



## EARL SHILTON TOWN COUNCIL

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\*\*\*The Planning Inspectorate,  
Environmental Services,  
Central Operations,  
Temple Quay House,  
2, The Square,  
BRISTOL, BS1 6PN

Our Ref: ESTC/FC/Chair  
Your Ref: TRO50007-000057  
Dated: 12 November 2020

09 December 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

### Earl Shilton Town Council (ESTC) Response To –

**Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017(the EIA Regulations) – Regulations 10 and 11.**

**Application by Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited (the Applicant) for an Order granting Development Consent for the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI) - the Proposed Development.**

**Scoping consultation and notification of the Applicant's contact details and duty to make available information to the Applicant if requested.**

#### Background.

1. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Applicant's EIA.
2. Earl Shilton is a Town of approximately 12, 200 all souls and 8,100 registered electors. The Town lies just NNW of the village of Elmesthorpe, the latter being key to this application. The only strip of land that materially separates Earl Shilton and Elmesthorpe is the A47 *Clickers Way* bypass East to West as the main trunk road from Leicester City to Hinckley Town. Earl Shilton itself sits entirely within Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) as its main Local Planning Authority (LPA) intermediate to Leicestershire County Council. There are however 2 instances of Blaby District Council's 'parrots beaks' land that cross Clickers Way and are bound into the fabric of the Town and its environs.
3. If you will forgive the expression that the subject of the HNRFI has been 'a long train running' you should note that the Planning Committee of ESTC sat in formal session on the evening of Monday 30 November 2020 to consider Applicant's Scoping Report submission and

decide the Town Council's reasoned stance on whether or not to object, be neutral or support the EIA and tacitly therefore the proposal as a whole.

#### ESTC's Position Statement

4. ESTC's stance is that they wholly object to the Applicant's basis for this EIA and as a consequence the proposed HNRFI with reasons set out below.

#### Reasoned Objections.

5. RFI over capacity already regionally exists, viz., in the form of:

- Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal 16 miles away South.
- Birch Coppice RFI 13 miles away West.
- SEGRO Logistic Park Castle Donington 29 miles away North.

Evidence suggests that these 3 sites are operating at well below optimum capacity. QED you already have your well sited 'Golden Triangle' provision for the East and West Midlands served with road and rail links e.g. A5, M1, A42/M42 and M1. Rail links from Derby, Birmingham, Nottingham and Leicester all exist too without the need to choke at bottlenecks such as the Narborough station road level crossing. In addition to the 3 RFIs above mentioned there is the significant main rail siding at Toton, Notts that could be re-purposed as a supplementary RFI with good existing links to the A52 Expressway and the nearby Junction 25 of the widened M1. Toton has a long and rich rail freight history albeit somewhat reduced and or moribund so why build on green field sites? Castle Donington also links with the major air freight hub of East Midlands Airport.

Warehousing. Page 46, paragraph 2.31 states that the greater part of the HNRFI site will be dedicated to high bay storage and logistic sheds. The opinion of this Consultee is that is the last thing a green field area needs when the local lay Councillor can see that warehousing capacity of all types within a 10/15 mile basis, either exists or is planned such as:

- Optimus Point Glenfield M1 Junction 21A.
- Magna Park Lutterworth which is expanding all the time.
- Drummond plans to build in Enderby St Johns Blaby District M1 Junction 21.
- Also there are countless new smaller warehousing sites serving the area such as the new addition to the Sir Frank Whittle Estate, Whetstone in Blaby District.

6. Earl Shilton Sustainable Urban Extension (ES-SUE). Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) state that they have bought a 60% stake in Barwood Land who are about to re-boot their option to build the ES-SUE of 1200 to 1600 dwellings in Earl Shilton right up to the edge of Clickers Way (A47) bypass. See paragraph 2 above.

7. Local Plans in Leicester City and affected Districts of Leicestershire. The Tritax Symmetry Scoping Report makes many and varied references to Local Plans. These are in the past tense. Leicester City Council and Blaby District Council have just launched public consultations for their latest iterations of their respective Local Plans. Hinckley & Bosworth

Borough Council are not far behind in their revised Local Plan process either. The point is the HNRFI Scoping Report timing is wrong and out of kilter with these 3 key Local Plans.

#### Recommendation.

8. As a strategic national decision the application based on future projections of 'pull' demand is the truly strategic way to assess a sensitive and sustainable '*economic good*' need for this project. Using the analogy of provision of electricity power where the national strategy needs to be ahead of demand the converse for RFIs, currently and in the medium term, is not proven to be an economic necessity or good and certainly not sensitive or sustainable.

9. This strongly perceived lack of demand for another RFI in the geographical heart of an established Midlands 'triangle; cynically perceived by some as a developer's way of avoiding Local Planning Authority consequential add-on planning permission for major housing development; can have a postponed lead time in order to:

- a. Have a forward looking economic forecast of real regional demand post Brexit taking into account national need also.
- b. Be aligned to the future Local Plans of Leicester City Council, Blaby District Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council.
- c. Points 9a and 9b above will provide a truly holistic appraisal of the project as a whole.
- d. Container ports (Liverpool, Hull/Immingham, Southampton and Felixstowe), of entry now have to up their game. For many years now they have enjoyed all the benefits of container shipping without the cost of sorting the cargo that arrives there. Even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century suppliers of goods could send by rail into the heart of major cities – their main markets fresh fish from the North and flowers from the South West. It is about time the UK re-discovered this craft and it should commence at the port of entry with the help of importers and exporters who pack the containers with goods.

#### Conclusion.

10. We are sure that other Consultee Scoping Opinions will raise points such as:

- Increased air, noise and light pollution due to the 24/7 operation of the HNRFI, (Scoping Report page 44, paragraph 2.21), with HGV traffic and concerns about 'ghost' railway access never really used.
- Landscape and visual impacts to existing settlements.
- Loss of countryside and wildlife habitat.
- Whilst not top grade agricultural land it is productive and will be lost forever.

That said by others, the main and overwhelming conclusion for Earl Shilton Town Council is that there is no clear and demonstrable case of economic good in this Scoping Report for the immediate and medium term futures.

Secondly, any amended Scoping Report or progression of this application should be aligned integrally and take into account the emerging Local Plans from the City of Leicester, Blaby District Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and of Course Leicestershire County Highways.

The advice of the Planning Inspectorate will always be most welcome.

Yours sincerely,

A rectangular area containing a handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to be 'CM Coe'. The background of the signature area is a light, textured grey.

CM Coe (Mrs)  
Chairman & Town Mayor  
for Council

\*\*\* denotes sent by email only