

**Application by Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited (“the applicant”)  
Seeking Development Consent for the proposed Hinckley National  
Rail Freight Interchange project (“the proposed Development”)**

**Planning Act 2008 and Infrastructure Planning (Examination  
Procedure) Rules 2010**

**Interested Party Reference number:**

**20037532**

**February 6<sup>th</sup> 2025**

As the Divisional member for Stoney Stanton and Croft, where the Hinckley National Rail Freight will be located, I was thoroughly disappointed that an outright refusal of this application was not issued by the previous Secretary of State for Transport, after the Examining Authority (ExA) recommended refusal. I ask that the new Secretary of State recognises the fundamental flaws in this scheme and now issues a clear refusal. The extra evidence submitted by TRITAX on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2024 offered no substantive change of information to alter the recommendation made by the ExA. The facts are the facts as highlighted in the ExA’s report. The village infrastructure of Sapcote cannot physically be changed to accommodate heavy goods vehicles going through its centre. In fact, the new proposals for the village make the situation more dangerous and raises fundamental road safety issues. The increase in barrier downtime at the Narborough level crossing, is unworkable for any community to live with. I worry about the equality and human rights of residents. Disabled people and those with pushchairs are being excluded and affected because they are not able to use the stepped bridge to avoid these colossal delays in time as they wait for the barrier to be lifted. Providing an extension of the existing waiting area and an information board on the station platform does not solve the problem. The new proposals by TRITAX are worse and more inconvenient. Mitigations to improve conditions at Aston Firs Travellers’ site are simply ineffective and the plans for sustainable

travel have only seen minor amendments and been paid “lip service” to. How will the modal shift for single car occupancy be achieved with limited additional bus services and a planned 8,400 employees? The HGV route and management plan has changed slightly but operational costs attributed to it by the developer are unlikely to deliver any meaningful mitigation.

Communication and engagement by TRITAX have been poor and inadequate from the beginning and continues to be so even at this late stage. I have been thoroughly disappointed with the approach taken by TRITAX to engage with my communities from the initial consultation. Even at this late stage I am aware of information subsequently submitted by TRITAX directly to organisations that **will not be available** to the public for comment. Where is the transparency in this process? Other professional partners including Leicestershire County Council officers have been treated with contempt in the same way. Following receipt of the Secretary of State’s letter on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024 the applicant failed to contact the County Council for a month. Knowing tight deadlines for submissions existed and that they would encounter significant workloads to answer submissions. This is not a good example of partnership working and the applicant has used a “divide and conquer” approach when dealing with all associated professional bodies. TRITAX have been given extension after extension and opportunity after opportunity to provide **fundamental and imperative evidence**. This should have been included in the original application submission and again at the public hearings when requested by the ExA. I suggest the reason for this is that it would prove the site to be an inappropriate location for a strategic rail freight interchange and the mitigations needed to make it feasible either too expensive or impossible to deliver. As I said at the hearing to the inspector if this is such a “slam dunk” of a project with a supporting business case why is the evidence not produced?

I fully support the technical highways submission made by Leicestershire County Council and those of other Local Authorities. Fundamental highway modelling and mitigations have still not been addressed properly by the applicant and the highway network will be in chaos if the development goes ahead. Junctions particularly affected are M69 J2, M1 J21/M69 J3, A5 Cross in Hand roundabout and the A5 Gibbet Hill roundabout. Especially as this is only a Rail Freight Interchange in part. It will take traffic off the road from Felixstowe but is estimated to generate an extra 9,000 HGV vehicle movements here a day with outward transportation to markets. The Fosse Villages and surrounding areas will be saturated with traffic and the existing junctions and motorway network will be gridlocked. Junction 21 requires significant investment to sort and there are no contingency plans for when the M69 is closed or blocked. This does happen on a frequent basis.

I hope for a positive outcome in that the Secretary of State for Transport will follow the inspector's recommendation and the overwhelming evidence submitted by Local Authorities and refuse the application which is totally inappropriate and does not fit the remit of a national infrastructure project.

Cllr. Maggie Wright

Stoney Stanton and Croft Division

Leicestershire