



Meeting note

Project name	Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange
File reference	TR050007
Status	FINAL
Author	The Planning Inspectorate (“the Inspectorate”)
Date	30 September 2022
Meeting with	Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project Update Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed, and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Project Update and Design freeze

Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited (the “Applicant”) shared an image of the proposed indicative masterplan for the site, showing nine units. The Applicant explained that the layout can change depending on the demand for different sized units, but this was their favoured layout in response to consultation feedback. The Applicant explained that the proposals involve the creation of a new access point from junction 2 of the M69 over the railway line through to the A47 to reduce traffic congestion, with estate roads off this link road leading to the railport and the warehouse estate. As drawn on completion, approximately 55% of the units (by floorspace) can be rail connected, resulting in less road use. There is also an option of installing a direct access to the warehouse estate from the rail port which would result in less congestion on and along the A47. The Applicant has also revised the height of the buildings in the development zones from a maximum height of between 27 and 33 metres down to a maximum height of between 22 and 28 metres based on feedback from consultation responses, to reduce visual impacts; although it is acknowledged by the Applicant that these cannot be completely removed.

The Applicant has created two areas of green space totalling approximately 60 to 70 acres that will be accessible for amenity use, and is constructing bunds at their perimeters for landscape screening. To add more ecological value the Applicant split the one larger lake into four lakes and added additional bunding and planting on the northern edge landscaping of the rail port to improve amenity for the Public Right of Way, and a screen for visual impact. The Applicant also explained it will be carrying out earth works to create two platform levels onsite, one nearest the Link Road to accommodate development for a maximum of 429,000

sqm (zones A, C and D on the parameters plan) and a lower one (circa 3 metres) further north for a maximum of 252,000 sqm (zones B and E on the parameters plan).

A new Public Right of Way route between the M69 and the development zones has a width of 10 to 20 metres and proposes a link between Units 2 and 3 on the masterplan through to the estate road footpaths to allow access within the scheme for connections between the site and the wider Public Rights of Way network, Burbage Common, and main arterial routes. The Inspectorate posed a question to the Applicant about any additional noise and landscape for mitigation measures for the Gypsy and Traveller sites which are nearby. The Applicant stated that acoustic fences (circa 6 metres in height) would be constructed to help with noise attenuation from the site, the Link Road and additionally will aid in lessening the existing noise from the M69.

Programme

The Inspectorate observed that the energy centre proposed as part of the development is below, but close to the threshold of being a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

Consultation

The Applicant has engaged with the three relevant local authorities and has created local authority working groups. The Applicant has also engaged with section 42 consultees seeking to achieve matters of agreement and those for further discussion.

The Applicant is working on a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with local authorities and has written to non-statutory parish councils along with issuing newsletters to the local authorities. The Applicant added that there have been minor changes to the Order limits since the last consultation, but no new parties are contained in the changes. The Applicant has written to the existing parties whose interests are affected to explain the Order Limit changes. The Applicant advised that a land title refresh exercise has been carried out and any new parties identified as a result of that routine exercise have been consulted. This will be explained in the Consultation Report.

The Applicant asked for more information around consultations. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to record all consultation including contact with parties who have not responded, so that the Applicant's efforts have been demonstrated.

The Inspectorate also posed a question about flooding and water management issues. The Applicant stated that the Environment Agency (EA) has been written to and that the EA has accepted the modelling approach.

The Draft Development Consent Order (DCO)

The Inspectorate will provide comments on the draft DCO and other draft documents in due course. The Inspectorate stated that it would be helpful if the Applicant could provide comfort that National Highways are content with the intended approach to the highway works.

The Inspectorate noted that it had been asked to provide some training for elected members on the Planning Act 2008 process and that the slides used, and any advice given would be issued as section 51 advice.

Draft Document Review

The Inspectorate noted that it was premature to talk about the draft document review as sufficient time would be needed to review the draft documents.

The Applicant asked about the format of the consultation report and for advice on the draft table extract from the Statement of Reasons. The Inspectorate said written advice would be provided.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- The Inspectorate will send an invite for review meeting on the 21 October 2022 (this meeting took place on 24 October 2022).
- The Applicant to inform the Inspectorate about National Highways Response to the DCO if a response is received.
- The Inspectorate will email the Applicant regarding the format of the consultation report and section 42 responses, along with a view on the Applicants' table extract from the statement of reasons.

