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Our Ref WXT/SRT/M-00987952

Date 8 April 2022

Delivered: By post and email to  
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Dear Sirs

## HINCKLEY NATIONAL RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE – LAND WEST OF STONEY STANTON PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

### 1. BACKGROUND AND CURRENT POSITION

- 1.1. We are instructed by a consortium of land promoters consisting predominantly of Barwood Development Securities Limited and Parker Strategic Land Limited (the “Consortium”).
- 1.2. This response is made on behalf of the Consortium and relates to Tritax Symmetry (“Tritax”)’s statutory pre-application consultation (the “Consultation”) for the proposed Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (“HNRFI”).
- 1.3. The Consortium has interests in land covering approximately 340 hectares to the west of Stoney Stanton (the “Residential Site”). The Residential Site is being promoted as a residential-led mixed use development comprising approximately 5,000 homes and is showed edged red on the plan attached at **Appendix 1**. The Consortium members own part of the Residential Site and have promotion agreements with the landowners of the remainder.
- 1.4. HNRFI is a nationally significant infrastructure project (“NSIP”) and consists of a new rail port, lorry park, warehousing and ancillary buildings up to 850,000m<sup>2</sup> GIA together with associated highways works. Those highways works include upgrades to the M69 junction 2, a new link road from the M69 junction 2 to the B4668/A47 Leicester Road plus a number of other alterations to the local road network.
- 1.5. The Residential Site is adjacent to the HNRFI and will be significantly impacted by it.
- 1.6. Pre-application consultation is a key requirement for an NSIP application. Without adequate consultation, the subsequent DCO application for the HNRFI (the “Application”) will not be

accepted and/or risks legal challenge on determination. It is trite law that for a consultation to be adequate, sufficient information must be provided to consultees to permit intelligent consideration and response.

- 1.7. The level of technical information provided at the pre-application stage falls short of what is required for the Consortium to make full representations. This calls into the question the lawfulness of the Consultation currently being undertaken.
- 1.8. We request that additional technical detail is provided at the pre-application stage so the consultees can properly understand the impact of the HNRFI on the surrounding area and make meaningful comment on the HNRFI scheme and its proposed mitigation measures.
- 1.9. We reserve the right to make further representations as and when the evidence requested in paragraph 5.2 below becomes available. Should additional information not be provided ahead of the Application's submission to the Secretary of State, we reserve the right to make further representations on the adequacy and lawfulness of the pre-application consultation exercise before and during the examination.
- 1.10. We understand that landowners of parts of the Residential Site who are not part of the Consortium may be making separate responses to the Consultation in respect of their freehold interests.

## **2. THE RESIDENTIAL SITE**

- 2.1. The Residential Site is broadly bound by the settlement of Stoney Stanton and Hinckley Road to the east, the M69 to the west, the B4669 Leicester Road to the south and the Birmingham to Leicester mainline railway to the north. It is not within the Green Belt and is not subject to any significant landscape constraints. It is also relatively flat and in an area of low flood risk. Due to the Residential Site's beneficial location and characteristics, it is considered highly suitable for a substantial residential-led mixed use development.
- 2.2. The broad location has been the subject of promotion for development for a period of years, with the wider area being supported by the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (December 2018). That plan identifies the potential for almost 100,000 homes to be delivered in the period to 2050. At the District level, the Blaby Growth Strategy (December 2018) recognises that "Blaby ... will be key to the delivery of a significant proportion of this growth."
- 2.3. Blaby District Council's Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) (2019) went on to specifically identify the Residential Site (reference STO026) as having capacity to deliver approximately 5,000 dwellings within the next 11-15 years. It noted that the Residential Site is "available, achievable, and developable."
- 2.4. More recently, the Residential Site has been included in the 2021 Regulation 18 consultation on the emerging Blaby Local Plan, which identified land west of Stoney Stanton as a potential strategic site option for future growth (paragraph 4.3.11 of New Local Plan Options document, January 2021). In Appendix A of that document (Summary of Site Assessments), it concludes that the Residential Site is a "reasonable option".

- 2.5. In the emerging Local Plan consultation, emphasis has been placed on delivering a small number of larger strategic sites that are well-located, well connected, and sustainable rather than spreading growth amongst smaller sites in existing villages and urban areas. Representations have been made to Blaby District Council in response to the Regulation 18 consultation to support the Residential Site's allocation. Those representations demonstrate the Residential Site's suitability and deliverability.
- 2.6. Furthermore, with agreement from officers at Blaby District Council, the landowners and Consortium members have recently undertaken a programme of engagement with the local community which involved two days of workshops in October 2021. 4,710 invitations were issued to local residents and business and the workshops were well attended. The responses from that community engagement exercise will inform the master planning of the Residential Site.
- 2.7. Based on the above, it is highly likely that the proposed allocation of the Residential Site will come forward in the Blaby District Council Regulation 19 Local Plan, which is currently scheduled to be published in Autumn 2022 within the timescale for consideration of the Application.
- 2.8. The Residential Site's status as an emerging strategic allocation will be a material consideration for the Secretary of State when determining the Application. It should therefore be given consideration by Tritax at this stage in the design process, so that the HNRFI does not place any unreasonable additional constraints on the Residential Site that would harm its future development.
- 2.9. This accords with the guidance provided in the National Policy Statement for National Networks 2014 (NPSNN), paragraph 5.165:  
  
*"The applicant should identify existing and proposed land uses near the project, and any effects of...preventing a development or use on a neighbouring site from continuing. Applications should also assess any effects of precluding a new development or use proposed in the development plan."*
- 2.10. It follows that the Secretary of State is required to consider any conflicts between the Application and any proposed land uses nearby and the adequacy of measures incorporated as part of the Application which are designed to mitigate against any such conflicts.

### **3. OBJECTION: INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF PRE-APPLICATION PROPOSAL**

- 3.1. In order for the Consultation to be adequate, sufficient information has to be provided to allow the Consortium to engage meaningfully with the process. The HNRFI is an Environmental Impact Assessment development ("EIA development") as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. We note that an Environmental Statement ("ES") will be submitted as part of the Application and that some Preliminary Environmental Information ("PEI") has been provided as part of the consultation documents.
- 3.2. Whilst it is understood that the PEI does not have to contain quite the same level of detail as a full ES, it still needs to provide enough information for consultees to understand the

rationale for key aspects of an NSIP, particularly where mitigation measures are concerned. Where a project is large and complex (such as the HNRFI), more detailed information should be shared at the consultation stage.

- 3.3. The HNRFI will have a number of significant impacts on the surrounding area that are intended to be mitigated through on and off-site measures. However, the level of technical information provided with the PEI does not allow the Consortium to understand the full extent of those impacts and/or whether proposed mitigation measures are sufficient. Those impacts are considered in more detail below.

**(i) Highways**

- 3.4. The evidence base provided does not readily inform the individual of the effect of the HNRFI proposals. Much of the analysis is contained within modelling reports prepared by Aecom for the Pan Regional Transport Modelling (PRTM) and also within Micro Simulation Modelling reports prepared for the assessment of the M69 junctions 1 and 2. However, these documents do not explain the changes in traffic flow on the local road network that result from the HNRFI proposals including the infrastructure measures that are required to deliver the overall scheme.
- 3.5. There are no details on the 'generic' growth factor that has been used to inform the PRTM. It is therefore unclear how traffic associated with the growth within Blaby, including any growth from development at the Residential Site, forms part of the background flows. There is also insufficient evidence to consider the impact of the HNRFI outside of the network peak hours and at its operational peak.
- 3.6. The Interim Transport Assessment Report ("ITAR") attached to the Consultation as Appendix 8.1 identifies at paragraph 9.12 that 40 junctions or locations within the study area have been considered in terms of the impact of HNRFI associated traffic. However, there is no evidence of the changes in traffic flow at each of these 40 junctions to be able to understand how the scheme is impacting on the study network. Therefore, it is unclear what the actual changes in traffic expected at each of the junctions within the study network are.
- 3.7. Summary model results tables of several standalone junctions are included within the ITAR. However, the detailed model report outputs for all of these scenarios are not available; only 7 junctions are included. Of these 7 junctions not all analysis of the various scenarios is included to provide justification of the junction improvements proposed. The junction improvements proposed in some locations may not, therefore, be appropriate.
- 3.8. Overall:
  - 3.8.1. There is insufficient evidence within the Consultation to be able to determine the impact of the overall HNRFI scheme on the study network.
  - 3.8.2. There is insufficient evidence to understand the growth factors that have been applied to the network in order to determine how growth within Blaby District has been considered and the extent to which traffic associated with the growth within Blaby and specifically at the Residential Site forms part of the background flows.

- 3.8.3. There is insufficient evidence to consider the impact of the HNRFI outside of the network peak hours and at the HNRFI's operational peak.
  - 3.8.4. There is insufficient evidence to understand the choice of junction improvements identified and it is considered that in the absence of this the wrong form of junction improvements are being promoted.
  - 3.8.5. The impact of the HNRFI to the east of the motorway is not clearly defined to be able to ensure suitable mitigation is provided. Specifically, the level of traffic predicted to travel through Sapcote and Stoney Stanton varies considerably between the evidence provided in the transport assessment and that included in the transport section of the ES.
- 3.9. The Consultation information provided to date relating to highways and transportation does not demonstrate suitable assessment and mitigation of the Application proposals. Additional information is therefore required for us to understand the full extent of the highways impacts and whether the proposed mitigation measures are sufficient.
- 3.10. Further details of our concerns regarding the highways evidence are set out in a technical note from RPS at **Appendix 2**.

**(ii) Noise**

- 3.11. The evidence base shows that operational noise levels for off-site roads are expected to increase by between 3 dB(A) and 9dB(A) for the roads bounding the Residential Site. Increases of up to 2dB are predicted at night-time.
- 3.12. However, due to the uncertainty surrounding the transport modelling and the likely traffic flows on the roads surrounding the Residential Site, we question the accuracy of the data and conclusions in Chapter 10 of the PEI regarding noise from off-site roads. We therefore request that this is revisited once further information is available regarding the impact of the proposed HNRFI on the surrounding road network.

**(iii) Air quality**

- 3.13. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the transport modelling and the likely traffic flows around the Residential Site, we also question the accuracy of the data and conclusions in Chapter 9 of the PEI regarding air quality impacts. We therefore request that this is also revisited once further information is available regarding the impact of the proposed HNRFI on the surrounding road network.

**(iv) Drainage**

- 3.14. Whilst a surface water drainage strategy and foul water drainage strategy drawings have been provided in Appendix 6 of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, there is a lack of sufficient detail to support these plans.
- 3.15. In terms of surface water drainage strategy, the drawings identify the locations of surface water attenuation tanks, ponds and outfall locations into nearby watercourses. The following

information to verify the attenuation volumes and areas shown is usually expected to support any proposed development:

- Greenfield run off rate calculations.
  - Supporting proposed attenuation calculations.
  - Exceedance flow route plans.
  - A demonstration that the proposed SuDS system will provide sufficient surface water treatment (e.g., in accordance with CIRIA C753 'The SuDS Manual').
  - Ongoing operation and maintenance plans.
- 3.16. Without this information we are unable to meaningfully comment on whether the surface water drainage strategy is sufficient or whether there is an increased risk of flood water escaping from the HNFRI to neighbouring land, such as the Residential Site.
- 3.17. Furthermore, a climate change allowance of 20% has been utilised based on the proposed 60-year design life of the HNFRI. However, in accordance with Table 1 of the Environment Agency Climate Change Guidance<sup>1</sup> the 60-year design life would require an assessment of 40% climate change allowance. The guidance states for flood risk assessments both upper end and central allowances should be assessed. This does not appear to have been done and raises serious concerns about the accuracy of the modelling that has been undertaken to date.

#### **(v) Landscape**

- 3.18. Chapter 11 of the PEI assesses landscape and visual effects of the HNFRI. However, despite being so lengthy and detailed, it is not clearly set out what is being assessed, and there is no clear assessment of the effects on the receptors. This is most notable in relation to visual effects.
- 3.19. For example, paragraph 1.5 of Appendix 11.1 (Visual Baseline Report) does not refer to the maximum height parameters of the proposed buildings. This is a fundamental part of providing a transparent understanding of the likely visual impact of the proposals and should be set out clearly.
- 3.20. Furthermore, no descriptions are set out in the tables of effects, either in the main chapter or in any of the appendices. As such, it is hard to make a judgement as to how the significance assessment has been derived.
- 3.21. The lack of description of effects, in particular visual effects, also makes it hard to understand how different elements of the masterplan, including the container storage and associated cranes will appear in views. The description of development in paragraph 1.5 of Appendix 11.1 refers to 16 trains of 775m in length, container storage and lorry parking. All of these elements have the potential to be visually discordant, especially the containers, if stacked sufficiently high. The assessment makes no reference to the impact of the containers, cranes, lorry parking or rail port within the views.

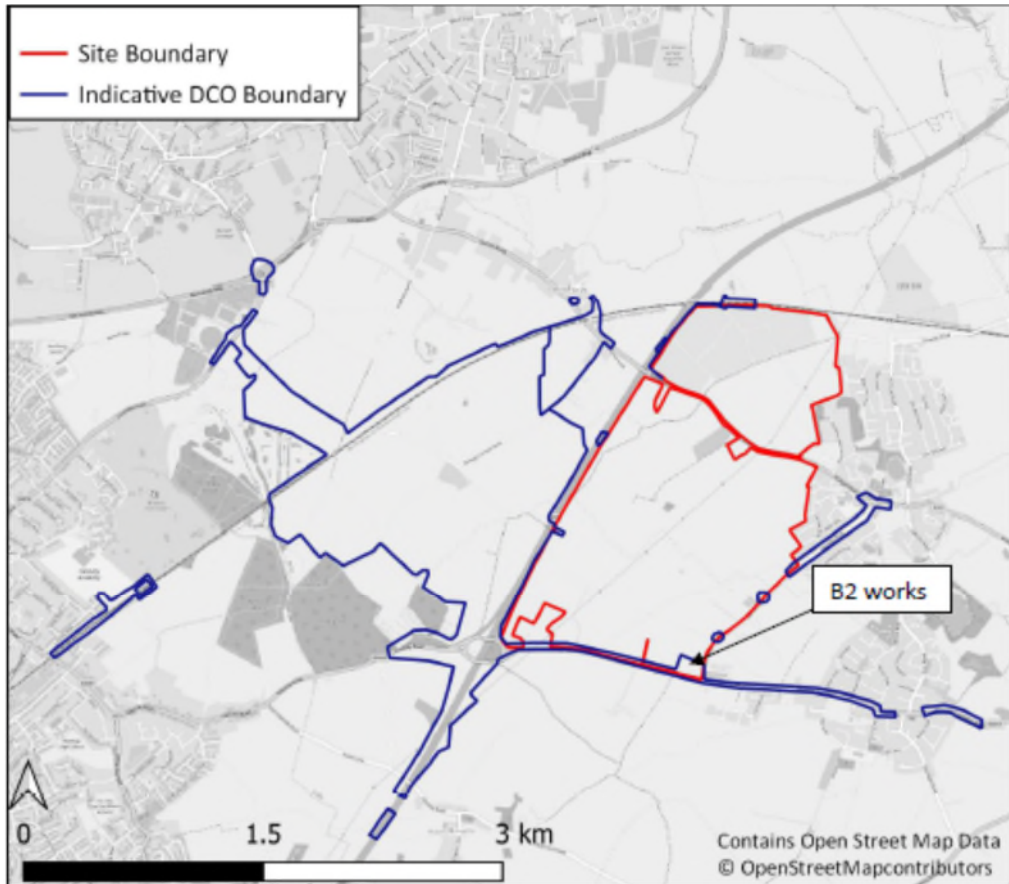
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change-allowances>

- 3.22. Finally, the assessment of effects on landscape character ignores secondary effects, i.e. the effect of the introduction of large scale warehouse type buildings and associated elements into the wider landscape.
- 3.23. For example, the assessment of construction and Year 1 operational effects on LCA 15: Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland (Table 11.11 and 11.13) is of negligible significance, stemming from low sensitivity to the transport infrastructure. It is true that the only direct effects on this character area will be a result of the upgrades in local highways. However, there will also be a change in a notable part of this character area stemming from the introduction of extremely large-scale commercial buildings into a landscape which is not characterised by such development. This essentially ignores the effects that the HNRFI will have on the character of the wider area outside the DCO boundary.
- 3.24. Accordingly, there needs to be further detail and clarity within the PEI landscape chapter to enable us to fully understand, and comment on, the impact on landscape arising from the HNRFI.

**(vi) Land take**

- 3.25. A large area of the Residential Site adjacent to the highway works at Junction 19 – B4669/Stanton Lane is marked as ‘B2 works’ at Figure 1 and also comes within the DCO land. From a review of the information submitted as part of the Consultation, it is unclear why that is the case when the only works in the area are new traffic signals at the junction.
- 3.26. We note that reference is made within Schedule 1, Part 2 of the draft DCO to a ‘temporary construction compound’ near the junction. However, it is not clear where exactly that compound is going to be situated nor why it needs to be in that area. On the basis of the information available, we see no justification for locating a construction compound on that land whilst there is a significant amount of space within the main body of the HNRFI site that could easily be utilised for such purposes.
- 3.27. Any construction compound in that area could sterilise the development of the Residential Site on that land for a significant period of time, which would be unacceptable to the Consortium.
- 3.28. It is also not clear whether that land is going to be used for any other purposes associated with the HNRFI, whether temporarily or permanently. The draft DCO refers to footpath improvements and signage; the details of which are not clear.



**Figure 1 – The Residential Site (in red) and DCO land (in blue)**

- 3.29. The draft DCO conveys powers on Tritax to compulsorily acquire such parts of the DCO land as are required for the HNRFI. Further information is required so that the Consortium can understand:
- 3.29.1. the nature of the works and/or land use in the vicinity of that junction,
  - 3.29.2. why such a large area comes within the DCO land,
  - 3.29.3. why any construction compound needs to be located in that area and cannot reasonably be located within the main body of the HNRFI site;
  - 3.29.4. whether it will be acquired, either permanently or temporarily as part of the HNRFI scheme; and
  - 3.29.5. if it will be acquired temporarily, for how long.
- 3.30. Without this information, we cannot provide any meaningful comment on that part of the HNRFI which directly affects the Residential Site.



#### 4. POTENTIAL NEW PASSENGER RAIL STATION

- 4.1. As part of the proposed new settlement on the Residential Site, a potential new passenger rail station is being considered at the northern boundary adjoining the Leicester to Hinckley railway line, if demand is proven and public funding available for it.
- 4.2. The Consortium considers that it is technically possible in terms of signalling capacity and distance from existing adjacent stations. Therefore, the HNRFI rail infrastructure should take account of, and not constrain, the potential to deliver a new passenger rail station at the Residential Site.
- 4.3. This accords with the guidance provided in the NPSNN, paragraph 4.3 which states:

*“In considering any proposed developments, and in particular, when weighing adverse impacts against its benefits, the examining authority and Secretary of State should take into account:*

*- Its potential benefits, including the facilitation of economic development, including job creation, housing and environmental improvements, and any long terms or wider benefits”*
- 4.4. Accordingly, the Consortium would welcome a meeting with Tritax so as to discuss potential solutions, including passive provision for a new passenger station being made in the signalling plan for the HNRFI.

#### 5. SUMMARY

- 5.1. There is a lack of sufficient evidence to support the pre-application proposal and the Consortium is currently objecting to the HNRFI on that basis.
- 5.2. In order for our clients to meaningfully engage with the proposals, please provide the following information:
  - 5.2.1. **Highways and transportation:**
    - a) Details of the growth factors that have been applied to the network in order to determine how growth within Blaby District has been considered and the extent to which traffic associated with the growth within Blaby and specifically at the Residential Site forms part of the background flows.
    - b) Evidence of the impact of the HNRFI outside of the network peak hours and at the HNRFI's operational peak.
    - c) Evidence of the impact of the overall HNRFI scheme (including the new M69 Junction 2 and link road) on the study network.
    - d) Detailed evidence in support of the choice of junction improvements identified.
    - e) Accurate modelling of the traffic predicted to travel through Sapcote and Stoney Stanton.

**5.2.2.Noise and air quality:**

- a) Accurate noise and air quality assessments which are based on the updated modelling of the predicted traffic flows on the roads surrounding the Residential Site, as requested above.

**5.2.3. Drainage:**

- a) Greenfield run off rate calculations and proposed attenuation calculations in support of the proposed drainage scheme.
- b) Exceedance flow route plans.
- c) A demonstration that the proposed SuDS system will provide sufficient surface water treatment (e.g., in accordance with CIRIA C753 'The SuDS Manual').
- d) Ongoing operation and maintenance plans.

**5.2.4. Landscape:**

- a) A clearer assessment of the likely visual impact of the HNRFI, with reference to the maximum height parameters of the proposed buildings, the container storage, the associated cranes and lorry parking.
- b) An assessment of the secondary effects, i.e. the effect of the introduction of large scale warehouse type buildings and associated elements into the wider landscape.

**5.2.5. Land take:**

- a) In respect of that area of the DCO land marked 'B2 works' at Figure 1 above, a clear description of the nature of the works and/or land use in the vicinity of that junction, why that area comes within the DCO land (including clear justification for any construction compound to be located there), whether it will be acquired, either permanently or temporarily as part of the HNRFI scheme and, if temporarily, for how long.

5.3. The above information must be provided at the pre-application stage and a reasonable amount of time given for our clients to consider it and provide any further observations on the HNRFI proposal.

5.4. Until our clients are given the opportunity to fully understand the impact of the proposed HNRFI on the surrounding area and provide meaningful comment on the pre-application scheme, they will continue to object.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Please direct any further correspondence in this matter to Will Thomas or Stuart Tym at Shoosmiths by email.

Yours faithfully

*Shoosmiths LLP*

**SHOOSMITHS LLP**



**Appendix 2 – RPS Technical Note**

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## TECHNICAL NOTE

**Project Title:** Hinckley NRF Interchange

**Report Reference:** JNY11287-01a

**Date:** 16 March 2022

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### Initial Review of Interim Transport Assessment

#### Introduction

- 1.1 This Technical Note on highways and transportation matters, has been prepared by RPS on behalf of the Consortium of Landowners / Developers representing the proposed development of land to the West of Stoney Stanton. The land to the west of Stoney Stanton forms part of the option testing for the Blaby Local Plan Regulation 18 assessment and is included within the options which include strategic residential allocations for the period up to 2038. Hence this land could form part of the growth within Blaby for the period up to 2038.
- 1.2 This initial review of the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI) has considered the documents relating to highways and transportation that form part of the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange consultation.
- 1.3 As a general matter it is considered that the evidence base provided does not readily inform the individual of the effect of the development proposals. Much of the analysis is contained within modelling reports prepared by Aecom for the Pan Regional Transport Modelling (PTRM) and also within Micro Simulation Modelling reports prepared for the assessment of the M69 junctions 1 and 2. However these documents do not explain the changes in traffic flow on the local road network that results from the development proposals including the infrastructure measures that are required to deliver the overall scheme.
- 1.4 The Interim Transport Assessment report attached to the consultation as Appendix 8.1 identifies at para 9.12 that 40 junctions or locations within the study area have been considered in terms of the impact of the development traffic. However there is no evidence of the changes in traffic flow at each of these 40 junctions to be able to understand how the scheme is impacting on the study network. Hence the reader is left questioning what are the actual changes in traffic expected at each of the junctions within the study network and not just those which are subject to further detailed analysis.
- 1.5 Summary model results tables of several standalone junctions are included within the Interim Transport Assessment Report, however the detailed model report outputs for all of these scenarios are not available, with only 7 junctions included. Of these 7 junctions not all the analysis

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of the various scenarios is included to provide justification of the junction improvements proposed. Hence in this regard it is considered that the junction improvements proposed in some locations are not the appropriate form of junction for the specific location.

1.6 Overall it is considered that:

- there is insufficient evidence within the Consultation to be able to determine the impact of the overall development on the study network assessed.
- There is insufficient evidence to understand the growth factors that have been applied to the network in order to determine how growth within Blaby District has been taken into account and the extent to which traffic associated with the growth within Blaby and specifically at Stoney Stanton development forms part of the background flows.
- There is insufficient evidence to understand the choice of junction improvements identified and it is considered that in the absence of this the wrong form of junction improvements are being promoted.
- The impact of the development to the east of the motorway is not clearly defined to be able to ensure suitable mitigation is provided. Specifically the level of traffic predicted to travel through Sapcote and Stoney Stanton varies considerably between the evidence provided in the transport assessment and that included in the transport section of the ES.
- There is insufficient evidence to consider the impact of the development outside of the network peak hours and at the operational peak of the development.

1.7 This review now considers some of the detailed elements contained within the consultation evidence.

### **Trip Generation**

1.8 In general terms, the trip generation adopted within the assessment appears to be consistent with other large scale distribution centre including those at DIRFT and Swan Valley Park as referenced in the consultation information. The assessment is based on the 850,000 sq.m. of B8 development, generating daily flows of 25,435 two way movements which is derived from the application of the B8 trip rates. In addition to this the Rail freight element of the development generates 2056 two way movements on a daily basis.

1.9 Hence the rail freight element of the development generates around 8% of the overall traffic on a daily basis, but with no apparent inter relationship between the rail freight operation and the general warehousing. Consequently the location of the site for the 850,000 sq.m. B8 element of the development appears to have no requirement to be located adjacent to the rail freight interchange as the synergy of the uses is not reflected in any linked trips.

1.10 When considering the AM and PM peak hours this same pattern of trip generation is apparent. In the AM Peak flows from the B8 element of the development reflect 1,372 vehicles two way with the Rail Freight traffic being only 71 vehicles two way, i.e. 5.2%. In the PM peak the B8 element of the development reflects 1,668 vehicle two way, and the rail freight traffic is 99 vehicles two way, i.e. 5.9%.

1.11 What is considered to be required is the trip distribution diagrams for the AM and PM peak periods, this being a 3 hour period around the peak hour, together with the inter peak period, this being a 3 hour period within the middle of the day. The reason for this is that these three peak

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- periods will reflect broadly 60% of the total traffic movements to and from the site throughout the 24hour period and that the impact of the development traffic will not only be material in the specific AM and PM peak hours but also within the peak periods and interpeak period.
- 1.12 Generally as the network peaks become more congested the hours before and after the peak period also become congested, and the impact of the B8 operation can become more significant during these periods. Furthermore the operation of the development is also likely to have a material impact in the interpeak period around the middle of the day when the traffic flows from the development are likely to be higher than in the peak hours.
- 1.13 Hence it is considered that further and clearer evidence is required of the movement of the traffic to the strategic and local road network within the overall study area and throughout the operating day of the development.

### **Background Traffic / Growth**

- 1.14 The ITA states that the PRTM 2.2 model has been used to understand traffic reassignment due to the proposed scheme and infrastructure (included at Appendix 5 of the ITA). Furthermore it is understood that PRTM 1.0 uses trip-end model based on NTEM to provide a generic growth factor for each site.
- 1.15 It is also understood that the PRTM 2.2 uses trip rates extracted from committed development transport assessments for 13 strategic sites around the Midlands, to provide an accurate representation of development impacts on future year modelling.
- 1.16 However, there are no details on the 'generic' growth factor used. There are also no details regarding the 13 strategic sites around the Midlands that have been included within the assessment. It would be useful if this information can be provided, in order to determine how growth within Blaby District has been taken into account and the extent to which traffic associated with the growth within Blaby and specifically at Stoney Stanton development forms part of the background flows.
- 1.17 Furthermore, there are no peak hour baseline traffic flow diagrams for each of the assessment years included in Appendix 5. This would enable an understanding of the changes in traffic flows between the assessment years. This is particularly important as an initial review of the traffic data extracted for some of the individual junction assessments shows reductions in background traffic for some junctions and increases at other junctions. Hence there is not a clear understanding of the base line traffic data adopted in the assessment and the growth rates applied to this base data.

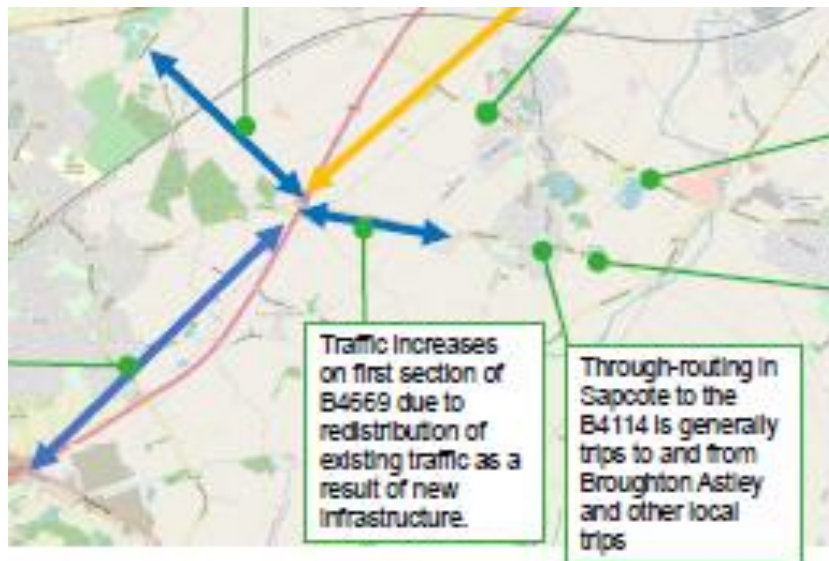
### **Assessment Years / Scenarios Traffic Flow Data.**

- 1.18 The assessment years appear to be an opening year 2026 and a future year 2036. The assessment of the network has considered peak traffic hours of 0800-0900 & 1700-1800.
- 1.19 It is understood the VISSIM peak hour modelling for the M69 Junctions was adjusted to include the AM and PM peak periods [AM peak: 07:00-07:30 (warm-up); 07:30-09:30 (peak period); 09:30-10:00 (cool down). PM peak: 16:00-16:30 (warm-up); 16:30-18:30 (peak period); 18:30-19:00 (cool down)]. As identified above, this does not reflect the full 3-hour peak period for the network which would need to have been considered in any Microsimulation assessment for the M69 junctions, together with a consideration of the interpeak period.
- 1.20 The assessment scenarios adopted within the report are:
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- i) WoD – Do Nothing
- ii) WoDWPA – without development with proposed access infrastructure
- iii) WDWPA – with development, with proposed access infrastructure.

- 1.21 The approach that seems to have been taken within the reporting is to consider the “Do Nothing” scenario and then to add in the main infrastructure, this being the M69 South facing slips and the A47 link road. This scenario is then the “Without development with proposed infrastructure”.
- 1.22 Finally the “with development” scenario is then assessed.
- 1.23 However there seems to be references within the reports to the effect that some of the changes in flow are due to rerouting of existing traffic which is not as a result of the development. This matter is illustrated in the consultation boards of which an extract is set out below.
- 1.24 The comment on the consultation board seems to be suggesting that the traffic increases to the east of the M69 are due to traffic redistribution and not as a result of the HNRFI. However the changes are due to the new infrastructure which is a requirement of the HNRFI. Consequently any residual change in traffic which results in an adverse impact is a matter the HNRFI needs to address.



**Fig 1.1 Extract from Public Exhibition.**

- 1.25 These changes to flows as a result of infrastructure measures as well as the development traffic need to be identified in traffic flow diagrams showing the changes in peak hour flows across the entire network (including individual 40 junctions) for the different assessment scenarios. Without this information it is difficult to fully understand and assess the full impact of the traffic reassignment resulting from the proposed access infrastructure and that of the development itself.
- 1.26 Such information would then assist in understanding the traffic redistribution as a consequence of the changes in infrastructure etc. As an example, analysis of the data illustrates an increase in traffic along the B4669 / Stanton Lane and further north (Hinckley Road, Lynchgate Lane,

Sharnford Road, Pingle Lane, Huncote Road) but with insufficient explanation as to why this is occurring. This needs to be reviewed and justified rather than accepted as a consequence of the PRTM traffic modelling. The PRTM model will reassign traffic via various routes to balance the traffic around the network rather than route the traffic along routes drivers will prefer the travel, albeit there may be increased congestion along such routes. Hence a review of the model is required to justify any anomalies within the model outputs.

### Highway Impact Assessment

- 1.27 The highway impact assessment is summarised within the Appendix 8.1 Interim Transport Assessment Report with detailed assessment considered of 40 junctions which are shown at Figure 26 of the report and listed at Table 21. However, the report only includes details of 7 of these junctions, where mitigation is considered. More detailed assessments are included at Appendix 10 of the Interim Transport Assessment, including reports prepared by Aecom on the PRTM and other reports relating to the Microsimulation model of the M69 junctions.
- 1.28 However, these reports are identified as being, Local Model Validation Reports (LMVR), Base Year Model reviews as well as Forecasting Modelling briefs. There does not appear to be any detailed evidence of the outputs from these reports to show the changes in traffic flows at the key junctions as a consequence of the development, together with the development infrastructure that stems from this, nor any sensitivity testing of these outputs.
- 1.29 Hence missing from the overall assessment is the detailed model report outputs of the remaining 33 junctions not included in the report. This is required to understand the changes in traffic movement at each of these junctions which results from the overall development including the new infrastructure.
- 1.30 Table 36 of the ITA provides an insight to the changes in traffic at key junctions in the Peak hours. An extract of this is attached below.

**Table 36: Total Flow Change and Highway Impact**

	Location	2018		2023	
		Total Flow Change	Highway Impact %	Total Flow Change	Highway Impact %
J52	M69 Junction 2	3298	244%	2893	190%
J19	B4669 / Stanton Ln	967	106%	895	90%
J41	Hinckley Rd / Lynchgate Ln / Sharnford Rd	47	16%	172	82%
J46	Huncote Rd / Stanton Ln / Pingle Ln	276	32%	298	42%
J20	Leicester Rd / Grace Rd / Sharnford Rd	272	26%	264	22%
J28	B4669 Leicester Rd / B4114 Coventry Rd	201	17%	194	16%
J29	The Common Barwell / A47 / B4668 Leicester Rd	404	12%	547	15%
J17	Hinckley Rd / New Rd / B581	168	11%	110	7%
J18	New Rd / Long St / Broughton Rd	96	6%	95	6%
J21	B4114 Coventry Rd / B581 Broughton Rd	121	5%	67	2%

- 1.31 This table highlights the levels of change in traffic to the east of the M69 and passing through Stoney Stanton and Sapcote. The red colouring signifies an impact over 5%.
- 1.32 The Junction No. 19 above is the first junction after the M69 when travelling east which is the existing “tee” junction of the B4669 with Stanton Lane. Here it can be seen that the impact of the development and development infrastructure result in broadly a doubling of traffic on this route

in the AM and PM peaks. Further comments on this junction are included in the Mitigation section below.

- 1.33 By comparison to this evidence, the main ES chapter 8 includes 24hour traffic flow data in the Table 8.5 and extract of which is shown below. Here the 5<sup>th</sup> row of the table identifies the changes in flow on the B4669 to the east of the motorway for the 24hr data. The level of increase is shown as 101.7%% which is broadly consistent with the 106% and 90% for the AM and PM peaks.

**Table 8.5: Highway impact**

Road	Location	Near to Sensitive Receptors	AADT Total Vehicles			AADT HGV's			Magnitude of Change Criteria	Significance of Traffic Effects
			2036 Without Development	2036 With Development	% Change	2036 Without Development	2036 With Development	% Change		
B4668 Leicester Road	A47 Link Road	Yes	19575	26022	32.9	6	1195	19583	Major	Major
Main Road	Claybrooke Magna	Yes	582	1344	131.1	0	0	0.0	Major	Major
A47	East of junction with A447	No	17065	18670	9.4	856	1703	99.0	Major	Moderate
B4669 Hinckley Road	Sapcote (between Stanton Lane and Sharnford Road)	No	6275	11995	91.2	166	558	236.4	Major	Moderate
B4669 East of M69 J2	Eastern villages-west of Stanton Lane Sapcote	No	10399	20979	101.7	322	700	117.1	Major	Minor
Stanton Lane/Hinckley Road	Stoney Stanton	No	3751	8610	129.6	141	130	-7.7	Major	Minor
B4669 Leicester Road	East of Sapcote	No	4953	9165	85.1	59	440	641.9	Major	Minor
Hinckley Road	Aston Flamville	No	1262	2417	91.6	38	54	43.3	Major	Minor

- 1.34 However, when considering the 4<sup>th</sup> line at table 8.5, this is the traffic travelling through Sapcote which is seen to increase from 6275 vehicles in 2036 to 11,995 vehicles two way with the development plus infrastructure, a 91.2% increase. This level of increase is somewhat different to the figures in Table 36 above, where at Junction 20 the increases in the AM and PM peaks are identified as 26% and 22%.
- 1.35 Clearly therefore this would suggest that the actual change in traffic within Sapcote will be far higher than the ITA is suggesting.
- 1.36 Furthermore the significance of traffic effects in Table 8.5, at this level of a 91.2% increase is described as Moderate. Given that for severance and for fear and intimidation, any increase greater than 90% is Major, this should be addressed in far more detailed and not resolved through the proposals to introduce traffic calming, and public realm measures in the centre of Sapcote.

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- 1.37 In practice the distribution of traffic to the east of the M69 needs far greater consideration, given that if traffic is dissuaded from travelling through Sapcote, as a result of traffic calming measures, it will inevitably travel through Stoney Stanton with the consequential impact and effect on that settlement.
- 1.38 When looking at the specific junction assessments, of those junctions assessed, some of the model reports are missing for some of the assessment scenarios. For example, J17 Hinckley Road / New Road, the mitigation assessment is only included with no details provided of the 2036 baseline model results. Furthermore, a mitigation drawing is included for J13 A47 Normandy Way / Ashby Road and the modelling assessment is summarised in the ITA, but no detailed modelling report is included. It would be useful if all of the full model report outputs for the network peak hour modelling (Saturn/VISSIM) and standalone junction assessments could be made available as part of the consultation.
- 1.39 A review of the model outputs for the standalone junctions assessed also show some inconsistencies. The assessment scenario references in the models are slightly different to those in the ITA. RPS has assumed that the 'WS' reference in the detailed model output reports means 'With Slips' at M69 2 and therefore the proposed infrastructure; i.e. the WPA scenario identified within the ITA.
- 1.40 In several of the model results summary tables, the 2036 WoD (Baseline or Do Nothing) scenario is excluded, with only a comparison of the 2036 WoD WS & 2036 WD scenarios. This echoes the point earlier that there is a lack of assessment between the 2036 Baseline (Do Nothing) and the 2036 WoD WS & 2036 WD scenarios to allow consideration of the overall effect of the development and development infrastructure.
- 1.41 For those model results that are available for the 2036 Baseline scenario, many junctions operate well within capacity and it is only when the proposed access infrastructure and development traffic are assessed that these junctions exceed capacity and require significant mitigation.
- 1.42 In reality, the development can only proceed with the proposed access infrastructure and therefore the impacts of both (the proposed access infrastructure and development) need to be compared to the 2036 Do Nothing (Baseline) scenario.
- 1.43 This would obviously result in a greater impact of the overall development traffic, with the greatest impact, particularly at J52 (M69 J2) and J19 (B4469/Stanton Lane) where these junctions will not operate within capacity in the future scenarios without significant mitigation.
- 1.44 In relation to the impact assessment there is a lack of information within the consultation documentation which prevents the reader being able to fully consider the overall impact of the development traffic. This is compounded by the fact that where information is provided not all detailed junction model reports are available.

### **Mitigation**

- 1.45 As previously mentioned, several junctions require significant mitigation, in order to operate within capacity. However, many junctions would work well within capacity in the 2036 Baseline scenario, without the proposed access infrastructure and development traffic.
- 1.46 For some junctions, it would be useful to understand the design chosen, particularly the southern slips of J52 M69 J2. Here there is insufficient explanation of these proposals within the reports. The type of slip roads identified on the drawings shows Type C merge and Type B1 diverge. Both these slip roads therefore allow two points of entry and exit from the motorway. This would
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- suggest slip road flows in the peak hours in excess of 1500 vehicles on each slip road. However there is no apparent assessment of these slip roads in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges CD122. Likewise there is no review of the north facing slips and any changes in flow to these to consider whether these slip roads will operate within capacity base on the current standards or whether these slip road need upgrading.
- 1.47 The flows for the M69 as set out in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report, at Table 8.5 suggests the proposed flows on the M69 to the south of junction 2 will increase from 59,836 to 83,292 vehicle two way 24hr AADT. This level of increase in traffic at this junction could suggest a lane gain arrangement especially as this will result in a significant increase in the level of HGV traffic at this location joining and leaving the motorway.
- 1.48 More surprising is the fact that the increase in traffic between junctions 1 and 2 of the M69 of 23,456 vehicles two way, is not replicated through junction 1 toward the M6, suggesting significant levels of traffic leave the M69 at junction 1. Likewise when considering the traffic travelling north on the M69 toward the M1 at Leicester, the evidence provided in Table 36 of the ITA shows a reduction in traffic at this junction of approximately 100 vehicles in 2036 in each of the peak hours.
- 1.49 Given the scale of the development and that traffic will inevitably route to the M1 this seems highly questionable and requires a detailed audit of the development traffic flows. The growth within the Leicester area will add traffic to this junction of the M1 motorway, with the M1 Smart motorway scheme no longer offering improved capacity to the M1 as this scheme has been placed on hold. Accordingly it would appear perverse to consider any development at HNRFI will result in reduced traffic at Junction 21 of the M1.
- 1.50 At the more local level an initial review of the other junction designs appears to indicate that insufficient land take is proposed and or whether other junction designs have been explored. For example, J19 B4669 / Stanton Lane, the land ownership boundary is very close to the eastern side of Stanton Road although land is taken from the western side of the junction for the introduction of a signal controlled junction. However this form of junction is questioned in this location where the speed limit is 50mph and where a roundabout would seem a more appropriate choice of junction form. More appropriately a roundabout junction design would better support the levels of traffic from each of the approaches. In this regard it would be helpful to see the initial Road Safety Audits of each of the junction and mitigation proposals across the study network.
- 1.51 Finally the junction proposals within Stoney Stanton (Junction 17) are to remove the existing mini roundabout at the junction of the B581 New Road with Hinckley Road and replace this with a signal controlled junction. The analysis of this junction is not complete within the evidence provided as the full analysis is not included in the appendices.
- 1.52 However the result from the analysis included in Tables 24 and 25 of the ITA do not show that the proposed works offer “vastly improved levels of capacity” as quoted within the report. In fact on the evidence provided the new signalised junction is operating close to capacity in the design year with the development and infrastructure measures. Hence further details are required of this junction assessment and the changes in traffic flows predicted through Stoney Stanton. Any further increases in traffic through Stoney Stanton which result from the development proposals incorrectly assigning traffic through Sapcote, will result in this junction exceeding capacity and creating a level of impact which is not mitigated by the development proposals.

## Summary

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- 1.53 In summary therefore, the information provided as part of the consultation process does not fully address the basis of assessment and fully consider the necessary mitigation. Further work is required and information to be provided to clarify the basis of the distribution of the traffic and the effects of rerouting associated with the new infrastructure.
- 1.54 This needs to be presented in full for the 40 junctions considered to be impacted on by the development proposals both in the context of the development traffic and also in relation to the reassignment of traffic associated with the new infrastructure measures.
- 1.55 Any assessment of the effects of the overall development must consider and mitigate both the effects of the rerouting of traffic which results from the new infrastructure proposals and also the effects of the development traffic itself. Hence any mitigation strategy must address the full effects of traffic changes resulting from the development proposals on the local road network.
- 1.56 In conclusion it is considered that:
- there is insufficient evidence within the Consultation to be able to determine the impact of the overall development on the study network assessed.
  - There is insufficient evidence to understand the growth factors that have been applied to the network in order to determine how growth within Blaby District has been taken into account and the extent to which traffic associated with the growth within Blaby and specifically at Stoney Stanton development forms part of the background flows.
  - There is insufficient evidence to understand the choice of junction improvements identified and it is considered that in the absence of this the wrong form of junction improvements are being promoted.
  - The impact of the development to the east of the motorway is not clearly defined to be able to ensure suitable mitigation is provided. Specifically, the level of traffic predicted to travel through Sapcote and Stoney Stanton varies considerably between the evidence provided in the transport assessment and that included in the transport section of the ES.
  - There is insufficient evidence to consider the impact of the development outside of the network peak hours and at the operational peak of the development.
- 1.57 In this regard it is considered that the consultation information provided to date relating to highways and transportation does not demonstrate suitable assessment and mitigation of the scheme proposals.
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