines are protected by catch points or a sand drag arresting facility.

3.4 The rail junction into the site, will be situated between Elmsthorpe and Hinckley. For safe access, trains will almost certainly be slowed to a stand or to a maximum of 10 mph before being cleared to enter. Depending on the direction the train is coming from, will mean crossing over the opposite running line. This will cause a prolonged obstruction of both eastbound and westbound lines, until the train is fully clear of the main running lines and safely into the terminal.

3.5 Trains leaving the terminal will inevitably cause similar delays to passenger trains during the cross over process. Restarting a 1,500 tonne half mile long train, is not a quick process, particularly in winter time and during adverse weather conditions. The fact there is a 1:162 gradient to climb, will require extended occupation while the train gets to line speed. Delays to passenger trains will have to be accepted and will certainly compromise aspirations by Midlands Connect and others, to provide a more frequent service and thus improve connectivity between the East and West Midlands.

4. RAIL OPERATIONS AT THE SITE

4.1 All Freight Train Rail Heads in this country have what is called a "Cripple Road". These are situated for instance at Power Stations, Mines, Collieries, Oil Terminals, Quarries and other locations where freight trains are loaded and unloaded. These facilities are where "Red Carded" Wagons and Containers are shunted out of the way in order to prevent delays to both freight and passenger trains.

4.2 Will these facilities be provided and will they be covered? Will covered facilities be provided for the inspection, maintenance and repair of both locomotives and wagons and if so, what will be the level of noise emitted? Will wagons have to be lifted by crane making its own noise or will below ground inspection pits be provided?

4.3 In some overseas countries these “Cripple Roads” are called “Sick Roads”. Whatever they are called, their importance in support of a safe operational railway cannot be stressed too highly.

4.4 Will the terminal have an auditable “Fitness to run Certification” procedure in place for all Locomotives and Wagons that depart from the Interchange?

5. EFFECT ON THE OPERATION OF THE SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE LINE

5.1 There is no doubt these long and heavy extra trains will have an effect on the operation of the South Leicestershire Line. We understand the longest trains at present are some 600 metres, the extra trains proposed will be 775 metres long.

5.2 Containers themselves are specified to measure up to 40 feet long and 8 foot 6 inches high. How many of these will be on one train?

5.3 Whatever Tritax Symmetry may say, the South Leicestershire Line is not a main line and was not built as a main line.

5.4 The line only has three aspect signalling, as opposed to four aspect signalling on a main line. There are no refuges, no passing loops and no facilities for Bi Directional working. Putting that simply, it means that any breakdown or other incident could close the line for hours or days. Who would pick up the bill for its effect on the country’s economy?

5.5 Local residents hear the trains and feel the vibration from freight trains, during the overnight period now. It could be argued that the railway line was here first. When residents moved to the area, the trains were not as heavy as they are today remembering it was not a main line with no intention of taking such traffic.

5.6 Has the geology underlying the line been analysed to ensure it is capable of supporting the longer, heavier trains? Will the additional cost of maintaining the tracks, be picked up by Tritax Symmetry or Network Rail? If the latter, it will be a cost to the tax payer, remembering that Tritax claim there will be no cost to the tax payer and that every aspect of the project will be 100% privately financed.

5.7 Further constraints are the fact that both Wigston North and South Junctions were some years ago, reduced to single rather than double lead layouts.

6. EFFECT ON THE OPERATION OF NARBOROUGH LEVEL CROSSING

6.1 FONS has done barrier timings at the crossing and taking into account all current proposals, road closures will increase from the current 20 minutes per hour to 40 minutes per hour. Timings taken by FONS were from the time the red light flashes (Ordering vehicles and pedestrians to stop) to the barriers going up and the roadway being fully clear again.

6.2 As a result of these timings, a report was published by FONS in 2019 entitled “Will Narborough Be Ready”, which revealed that the crossing was closed to road traffic for an average 16.25 minutes per hour. The report stated “Whilst this doesn’t sound too much, excessive delays are caused to road traffic, particularly at peak times and if there is a build up of trains”.

6.3 In 2019 there were very few freight trains using the South Leicestershire Line and thus going through Narborough. There are now up to two freight trains per hour, hence the conservative estimate of barrier down time has increased to 20 minutes per hour.

6.4 FONS has submitted a Freedom Of Information Request to Network Rail, in order to ascertain if barrier timings are electronically recorded. A key request to Tritax Symmetry and indeed Network Rail, would be for full transparency over the numbers used to calculate line availability and barrier downtime.

6.5 It would also be useful to know the average speed and length of current freight trains, against what is expected of Tritax services. If slower (As expected due to acceleration from the Interchange) or longer, then downtime will be far in excess of four minutes per train. It is imperative this information is obtained, so that meaningful, truthful and accurate information is duly analysed.

6.6 This is a busy crossing for both road and rail traffic. At peak times, road traffic queues through Littlethorpe towards Whetstone and in the other direction it completely clogs up the narrow roads and two mini roundabouts in the Narborough village area and spills on to the already busy B4114 dual carriageway, thus creating even further dangers.

6.7 The narrow pavements on the approaches to the crossing at school times, see children and adults having to walk on the road in order to proceed. Being held by the extra trains using the crossing, will create even more congestion and dangers than there are at present for all pedestrians.

6.8 Many of the parents taking and collecting their children to and from school, have younger children and babies in their families. As they cannot be left on their own at home, this means negotiating prams and push chairs etc. along the busy pavements and if not possible on to the also congested roadway.

6.9 This situation will only get worse and indeed more dangerous, if barrier down times are extended. The two settlements of Narborough and Littlethorpe are separated by the railway line, although the crossing acts as an important link between the two settlements.

6.10 A flyover was proposed some years ago, but this now would not be possible, due to a housing estate having been built on the Narborough side.

6.11 Tritax Symmetry have taken no cognisance of the impact these half mile long and heavy trains will have on the operation of the crossing, the effect on the village and the overall effect on the community itself.

6.12 It is not good enough to say that nothing can be done to resolve the so called Narborough problem, it is however better accepted that nothing should be done that knowingly makes the situation more dangerous.

6.13 If the Secretary of State does make the wrong decision, money and planning permission will be needed to resolve the so called Narborough problem. County Highways will have to be involved and at least one Pedestrian Lift, provided at the Level Crossing.

6.14 There are no guidelines for the amount of time that the barrier can be down for. This is an automatic process, with Trains whether freight or passenger always taking priority over road traffic.

6.15 There is a "Right Side Failure" process in place, which means that on occasions when the barriers have failed, the Signaller at the Railway Operating Centre in Derby is not aware there is a problem, until advised by a member of the public.

6.16 Whilst it is the Signallers role to monitor a CCTV screen to check the crossing for any vehicle or other obstacle trapped on the crossing when the barriers come down, is this a pure fail safe system? Cars and

Tractors have been hit recently by trains due to Signallers being distracted and unclear communications between Signallers and Control Centres.

7. EFFECT ON THE OPERATION OF NARBOROUGH STATION

7.1 FONS has for many years been concerned about many safety aspects about the operation of the station. The size and weight of trains operating to and from HNRFI and speeding through the station at 75 mph., has as yet never been experienced.

7.2 At present and particularly on windy days, there is a serious danger that people waiting on the platforms could be swept under a train. This is not a dramatic assertion, but a fact.

7.3 The narrowness of the platforms present their own danger, particularly the widths from the yellow lines to the station buildings. Waiting passengers are never told to stand behind the yellow lines, as is customary at most other stations.

7.4 Thankfully wagons are no longer of an open type and we do not any longer have passengers showered with coal dust and other materials, since what were called HAA Wagons have been withdrawn.

7.5 There is however still a frightening draught and noise created, made even worse due to few advanced safety announcements being made. Occasionally when a stopping passenger train is announced and the level crossing barriers come down, a freight train passes through as waiting passengers are moving themselves forward to the edge of the platform.

7.6 Both passenger and freight trains not stopping at the station, are not required to sound their horn. There are no "W" Warning Signs either side of the station, which FONS considers should be in place to protect both the station itself and the level crossing.

7. EFFECT ON THE OPERATION OF THE MIDLAND MAIN LINE

8.1 Most passenger and freight trains that come off the South Leicestershire Line and thus head towards Leicester Station and onwards, have to wait for a path on to the Midland Main Line before heading northwards. This is always to give priority to trains already on the MML.

8.2 Additional trains were introduced by East Midlands Railway a few years ago, in order to provide a better more frequent service between the East Midlands and London St Pancras, in order to boost the East Midlands economy, get cars off the roads and support the government's levelling up agenda.

8.3 This has resulted in a capacity problem between Wigston Junction and Syston Junction, the route trains to and from HNRFI are planned to use. There is a rail route for trains to turn right at Wigston Junction, but this has now for some reason been put out of use.

8.4 There has been a proposal to reopen the line for passenger trains to run directly between Burton on Trent and Leicester, known as the Ivanhoe Line. This would have relieved traffic on the A50 and other roads into and out of Leicester. This we are told cannot happen due mainly to the foregoing capacity problem between Wigston Junction and Leicester.

8.5 So if we cannot relieve local roads to help the constituents of Leicestershire and Staffordshire, plus the obvious help with the environment, why can capacity be found for long and heavy freight trains hauled by dirty diesel engines?

8.6 In addition this stretch of line will be subject to long delays and closures, when MML electrification is under way north of Market Harborough. This will be a far more definite project than any plan to electrify the South Leicestershire Line.

8. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL AND SAFETY FACTORS

9.1 Tritax Symmetry claim the Interchange will have NO impact on the environment or wild life. We consider this to be a totally unsubstantiated statement. Tritax Symmetry also claim that Blaby District Council and that Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, were both happy with the way measurements were taken.

9.2 Interestingly the outcomes and results of these measurements, have we understand not as yet been disclosed.

9. OVERWHELMING CONCLUSIONS

10.1 Both of the webinars posed more questions than answers, supplementary questions were not allowed. There was no mention about passing loops, refuges, bi directional working or that freight trains even today cause delays to passenger trains.

10.2 Tritax Symmetry claim there will be “No Impact” on the environment or wild life and “Little Impact” as far as the railway line was concerned. No evidence of these claims has as yet been provided.

10.3 Safety matters relating to Narborough Station highlighted by FONS have not been addressed, in fact Tritax Symmetry seem to have no concern about the effect their project will have on the station, the level crossing or indeed the village itself including the overall community.

10.4 A question to be asked relates to the genuine requirement for the use of rail, or is it solely to expedite planning consent. Could it be there could be railway sidings and other related railway facilities built with all the loss of green belt land, never to be used or even see a train.

10.5 We have highlighted a number of serious problems with this application, with huge implications not just in the Elmsthorpe and Hinckley area, but in an extremely wide radius from it.

10.6 FONS supports the widespread opposition to this proposal from the Leicestershire Parishes and Action Groups, and hopes the Secretary of State, will consider all detailed aspects and unanswered questions, relating to each of the safety and environmental concerns raised in this response.

Since the foregoing was written a number of events have taken place, so that FONS could even better grasp the enormity of the proposal and its further implications on the overall railway network, were it to be implemented.

1. Five members of FONS visited the Network Rail East Midlands Operating Centre at Derby, on Monday 22nd January 2024.
2. FONS attended a virtual meeting between the Network Rail Route Director and the MP for South Leicestershire on Monday 4th March 2024
3. FONS met on site with the Network Rail Route Director and Route Level Crossing Manager on Friday 22nd March 2024.
4. FONS attended an East Midland Railway Stakeholders Meeting on Friday 31st January 2025.

1. Visit to Network Rail East Midlands Operating Centre on 22/01/2024

The visit to the Network Rail East Midlands Operating Centre was interesting in that we observed for ourselves, the limitations in existence today as far as operating capabilities are concerned. The junctions at Wigston are struggling to cope with today's traffic levels and plans to provide more capacity have all been shelved over the years. Controllers were busy regulating trains in their respective areas and it was interesting in that I did not get an answer to my question "What would you do if a half mile long Tritax train turned up at Glen Parva Junction right now?" Tritax have advised that revisions have been agreed with Network Rail, for changes to be made at the Centre in order to accommodate HNRFI. Changes to the control of the Midland Main Line are in progress, but nothing for HNRFI. The whole line between the already busy junctions at Wigston and Syston through Leicester Station, is seen as a bottleneck. A serious concern that has already been raised in public, by the Chief Executive Officer of GB Railfreight and others. Network Rail's only written reply that FONS has access to is "There are options for a phased approach which will allow the works to be progressed at the appropriate time". FONS finds it difficult to understand what this really means. Adding a mix of half mile long freight trains will only make the situation worse, having a serious knock on effect on services on the MML to and from London St Pancras and Cross Country services between Birmingham New Street and the Eastern Counties including Stansted Airport.

2. Virtual Meeting with Network Rail and MP for South Leicestershire on 04/03/2024

A number of questions were posed of Network Rail at the virtual meeting, most of which did not receive clear cut answers. FONS members are amazed that the level crossing barrier at Narborough, could be closed to road traffic for up to 45 minutes at a

time. Recently at a quiet time of the day, the village area including the B4114 dual carriageway and Littlethorpe were full of stationary traffic. This was because the level crossing barriers had been in the down position for road traffic, for an excessive amount of time. I 'phoned the Network Rail East Midlands Operating Centre, who were not aware of the problem. They then responded and said they would release the barrier, after the next train had gone through.

FONS has been unable to see a site assessment, for the level crossing at Narborough. This according to Network Rail, should be documented as a Narrative Risk Assessment or Suitable and Sufficient Risk Assessment/Impact Assessment Report. FONS has not seen any evidence of this taking place. I attended a meeting with Arap who recognise the potential dangers associated with the level crossing, particularly with its narrow approaches and closeness to two mini roundabouts. The problem at Narborough is exacerbated due to the constrained sub optimal road layout on Station Road, which prevents traffic from moving freely when the barriers are raised. This occasionally causes road vehicles to be stopped on the crossing, which can create its obvious danger, if not observed by the Controller at the Network Rail East Midlands Operating Centre. Network Rail we understand has been in discussion with Leicestershire County Council in order to find ways of improving the situation, but no signs of improvement are visible at the site so far.

The issue of runaway rolling stock discussed at paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of our original submission, has not been addressed by Network Rail. The worry we have is the gradient on the South Leicestershire Line, at the junction to and from the HNRFI site. Network Rail have said there will be a rising gradient east to west, before the line reaches a level plateau. They have said there is LITTLE RISK of an uncontrolled runaway at the site, not there is NO RISK. This is despite the concerns raised by the Rail Accident Investigation Branch.

The South Leicestershire Line has little scope for flexible working between Wigston Glen Parva Junction and Nuneaton. This means there are no crossovers, no refuges and no bi directional working possibilities. Our question is; How can additional Freight trains and indeed passenger trains be "factored" in, when for years FONS has been told there is no capacity for a better service to be provided for Narborough passengers. The incident on 6th December 2023 was discussed, whereby a passenger on a train at Narborough was taken seriously ill. An ambulance was called but could not get to the station, due to the congestion resulting from the level crossing barriers being closed to road traffic. The train was eventually moved to Nuneaton, where paramedics attended to the passenger 45 minutes later. FONS was made aware an operating protocol was being considered, but we have not as yet been made aware of any progress with this. Lets hope an incident like this does not happen again, with more serious consequences.

FONS considers HNRFI will compromise existing freight users of the network, having 10 similar facilities within 50 miles of HNRFI. We could have a massive rail/road facility that never sees a train. With 10 similar such facilities, would existing track and signalling capabilities be able to cope?

3. Site meeting with Network Rail on 22/03/2024

The FONS Treasurer and I met on site at Narborough Station with the then Network Rail Route Director East Midlands and Network Rail's Route Level Crossing Manager. We started the meeting by observing the operation of the Level Crossing. Concern was expressed about a broken part of the crossing. We discussed the poor signage on both approaches to the crossing, which the Route Director said he would report to Leicestershire County Council. Vehicles were parked causing an obstruction on the Narborough side. This caused road vehicles to temporarily block the crossing. I advised that heavy road vehicles used the crossing including, 'buses on the school run and those on rail replacement work. The Route Director felt the siting of the 'bus stop was in a bad place and again, will contact Leicestershire County Council about this. Another hazard is when the close by local convenience store has deliveries, which also causes a severe obstruction. While we were there, a large lorry with a large trailer passed through. We were there at a comparatively quiet time of the day, but I managed to get us all to understand and imagine the situation at the busy morning and evening weekday peak times.

We then moved to the station itself, after a heavy freight train had passed through Platform 2. I pointed out and it was observed, there were no warning announcements about trains passing through the station. I remarked that on one occasion when I was travelling, the 09.25 to Birmingham New Street was announced as the next train to arrive with passengers moving to the edge of the platform, only for a freight train to pass through at speed. The maximum speed for freight trains passing through is 75mph and for passenger trains it is 90mph. The Route Director said he would look into this. We discussed the narrowness of the platforms, in particular the very narrow space between the Ticket Office and the platform edge on Platform 1. I wondered if the triangular part of the Ticket Office could be levelled out, in order to reduce the safety risk at that point. The Route Director understood what I was saying, but was opposed to the suggestion as it would spoil the character of the building. I disagreed saying that safety was of paramount importance, rather than appearance.

FONS is very worried about the extreme narrowness of this particular area and hopes any contact between a moving train, irrespective of speed and a person never takes place. This has very recently been brought to mind by an accident, which took place at Banbury Station on 8th June 2024. A Cross Country passenger train travelling from Reading to York entered Platform 2 at Banbury, where it was due to stop. As the train

arrived, a pram carrying a two month old infant rolled towards the platform edge and came into contact with the train's bodyside. This contact occurred while the train was moving at an estimated 35 mph (56 km/hr) and caused the pram to spin and tip over. This resulted in the infant falling from the pram onto the platform surface. The infant sustained a minor head injury as a result. Unlike Banbury the platforms at Narborough are level, but the forced closeness of waiting passengers to trains has the potential to be of even more danger.

We observed the former Station Master's House and Garden site, and talked about our wish for it to be transformed for the benefit of the community. Difficulties with the Arch Company were highlighted and I was asked to provide contact details. The site we understand is still owned by Network Rail and has a 125 year lease, awarded to the Arch Company. We also explained the problems FONS had, when trying to get a new Cycle Hub for the station.

Having visited the proposed HNRFI site, we all agreed that the area to be taken up is huge. I mentioned the other 9 Rail/Road Interchanges, which the Route Director didn't wish to comment upon. Back at Narborough, it will be seen there are a number of issues relating to the Level Crossing. Both the Route Director and the Route Level Crossing Manager suggested there needs to be better communications between Network Rail and Leicestershire County Council. On behalf of FONS, I asked if we could be represented in these communications. FONS has not as yet heard anything and is not aware if even any communications have taken place.

4. East Midlands Railway Stakeholder Meeting on 31/01/2025

Lack of capacity and resilience on the South Leicestershire Line, was raised over and over again. Concern was also expressed by EMR's Control Staff, about the restrictions on the Midland Main Line between Wigston Junction and Syston Junction. This is the route the Tritax trains are planning to use. It is difficult to keep the trains moving now without the imposition of additional half mile long heavy freight trains to cope with.

Much discussion took place about how additional freight trains, will fit in with Midland Main Line Electrification Programme. All it will create will be more bottlenecks and substantial delays.

STATEMENTS OF FACT RELATING TO NARBOROUGH LEVEL CROSSING

Located near to Narborough Station, it facilitates the travel of road vehicles and pedestrians along Station Road. The Applicant's approach was that as long as the level crossing was not closed for more than 45 minutes in any hour, then there were no issues. Network Rail has confirmed that the rail industry, including HM Railway

Inspectorate at the Office of Road and Rail (ORR), only considers it necessary to undertake a site assessment where the 45 minute criterion is breached.

The ExA accepted that each train journey would result in a 4 minute closure, assuming it did not coincide with the closure associated with another train path. The Applicant highlighted that the worst-case scenario for barrier closure when trains make their journey, the Level Crossing would be closed for for a maximum of 25 minutes and 22 seconds between 15.00 Hrs and 16.00Hrs. This is already a busy and conjected time, due it being the main school closure time. Creating more conjection creates more dangers, especially for children.

Furthermore, the chance of overlapping between train paths, thus extending individual closures will also increase, resulting in an increase in the chances that the traffic queue would not dissipate prior to the next closure of the crossing, resulting in queues and conjection worsening. The ExA concluded that due to the additional closures expected at the Level Crossing, the Secretary of State should give highway delays moderate weight against the Proposed Development.

The previous Secretary of State noted the ExA's concerns about additional closure times and that this would unfairly impact those with ambulatory issues, as they would be unable to utilise the stepped bridge over the railway. She also noted that the ExA concluded that this impact would not advance equality of opportunity for those with protected characteristics of age and disability as defined by the Equality Act.

If it is within legislation to allow the highway to be closed to road traffic whether it be for 25 minutes and 22 seconds or even 30 minutes, this would be a ridiculous state of affairs. It would bring the whole area of Narborough, Littlethorpe and Whetstone to a complete standstill and compromise safety on the fast flowing B4114 dual carrageway. This would affect the whole life of these villages including both businesses and individuals. This is one of the many reasons that FONS is strongly disputing Network Rail's theoretical assessment, of the impact HNRFI would have on the South Leicestershire Line.

FURTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

The following are in addition to the six Overwhelming Conclusions set out in our original submission.

1. IT IS GOOD THAT NETWORK RAIL AT LAST, RECOGNISES, THAT THERE ARE PROBLEMS WITH THE LEVEL CROSSING AT NARBOROUGH.

2. IS IT GOOD ENOUGH FOR THERE TO BE LITTLE RISK OF A RUNAWAY RATHER THAN NO RISK, REMEMBERING THE RAIB'S CONCERNS.
3. THERE HAS BEEN NO CONSIDERATION THAT THESE HEAVIER TRAINS, WILL HAVE A LONG TERM EFFECT ON THE LINE.
4. THE SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE LINE WAS NOT BUILT AS A MAIN LINE AND WAS NEVER INTENDED TO BE SO.
5. GEOLOGY PLUS KNOWN CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE ISSUES, HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED.
6. TRITAX SYMMETRY HAVE SAID HNRFI, WILL NOT COST THE TAX PAYER A PENNY. IS THIS STILL THE SITUATION?
7. FONS HAS BEEN ADVISED THERE IS NO CAPACITY FOR THE PROVISION OF A SMALL NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL STOPS AT NARBOROUGH, SO HOW WILL CAPACITY BE FOUND FOR A NUMBER OF HALF MILE LONG FREIGHT TRAINS.
8. WHEN WILL THE WORKS IN THE LEICESTER AND F2M&N CORRIDORS BE COMPLETED?
9. THE POTENTIALLY FATAL INCIDENT HAPPENED ON 6TH DECEMBER 2023 AND LESSONS SHOULD BE LEARNT.
10. THE 6TH DECEMBER 2023 INCIDENT EMPHASISES THE SEVERE CONGESTION THAT CAN QUICKLY BUILD UP AT THE LEVEL CROSSING, AND THUS CAUSE A DANGER TO LIFE.
11. NETWORK RAIL SAY IT HAS TO BE CONFIRMED, THAT HNRFI WOULD NOT COMPROMISE THE RIGHTS OF EXISTING USERS.
12. HAS THE GBRTT TAKEN ANY COGNISANCE OF THE CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE ISSUES ON THE LINE, THE PRESENT GREEN FIELD SITE AT ELMSTHORPE AND THE LEVEL CROSSING ISSUES AT NARBOROUGH.
13. THE SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE LINE IS ALREADY CONSTRAINED, HOW DOES IT COMPARE WITH THE ONE IN EAST ANGLIA WHICH HAD IT'S APPLICATION TURNED DOWN?
14. FONS IS GRATEFUL THAT YOUR PREDECESSOR WAS MINDED TO TURN DOWN THE PROPOSAL, THUS ACCEPTING THE EXAMINING OFFICER'S ADVICE.

15. FONS HOPES THAT THE FURTHER INFORMATION AND EVIDENCE PROVIDED HERE, CONFIRMS THE VIEW THAT HNRFI SHOULD NOT BE IMPLEMENTED.

OVERWHELMING CONCLUSIONS

BOTH NETWORK RAIL AND TRITAX SYMMETRY (HINCKLEY) HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT AND OBSTRUCTIVE THROUGHOUT THE PLANNING INSPECTORS CONSULTATION PROCESS. NETWORK RAIL FAILED TO TURN UP FOR KEY MEETINGS AND TRITAX SYMMETRY WERE ALWAYS SLOW TO RESPOND TO THE PLANNING INSPECTOR'S REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION.

WE HOPE YOU CONSIDER ALL THE DETAILED POINTS DOCUMENTED IN THIS SUBMISSION AND NOTE THERE ARE STILL A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ANSWERED BY NETWORK RAIL OR TRITAX SYMMETRY.

IT WILL BE SEEN AT PARAGRAPH 10.6 OF OUR ORIGINAL SUBMISSION, WE WERE OPPOSED TO THE HNRFI DEVELOPMENT.

HAVING HAD THE VISITS AND MEETINGS AND THUS GATHERED MORE EVIDENCE, AND LEARNT MORE ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL, FONS NOW EVEN MORE STRONGLY OPPOSES THE IMPOSITION OF HNRFI.

TRITAX SYMMETRY HAS SOLELY RELIED ON INFORMATION PROVIDED BY NETWORK RAIL. THIS INFORMATION HAS PROVED TO BE UNRELIABLE AND AT WORSE TO BE UNTRUE. THE SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE LINE WAS NOT BUILT AS A MAIN LINE AND SHOULD NOT BE REFERRED AS A MAIN LINE. THE ADDITION OF THESE HALF MILE LONG HEAVY TRAINS WILL ADD VIBRATION AND NOISE, AND ULTIMATELY DAMAGE THE LONG TERM GEOLOGY, RESILIENCE AND STABILITY OF THE LINE.

TRITAX SYMMETRY SAY THAT HNRFI, WILL NOT COST THE TAX PAYER A PENNY. FONS STRONGLY DISPUTES THIS AND WHEN LONG TERM DAMAGE DOES OCCUR, THE COST WILL INEVITABLY BE PASSED ON TO THE TAX PAYER.

WITH RESPECT SECRETARY OF STATE, YOU WILL HAVE TO TAKE THIS AND OTHER FUNDAMENTAL FACTS RELATING TO THE RAILWAY OPERATION INTO ACCOUNT, AS YOU MAKE YOUR FINAL DECISION.

FRIENDS OF NARBOROUGH STATION.

INTERESTED PARTY REFERENCE NUMBER: 20039668.

WRITTEN BY; JOHN HARRISON
FONS COMMITTEE MEMBER
FEBRUARY 2025