The West Midlands Rail Freight Interchange Order 201x

Interim Consultation Report

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Regulation 5(2)(q)

July 2017

Copper Consultancy

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1.1 This Interim Consultation Report details the first stage of consultation carried out on the West Midlands Interchange (WMI) including the feedback that was received and how it has been considered in the development of the project. The project, which is being proposed by Four Ashes Limited (FAL), has been refined and improved following consideration of all the feedback received.

1.1.2 Stage 1 Consultation ran from Monday 13 June 2016 to Sunday 24 July 2016. This document has been prepared as part of Stage 2 Consultation.

1.2 Why we consult

1.2.1 Consultation on proposals helps create better projects; maximising benefits and reducing potential impacts. Consultation with those who live locally or who have responsibility for the local area brings the benefit of intimate local knowledge. FAL is carrying out two stages of consultation before submitting an application to the Planning Inspectorate. This includes one stage of ‘non-statutory’ consultation that we have already carried out (Stage 1, between 13 June and 24 July 2016) on early stage proposals, and one ‘statutory’ consultation on detailed draft proposals, which this document forms a part of and will run from 5th July 2017 to 30th August 2017.

1.2.2 We recognise that developments have impacts. By involving local people we hope to understand their concerns and refine the scheme to reduce these impacts as much as possible. By listening to the local community, we can take their concerns into account as we develop the project, and this should lead to a better, more sensitive development.

1.3 Stage 1 consultation

1.3.1 Valuable feedback from Stage 1 consultation was received from statutory consultees, stakeholders and from members of the public – most of which were from the local community. We received responses from 20 statutory consultees and around 300 responses from the public.
1.3.2 A large amount of detailed feedback was received and the key issues raised were:

- The loss of Green Belt, agricultural land and green space.
- Why this site and/or why this scale of development?
- The impact of additional traffic near the site.
- Scepticism regarding the employment figures put forward.
- Impact on residents and communities from light, noise, air pollution, and loss of property value – noise was the single most common impact identified.

1.3.3 Responses from statutory consultees were more specific to the individual roles and responsibilities of the consultees. Many of the comments from these consultees were to highlight particular areas they wished to see covered in more depth at the next stage of consultation.

1.3.4 The project proposals have been updated to reduce impacts wherever practical. In addition, a draft Alternative Site Assessment has been published (document 7.2) which sets out the need for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange in the region as well as how and why the proposed site at Four Ashes was chosen.

1.3.5 A project website - [www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk](http://www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk) - was set up in April 2016 and since then it has been updated to advise the public of milestone points in the evolution of the project. For example, in December 2016 the website was updated to provide details of the latest Illustrative Masterplan.

1.4 Stage 2 Consultation

1.4.1 This report has been published as part of our Stage 2 Consultation, which will fulfil the statutory pre-application consultation requirements of the Planning Act 2008.
1.4.2 How FAL are consulting with the community during Stage 2 consultation is set out in our Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) which was published and uploaded onto the project web site on 21st June 2017.

1.4.3 A Consultation Report will be submitted with FAL’s application for a DCO, which will set out all the details of consultation on the scheme, summarise the feedback received and FAL’s consideration of that feedback.
2. Introduction

2.1 About the project

2.1.1 The West Midlands Interchange (WMI) is a proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) immediately west of Junction 12 of the M6 in South Staffordshire. A SRFI is a large distribution park linked into the strategic rail and road system, capable of accommodating warehouses for the storage, processing and movement of goods for manufacturers, retailers and consumers.

2.1.2 The current proposals for the West Midlands Interchange include:

- An intermodal freight terminal with connections to the West Coast Main Line, capable of accommodating up to 10 trains per day and trains of up to 775m long and including container storage, HGV parking, rail control building and staff facilities;
- Up to 743,200 square metres of rail served warehousing and ancillary service buildings;
- New road infrastructure and works to the existing road infrastructure;
- Demolition of existing structures and structural earthworks to create development plots and landscape zones; and
- Strategic landscaping and open space, including alterations to public rights of way and the creation of new ecological enhancement areas and publicly accessible open areas.

2.1.3 The Planning Act 2008 as amended (‘the Act’) sets out a planning process for projects classified as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

2.1.4 In view of their national importance, this classification covers developments such as energy generating stations of a certain size, new highways, new gas and overhead electric lines, as well as a range of other infrastructure projects.
To be considered a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, a rail freight interchange must be over 60 hectares in size and have the capacity to handle four or more goods trains per day. The West Midlands Interchange proposal site is 297 hectares with the capacity to handle up to 10 goods trains per day at maturity.

2.1.5 The planning process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects is different to that for most planning applications. Instead of applying for planning permission from the appropriate council covering the site, we will apply to the Planning Inspectorate for development consent. The Planning Inspectorate will examine our application before recommending to the Secretary of State (for Transport in this case) whether the proposals should receive consent. The Secretary of State then makes the final decision.

2.2 Pre-application consultation

2.2.1 Consultation before the submission of a proposal is a key requirement of the Act. Effective pre-application consultation leads to a better developed application, where key issues have been considered as thoroughly as possible before submission. It also increases the level of understanding of projects amongst the public. The Government considers pre-application consultation particularly important in allowing for shorter and more efficient examinations.

2.2.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has issued its advice on the pre-application process, including consultation, called the ‘Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process’ (March 2015). This advice sets out a number of principles for good consultation, including recommending multiple stages of consultation on complex projects.

2.3 Stage 1 Consultation

2.3.1 The partners of FAL adopted a vision for the WMI project. This vision was committed to and set out at the Stage 1 Consultation and it has guided the development of these proposals:
The partners of FAL are committed to delivering a rail-served development which will bring significant sustainable social and economic benefits to South Staffordshire, the Black Country and the wider region, through responsible design and by taking into account community interests and environmental considerations.

2.3.2 In order to help us to develop the best possible project, FAL has decided to carry out two stages of consultation on the West Midlands Interchange. Only one stage of consultation is mandatory under the Act. However, in order to maximise the opportunity for communities and stakeholders to meaningfully influence the final proposals, FAL chose to consult early in the formulation of the scheme and is now asking for comments on the project that has evolved following the first round of consultation.

2.3.3 The first stage of consultation was designed to get feedback on the general principles of the project and the two draft layout options we were considering for locating the rail terminal within the site. Stage 1 consultation was held from Monday 13 June 2016 to Sunday 24 July 2016.

2.3.4 Whilst Stage 1 consultation was ‘non-statutory’ FAL approached it in the same way as a statutory exercise. For example, FAL discussed the best approach to Stage 1 Consultation with the District and County Councils ahead of formalising arrangements. The ‘Consultation Strategy’ was published on the project website (www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk) on 8 June 2016.

2.3.5 Our approach to Stage 2 Consultation has similarly involved detailed discussions with South Staffordshire Council and Staffordshire County Council to ensure that they consider our consultation to provide sufficient opportunity for people to comment on the proposals. These discussions included consideration of the extent of the consultation area, the suitability of the locations for the exhibitions and the number of exhibitions. For example, in response to feedback from Stage 1 consultation, the Zone of focused consultation for Stage 2 has been widened to include Penkridge. FAL published a draft Consultation Strategy for consideration by South Staffordshire District and Staffordshire County Council and took on board
their comments before finalising arrangements for Stage 2 consultation and publishing the SoCC.

2.3.6 The published Consultation Strategy for Stage 1 can be found in Appendix 1.

2.4 Material and Information available at Stage 1 consultation

2.4.1 The first stage of consultation was used to set out the early outline proposals for WMI and encourage the identification of issues people felt were important to address as part of the development of the scheme. We also sought opinions and information regarding two alternative layout options for the scheme that were being considered.

2.4.2 The following materials were made available as part of the consultation:

- Layout Option Plans – plans showing the two layout options for the West Midlands Interchange that were consulted on.
- Consultation Overview Document – this was the primary consultation document for Stage 1. It contained:
  - Background to the project
  - Preliminary proposals
  - Information about potential benefits, effects and impacts of the proposals.
- Environmental Report – a technical document that set out early environmental considerations and information about the proposals.
- Newsletter – which was used to publicise the consultation. It gave an outline of the project and the Stage 1 Consultation process, as well as directing people to where more information could be found and details of public exhibitions.
- Feedback Form – to help collect people’s views during the consultation process. The form guided feedback on a number of issues which FAL was specifically interested in at this stage of the project’s development, but there was also dedicated space to make any additional comments.
2.4.3 Copies of the consultation promotional materials, exhibition boards and feedback form can be found in Appendix 2. Other Stage 1 consultation documents can be downloaded from the project website but have since been superseded by documents published as part of Stage 2 consultation.
3. Stage 1 – Consultation with statutory consultees

3.1 Early engagement

3.1.1 FAL and the project team engaged with various stakeholders before Stage 1 Consultation. These stakeholders include officers from South Staffordshire District Council and Staffordshire County Council and Network Rail.

3.1.2 The purpose of this early engagement was to introduce certain key stakeholders to the project and receive initial feedback on the approach to its development.

3.2 Identification of consultees

3.2.1 As mentioned, although Stage 1 Consultation was not carried out to fulfil the requirements for pre-application consultation under the Act, the Act was used as a guide to identify stakeholders that take on a statutory function during the statutory period of pre-application consultation.

3.2.2 For Stage 1 consultation, a number of “statutory” consultee groups were identified.

Local authorities

3.2.3 The following local authorities were included in Stage 1 consultation:

- South Staffordshire Council, which the application site is located in.
- The following councils which share a boundary with South Staffordshire Council:
  - Stafford Borough Council
The upper-tier county council for the application site, Staffordshire County Council.

The following unitary or upper tier county councils which share a boundary with Staffordshire County Council:

- Leicestershire County Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Cheshire East Council
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council
- Telford and Wrekin Council
- Shropshire Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- West Midlands Combined Authority

**Statutory organisations**

3.2.4 Statutory organisations include various organisation and bodies, which FAL is required to consult on proposals. This includes organisations like Highways England and the Environment Agency with specific responsibilities as consultees in the planning process. It also includes parish councils near the site as representative bodies.

3.2.5 A full list of the statutory consultees consulted as part of Stage 1 consultation can be found in Appendix 3.

**Potentially affected land owners**
3.2.6 42 land owners potentially affected by the proposals were specifically consulted. A number of meetings were held on a one to one basis to explain the proposals as they affected those parties.

3.3 Consultation activity

3.3.1 All consultees listed above were written to, inviting them to provide feedback to Stage 1 Consultation. The letter included details of where additional information about the proposals could be found. The deadline for responding to Stage 1 Consultation was the same as for members of the public - 24 July 2016.

3.3.2 The following consultation materials were enclosed with the letter:

- A Newsletter that was sent to homes and businesses near the site, setting out information about the project and consultation.
- Plans of the two layout options being consulted on during Stage 1 Consultation.
- A Feedback Form asking specific questions about the project.

In addition, the Local Authorities and potential Persons with interest in land (PILs) were also sent a copy of the Consultation Overview Document.
4. Stage 1 Consultation - Consultation with the Community

4.1 Early engagement

4.1.1 FAL and the project team engaged with residents and businesses nearest to the site before Stage 1 consultation. The purpose of this early engagement was to introduce the people closest to the project to the principle of a strategic rail freight interchange, FAL and the process that the project would be following.

4.1.2 On 12 April 2016, FAL sent letters to 234 homes and businesses near to the site with introductory information about the project. Those closest to, or within, the proposed site were offered meetings with Peter Frost, FAL director, before Stage 1 consultation. Nine meetings were held with members of the local community before the start of Stage 1 consultation. These were one to one meetings to explain the principle of the application and the DCO process.

4.1.3 On the 12th April 2016 FAL gave a presentation to South Staffordshire Councillors and a number of Staffordshire County Councillors again to explain the principles of the application, our consultation approach and the DCO process. Members asked the team to keep them informed via regular briefings at key points in the project. Further presentations were made on the 7th June 2016 and the 29th November 2016.

4.1.4 In addition, elected representatives (including councillors, parish councils and Members of Parliament) were sent information about the upcoming proposals.
4.2 Approach to consultation

4.2.1 FAL sought to ensure those who live and work near the site of the proposed development would have the opportunity and ability to learn about and feedback on the early stage proposals during Stage 1 Consultation.

4.2.2 In order to accomplish this, the consultation was promoted through a range of channels (see below), increasing awareness of the project and the consultation period. Consultation documents were easily available to enable people to access information. Finally, feedback was collected through a range of channels to ensure that people could make their comments in their preferred way.

4.2.3 Throughout the consultation, a Freephone helpline was also promoted which allowed people to get in touch directly with the project team via our contact centre to find out more about the project and the consultation.

4.2.4 Before Stage 1 consultation, we published a ‘Consultation Strategy’ on our project website. This document set out how we were consulting with the community during Stage 1. It was available along with other consultation documents so that people could see how we were carrying out consultation.

**Contact centre**

4.2.5 A contact centre has been available since we began early engagement on the proposals in April 2016. We publicised an email address (contactus@communityrelations.co.uk) and freephone number (0800 377 7345) so that people could contact the project team at their convenience. The details of the contact centre were included on promotional material for Stage 1 Consultation.

**Website**

4.2.6 All information published as part of Stage 1 Consultation was available on the project website [www.westmidlandsinterchange](http://www.westmidlandsinterchange). The website also provides a
Frequently Asked Questions section, updates about the project and details of how people can get in touch with the project team.

4.3 Consultation activity

Methods of informing people of the Consultation

4.3.1 As set out in the Consultation Strategy, a number of methods were used to promote the consultation and increase people’s ability to engage with Stage 1.

4.3.2 Direct mail – All homes and businesses within approximately 2km of the site were sent information directly by Royal Mail. This provided a reliable way of ensuring that people who lived and worked within the immediate vicinity of the project had an opportunity to learn directly about the project and consultation. Homes and businesses were sent copies of the Newsletter, Feedback Form and Layout Option Plans.

4.3.3 We also made direct contact with elected representatives, recognising their role in liaising with their communities. This included all councillors within South Staffordshire Council, relevant councillors within Staffordshire County Council, the two local Members of Parliament and the Parish councils in the area.

4.3.4 Newspaper advertisements – In order to promote awareness of the project and consultation amongst the consultation zone and wider area, newspaper advertisements were placed in the Birmingham Mail and the Express and Star on Thursday 16 June 2016, during the first week of the consultation. Copies of those advertisements can be found in Appendix 2.

4.3.5 Press release – In order to promote awareness of the project and consultation amongst the wider community, a press release was issued on Monday 13 June 2016 to the following newspapers and media outlets:

- Birmingham Mail
- Birmingham Post
- Bridgnorth Journal
- Burton Mail
- Cannock Chronicle
- Coventry Telegraph
- Express & Star
- Leek Post & Times
- Lichfield Mercury
- Royal Sutton Coldfield Observer
- Shrewsbury Admag
- Shrewsbury Chronicle
- Shropshire Star
- Staffordshire Newsletter
- Sunday Mercury
- Tamworth Herald
- Telford Journal
- The Sentinel (Stoke)
- Walsall Advertiser
- Walsall Chronicle
- Wolverhampton Chronicle
- Wolverhampton West, Town and Village Life

4.3.6 A copy of the issued press release can be found in Appendix 2.

4.3.7 Posters – In order to help further promote the consultation, posters were placed in the following locations:

**Table 1: Stage 1 Consultation poster locations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poster location</th>
<th>Postcode</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shareshill Community Shop and Post Office</td>
<td>WV10 7LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shareshill, St Mary &amp; St Luke C Of E Church</td>
<td>WV10 7LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shareshill Parish Council notice board next to Havergal C E Primary School</td>
<td>WV10 7LE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shareshill Parish Council notice board next to Shareshill Community Shop and Post Office</td>
<td>WV10 7LA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Information availability

4.3.8 All the Stage 1 consultation documents were available online (at [www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk](http://www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk)) and as paper copies at a number of information points for the duration of the consultation. The details of the information points were provided in our published Consultation Strategy and our Newsletter, which was sent to around 3,000 homes and businesses nearest the site.
Table 2: Information points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brewood Library</td>
<td>Newport Street, Brewood, Stafford, ST19 9DT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penkridge Library</td>
<td>Bellbrook, Stafford, ST19 5DL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Staffordshire Council</td>
<td>Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, WV8 1PX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.9 In addition, all the consultation materials were available at our public exhibitions.

4.3.10 Our Consultation Overview Document, which summarised the key information at this stage of the project, was available for people to take away from information points, at the public exhibitions and on request through our contact centre.

4.3.11 This approach ensured that people could review documents in the way that best suited them.

Public exhibitions

4.3.12 Three public exhibitions were held as set out in the published Consultation Strategy. The exhibitions provided an opportunity for people to review the documents with members of the project team on hand to answer questions. The exhibitions were held early in the consultation period to allow people to discuss issues with the project team and have time to fully consider their responses to the consultation.

A total of 472 attendees were recorded at the three exhibitions.

Table 3: Public exhibitions and attendee numbers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 30 June 2016</td>
<td>2pm to 7pm</td>
<td>The Haling Dene Centre, Cannock Road, Penkridge, Stafford, ST19 5DT</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
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### Feedback mechanisms

4.3.13 As with the consultation document availability, we provided a number of different ways for people to provide their comments. The Stage 1 Feedback Form was included with the Newsletter that was sent to the nearest 3,000 homes and businesses to the site. This included a Freepost address so that responses could be sent to us without cost to the community.

4.3.14 People were also able to leave their feedback with us at public exhibitions, online through a digital version of our feedback form, or by emailing us their thoughts via the dedicated project email address.

4.3.15 Feedback could be sent through any of the channels below. The deadline for responding was given as midnight on Sunday 24 July 2016.

- Freepost – the Feedback Form, or any other feedback, could be posted to FREEPOST WMI
- Project website (www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk) which hosted an online version of the Feedback Form
- Email – via contactus@communityrelations.co.uk
5. Stage 1 Consultation – Feedback from Statutory Consultees

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 Responses were received from 20 statutory consultees:

- Cheslyn Hay Parish Council
- Dunston with Coppenhall Parish Council
- Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Ashton Parish Council
- Penkridge Parish Council
- Joint Parish Councils
- Cannock Chase AONB Partnership
- Environment Agency
- ES Pipelines
- Health and Safety Executive
- Highways England
- Inland Waterways Association
- National Grid
- Natural England
- Public Health England
- Royal Mail Group
- South Staffordshire Council
- Staffordshire County Council
- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue
- The Coal Authority
- Warwickshire County Council

5.2 Summarised feedback

5.2.1 In the sections below, the principal issues raised by each consultee are summarised. Details of how the project has evolved can be found in Section 7.
**Cheslyn Hay Parish Council**

5.2.2 The Parish Council raised several objections to the proposals on the grounds of the loss of Green Belt, impact on local residents (specifically noise), the impact on rural amenity, the traffic created by the proposals and the potential for “rat running” through local communities. Concern was also expressed about the location and scale of the project. The Parish Council also considered that mineral excavation on the site should be completed before any development is taken forward.

5.2.3 The Parish Council asked several questions about the project including; whether the project was part of a national initiative, whether it was linked to Pentalver, if the project would lead to the nationalisation of the M6 toll, the interaction with the proposed M54/M6 link road and HS2, if there was additional capacity on the rail line, if occupants would be required to use the rail terminal, how staff car parking was being handled, the area employees were likely to be drawn from, what pollution controls could be put in place and how traffic controls could be enforced.

**Dunston with Coppenhall Parish Council**

5.2.4 The Parish Council raised objections to the proposals on the grounds of the impact on residents and the loss of Green Belt. Concerns were also expressed regarding the impact of additional traffic, noise and pollution. It was also stated that the project should not only benefit the developer.

5.2.5 The Parish council asked several questions about the project including; a request for details of the transfer from road to rail, details of the freight transportation to be used, whether Jaguar Land Rover will be affected by the proposals, which rail routes would be used and the need for the project.

**Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council**

5.2.6 The Parish Council raised concerns about the proposals including; the impact of air and noise pollution from HGV traffic, the impact on already congested
major roads. The Parish Council suggested that a non-Green Belt site be used.

**Penkridge Parish Council**

5.2.7 The Parish Council did not provide its own response but collated and forwarded correspondents from local residents as their response.

5.2.8 The issues raised included: objection to the loss of Green Belt, concern about the scale of the project, statements that there are other brownfield sites that should be used, that claims have not been backed up, concern regarding traffic generation and the impact on residents, the loss of natural habitats, the impact on rural lifestyle, impact on property prices and the justification for developing south of Vicarage Road was questioned.

5.2.9 Some of the emails expressed general opposition to the project. The issue of whether occupants would be obliged to use the rail terminal was also raised.

**Joint Parish Council response**

5.2.10 A consultation response was received as a joint response from nine parish councils. These were:

- Hatherton Parish Council
- Featherstone Parish Council
- Cheslyn Hay Parish Council
- Great Wyrley Parish Council
- Shareshill Parish Council
- Saredon Parish Council
- Hilton Parish Council
- Huntington Parish Council
- Dunston With Coppenhall Parish Council

5.2.11 The issues raised in the response were:
• Opposition to the development, primarily because of the loss of Green Belt and a lack of evidence that there are no appropriate alternative sites.
• Alternative sites were suggested including Rugeley Power Station, Junction 15 at Meaford, Hortonwood at Telford, Fradley at Lichfield and Drakelow Power Station.
• Concern that occupants will not be obliged to use the rail terminal and that it will simply become a logistics centre.
• Concern regarding additional traffic and the impact on people and roads.
• Concern regarding noise and light pollution.
• Concern regarding impact on a SSSI.
• The jobs figures were questioned and concerns were raised about the impact on the local economy and public finances.
• Concern regarding the loss of a heritage asset provided by the Canal Conservation Area.
• Statement that there was no evidence for the size of the project and the use of land south of Vicarage Road was questioned.

**Cannock Chase AONB Partnership**

5.2.12 The Partnership’s primary concerns were on visual impact on the AONB and what mitigation measures would be taken to screen the site.

**Environment Agency**

5.2.13 The Environment Agency raised several specific areas for consideration by the project team including; contamination of controlled waters from the terminal area, impact on existing ground water remediation work, localised surface water flooding, management of contaminated water and drainage.

5.2.14 General concerns about air pollution were also raised. The Environment Agency suggested that the West layout option would have less impact on watercourses.
ES Pipelines

5.2.15 The utilities firm ES Pipelines confirmed that it had no gas or electricity infrastructure on the site and was not affected.

Health and Safety Executive

5.2.16 The Health and Safety Executive responded that they had no comments on the proposals at this stage, but that they should be involved in the statutory consultation.

Highways England

5.2.17 Highways England requested that several issues be considered and information provided as part of the development of the proposals, these included:

- Statement that joint working with Network Rail will be required.
- That Highways England will need to see rail forecasts.
- Suggestion of 24/7 surveys for HGV, non-HGV and rail trips.
- Various points regarding additional or expanded surveys and information for the next stage of consultation.
- Request for evidence demonstrating appropriateness of proposed junction layout.
- Request for more detail regarding provision for sustainable modes of transport.
- Statement that the consented Bericote development needs to be considered.
- Agreement that the facility represents an 'exceptional circumstance'
- Intended to assess future year assessment in 2036.
- Interest in development's impact on air quality, ecology and nature conservation, landscape and visual, noise and vibration, water environment and utilities.
Inland Waterways Association

5.2.18 The Inland Waterways Association raised general concerns about the project, including; a stated reduction in freight capacity on the West Coast mainline, excessive size of development, that the project is not a ‘rail interchange’ and that transportation claims are not credible.

5.2.19 Specific concerns regarding the impact on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal included; damage to the rural setting of the Canal, the visual impact of the development and proximity to the Canal, noise impact, and potential impact on Calf Heath Reservoir.

National Grid

5.2.20 National Grid responded to the consultation to alert the team to low and medium pressure pipelines in the development area.

Natural England

5.2.21 Natural England noted that the proposed development is near the Cannock Chase AONB, Four Ashes Pit SSSI and Belvide Reservoir SSSI. Natural England highlighted the potential impact of air pollution, the loss of agricultural land and the need to accommodate protected species. An evidence plan which should look to demonstrate a net benefit was requested.

Public Health England

5.2.22 Public Health England made a number of requests and recommendations for information including; assessment of alternative sites, recommendation of carrying out an Environmental Impact Assessment, screening assessments, air pollution assessment, water impact assessment, contamination assessment, consultation with local authorities and the Environment Agency and assessment for human health risk.

5.2.23 It was also suggested that the perception of risk may have a greater impact than hazards themselves.
**Royal Mail Group**

5.2.24 The Royal Mail Group confirmed that they have no issue with the project going ahead but expressed concern regarding the potential impact of additional traffic. The Royal Mail Group requested a detailed transport impact assessment and to be involved in the next stage of consultation.

**South Staffordshire Council**

5.2.25 South Staffordshire Council responded to the consultation with an interim position on the project, which was to oppose the project at this location due to the impact on the Green Belt but acknowledged that the project addresses the Government’s aim of shifting freight from road to rail. The Council requested an assessment of alternative sites.

**Staffordshire County Council**

5.2.26 Staffordshire County Council requested evidence of the need for the project, the site selection and the exceptional circumstances warranting the large scale of the development, and how the project fits with national strategy. The Council expressed interest in the transport aspects of the proposals, the justification for the loss of Green Belt, more detail on the proposed junctions, the integration of the rail element to the proposals and the potential to incorporate advanced manufacturing and engineering.

5.2.27 The Council expressed interest in the economic strategy for the project, the travel to work area, the number and type of potential jobs created, how the freight paths would be managed, and the creation of a training / employment plan for local people, and the potential for manufacturing on site.

5.2.28 The Council raised concerns including; the loss of Calf Heath Wood, impact on the water environment, indirect impact, flood risk, the need to assess impact on the historic environment, waste generation, air quality impact, impact on users of the Canal towpath, the need for information about phasing, the potential impact on passenger rail services, how the rail terminal will be
linked in the rail line, the impact on traffic, parking provision, and impact on existing businesses (specifically during construction)

5.2.29 The Council also requested that community facilities be incorporated into the site, that additional information about landscaping be provided, that sensitive building design be used and that the project should strive for sustainability, that flood risk and biodiversity be considered in the design, that additional surveys on biodiversity and flooding be carried out, and that the Water Framework Directive should be considered when assessing impact.

**Staffordshire Fire and Rescue**

5.2.30 Staffordshire Fire and Rescue stated that appropriate supplies of water should be made available at the site and proper vehicle access provided (including outlining requirements). The use of Automatic Water Suppressions Systems was advised.

**The Coal Authority**

5.2.31 The Coal Authority stated it had no comment as the site lies outside its defined ‘High Risk’ areas.

**Warwickshire County Council**

5.2.32 Warwickshire County Council recognised the benefits the scheme could deliver in better connecting local markets to ports and rail networks. The Council noted development pressure on the A5, the rail capacity on the branch line and that the consented Bericote scheme needs to be considered.

**City of Wolverhampton Council**

5.2.33 The City of Wolverhampton Council welcomed the proposals and recognised the need for a development of this type and scale in this area.
6. Feedback from the public

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 300 pieces of feedback were received from members of the public, organisations and councillors.

6.1.2 This section of the report summarises the key concerns raised in responses to the WMI public consultation. It reviews the responses by geographical location, beginning with Four Ashes and Gailey in the centre, and following clockwise to consider responses from: Penkridge; Calf Heath, Great Saredon and Four Crosses; Coven; and Brewood; responses from the wider area.

6.1.3 The analysis finds that traffic and noise are the most pressing issues, followed by justifications for developing the greenbelt, and then wildlife conservation.

6.1.4 A number of requests for further information were also made in the consultation feedback.

6.2 Methodology

6.2.1 Responses were organised by location in order to understand whether particular issues would arise for those in particular areas, such solutions to broader issues (for example, congestion) can be better tailored to the particular needs of those area. Location was determined by checking the given postcode and address, in order to gain a more accurate understanding of the sources of concern.

6.2.2 The frequency of references made to particular issues was then noted for each area. In this report, this is displayed in tabular form within each area section. Frequency (f) refers to the number of occasions each issue arose.
6.3 Summary of findings

6.3.1 Question 1 and question 3 of the State 1 Consultation form asked consultees to provide information about the site, surrounding area and any specific concerns. This section summarises, by theme, the main issues and information raised within consultees’ responses. Table 1 below identifies the four most cited concerns in each of the main consultation areas.

6.3.2 General opposition to the project was a common comment throughout. Opposition was sometimes stated without reference to specific reason but often linked to the issues highlighted below. Comment was made throughout out that the project ‘should not be allowed to happen’.

6.3.3 A common observation was that the respondent understood the value of SRFIs to the regional and national economy but disagreed with the selection of site; believing that alternative/brownfield sites would be better for the project.

Table 4. Four most cited concerns of each area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Ashes</th>
<th>Gailey</th>
<th>Penkridge</th>
<th>Calf Heath</th>
<th>Coven</th>
<th>Brewood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>= Noise</td>
<td>= Noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>= Scale and appearance</td>
<td>= 24-hour operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>Air pollution</td>
<td>Quality of life</td>
<td>Wildlife</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Traffic

6.3.4 This was the most cited concern in all areas. In particular, concerns surround congestion of the A449 and A5. Public comments state that such congestion particularly occurs when there are accidents on the M6, leading to the use of local roads in the area by motorway traffic as an alternative route.

6.3.5 Related to this are concerns about the impact of approximately 8000 new employees and many HGVs using local roads, particularly for the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, bikers and riders, and for the impact on commuting times to school and work. Of a similar nature, many comments raise the importance of the ability of emergency vehicles to operate quickly on local roads and of residents to reach New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton.

6.3.6 Traffic-related comments also demonstrate a widespread view that the local road infrastructure is unable to cope with heavy vehicles, particularly in their anticipated number and frequency. It was argued on a few occasions that the Council spends too little on road maintenance at present traffic levels. Relatedly, there is a belief that HGVs won’t adhere to signs restricting their use of particular roads, and that this problem will be consolidated by the narrowness of local roads, which comments state makes these roads too narrow for HGVs to carry out U-turns. Two respondents stated that HGVs regularly get stuck under bridges.

6.3.7 Regarding particular locations for anticipated traffic concerns, the responses as a whole raised all of the main connecting roads in the area at some point. Unsurprisingly, those closest to particular areas received particular attention, however there is a widespread general concern for traffic in the broader area. For example, a few responses, coming from across the consultation areas, mentioned Straight Mile as a location that would be affected by increased traffic. This was not one of the core locations of concern, however. The following paragraphs discuss the more specific concerns over traffic on local roads.

6.3.8 For residents of Calf Heath, 44 of 60 responses discussed traffic on Vicarage Road. A number of these responses express concern over the entrance to the proposed site on Vicarage Road; public consultees contend that the
introduction of a roundabout will further add to congestion on the A449. Comments recommend that this could be resolved by (a) restricting the development to the west of Vicarage Road, (b) having entrances only from the A5 or (c) creating a direct route to the site from the M6. Calf Heath public respondents are also concerned about traffic on Station Drive.

6.3.9 For residents of Penkridge and Coven, residents express particular concern over increased traffic through their villages and the impact of this on the rural feel of the villages. Respondents from Penkridge are also concerned over impacts on Gailey Island. This was also raised by Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Ashton Parish Council, however few Gailey residents (2) mentioned this.

**Noise**

6.3.10 Noise was also a widespread issue for most respondents, some of whom complained of the existing ‘drone’ from the M6. Objections relating to noise came most strongly from residents closest to the site; in Four Ashes, Gailey and Calf Heath. These respondents spoke of the noise impacts on residents in their houses, and in the impact of the noise pollution in generally quiet and tranquil villages.

6.3.11 In general, responses that reference noise raised this as an issue but in no detail. Most consultation flagged broad issues in this manner.

6.3.12 However, of note is responses that anticipated adverse noise impacts on pets, wildlife, and those using the local countryside for leisure purposes. Specifically, a number of public comments from across the consultation areas argued that although some of Calf Heath Wood will be preserved, levels of enjoyment will be reduced due to increased noise.

**Green Belt**

6.3.13 The green belt was one of the most cited concerns and was mostly mentioned in general terms. Reiterating its designated status and, as such, its right to be preserved. The topic of the development of the greenbelt generated
passionate language from respondents across the consultation areas; for example, terms such as 'devastating' and 'unacceptable'.

6.3.14 Many public consultees asked to know what the special conditions are in this circumstance that warrant development on the greenbelt. Two people mentioned that local people have been unable to build houses due to the greenbelt, and find this unfair. Many comments expressed a belief that there must be a more appropriate brownfield site. Many of these comments also stated that the respondents felt the scale of the proposed site is unnecessarily large when compared to other RFIs, such as at East Midlands Gateway.

**Wildlife**

6.3.15 As with noise and the green belt, comments relating to wildlife mostly raised the topic in general terms. Responses anticipated the development of land for the proposed project to result in destruction of wildlife and nature, and argued a need to protect wildlife. The following paragraphs note some of the specific and detailed comments relating to wildlife.

6.3.16 Some responses anticipate that the project would result in the enclosure of Calf Heath and increased noise and air pollution in this area, which they argue will impact wildlife corridors (in addition to impacting their enjoyment of the area).

6.3.17 A number of respondents from across the areas mentioned the need to protect Heronry at Gailey reservoir.

6.3.18 Some comments suggested there are protected species in the area. One respondent said there are protected Crested Newts in Four Ashes.

6.3.19 One respondent argued that the nature and wildlife in the area is a source of tourism that will be destroyed.

6.3.20 Other environmental concerns raised include:

- flooding (particularly of the A449 and A5), due to a high water table;
• the status of Cannock Chase as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and
• the stability and pollution of the Canal and Calf Heath reservoir.

**Air pollution**

6.3.21 Air pollution was a signalled as a significant concern for respondents from across the consultation area, although concern over air pollution was express less than it was for noise pollution. The following paragraphs identify the sentiment of the comments regarding air pollution.

6.3.22 Air pollution was mostly raised in connection to the increase of heavy vehicles in the area and to the use of local roads for ‘rat runs’ and commuting by the 8000 new employees.

6.3.23 Relatedly, there was a perceived irony noted by many residents across the area that rail freight is intended to reduce emissions yet will increase the emissions pollution affecting local people.

6.3.24 In response to anticipated air pollution, a few comments also asked for the rail line to be electrified.

**Scale and appearance**

6.3.25 The scale and appearance of the project was commented on by respondents from Calf Heath, Coven, Gailey and Penkridge. In these areas, the proposed development was felt to be too tall to be effectively screened, impacting on the views of the landscape. This argument was tied to house prices in some consultation responses; a number of respondents argued they have paid a premium in house prices to enjoy views of this landscape.

**24-hour operation**

6.3.26 The consultation responses as a whole indicate that there is confusion over whether the proposed development will operate overnight. Many responses indicate an assumption that the development would operate on a 24-hour/7-
days per week basis. Responses from Calf Heath and Coven express the most concern about this, due to anticipated night-time noise, light pollution, and general disturbance. This was not raised in any responses from the Four Ashes area.
Other issues

6.3.27 Other topics were raised. The following paragraph identifies the key sentiments regarding these issues, which were raised on too few occasions to warrant their own sections but are noteworthy.

6.3.28 **Alternative uses:** The consultation responses as a whole also indicate confusion over whether the site will be used for uses not directly related to the operation of the site as a rail freight interchange, such as manufacturing uses. Other respondents believed that the rail terminal element of the proposals was only included to overcome the green belt classification. Some comments state that this could happen in the event that the site experiences underuse (as has been the case at Etwall). Other suggest that the intention to use the site for other uses is the reason for the scale of the project (described as ‘unnecessary’ by one respondent) and that to do so would circumvent greenbelt policy.

6.3.29 **Affordable workspace:** One respondent asked that affordable workspace be provided as part of the development in the same manner that affordable housing would be provided on a residential development.

6.3.30 **Property values:** Across the consultation responses as a whole, those closest to the site raised cited the devaluation of their properties as a core objection to the project, for which any responses requested compensation. Comments of this nature arose particularly in responses from consultees in Calf Heath, Gailey, Coven and Four Ashes. One consultee requested a comparable compensation package to those offered by Heathrow Airport Limited to those to be affected by the third runway (at least 125% of their property value). Some other responses requested that the developer purchase their properties, with two consultation responses requesting that Compulsory Purchase Order (‘CPO’) powers be used. Of the opposite sentiment, two others consultation responses suggested stated that the use of CPO powers would be ‘disgraceful’.
Proposed project alterations

6.3.31 A number consultation responses made suggestions to altering the project. These include the following:

- provision of a direct road connection between the M6 and the proposed site;
- downscaling the project or restricted it only to the Bericote site;
- implementation of traffic management measures, such as a traffic management plan, traffic calming measures, traffic lights and an overall lower speed limit;
- provision of more screening and landscaping measures;
- improvements to local footpaths;
- permitting South Staffs District Council to retain all new generated business rates income; and
- provision of affordable business space on the development site.

Preferred options

6.3.32 Question 2 of the Stage 1 Consultation form asked for comments regarding the illustrative layout options. The majority of responses did not answer this question, or answered by stating the project should be halted or relocated to other brownfield sites. Of those who did respond, the preference was for the East terminal, except in Gailey (which preferred West) and Calf Heath (that had mixed opinion).

6.3.33 Table 1 below summarises the preferred options of public consultees as a whole for each the main consultation areas.

Table 5. Preferred option of each area, and reasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Ashes</th>
<th>Gailey</th>
<th>Penkridge</th>
<th>Calf Heath</th>
<th>Coven</th>
<th>Brewood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Equal split</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A number of responses recommended instead that the project should proceed on different sites. Alternative sites that were recommended in these responses included the following: Bescot Yard; Rugeley; Crewe Mashalling Yards; Birch Coppice site, Daventry; Etwall RFI; East Midlands Gateway RFI; and The Gateway, Brierley Hill.

**Requests for the next consultation**

**6.3.35** Question 4 of the Stage 1 Consultation form asked consultees for comments regarding the consultation process for the Stage 2 Consultation. The responses to this question are summarised in the following section.

**6.3.36** Some respondents requested that the consultation cover a wider area. This response seemed to be connected to perceptions of the scale of the effects of the project, which it is felt will cover a wider area than that which was consulted for Stage 1. It is noted that Penkridge residents were particularly disappointed to not have been consulted initially.

**6.3.37** Many comments regarding the next consultation surrounded advertising methods. Responses of this nature urged a need to use a combination of traditional methods (flyers, posters and door-to-door) alongside email and social media, since many people in the area do not have or use the internet. One consultee suggested that an online forum could be set up to constructively discuss problems and solutions.

**6.3.38** Some comments related to the format of the consultation meetings. These included requests for:

**6.3.39** multiple meetings to be held over a number of days, including later in the evenings and at weekends;

**6.3.40** the major landowners to attend the consultation meetings;

**6.3.41** to-scale models of the proposed development; and
6.3.42 presentations on the alternative sites considered, the traffic studies undertaken and the anticipated impacts on the area.

**Further questions**

6.3.43 There were many questions about the project. Broadly, these covered the following areas: access to traffic, environmental and financial, options and noise impact reports; grounds justifying greenbelt development; how HGVs will be prevented from using minor roads; plans to compensate residents; whether CPO powers will be used; site operation hours; increased road and rail figures; sizes and speeds of trains; warehousing and freight stack dimensions; whether trains will be electric or diesel powered; likelihood of alternative site uses; funding sources; any restrictions on chemicals and hazardous materials contained in warehouses; general dates for the project; wildlife and nature projection and management; job numbers and types.

**Conclusion**

6.3.44 This section of the report has reviewed the responses to the West Midlands Interchange Stage 1 Consultation on an area-by-area basis. The key broad areas of concern raised by members of public from across the consultation areas are traffic congestion, noise, air and light pollution, impacts on wildlife, and development of the green belt, and impacts on wildlife. These issues were raised across the consultation areas and the analysis found that there were fewer differences in priorities between the areas than anticipated, in part because of the tendency of consultees to list all concerns, rather than write in depth about particular issues, and to express concern over issues that they expected would affect residents of other areas, but not necessarily themselves.

6.3.45 Many of the concerns raised by consultees are underlined by a general lack of clarity on key issues, particularly whether the site will be operate on a 24-hour/7-days per week basis, or whether the site will be restricted to rail freight use or also used for other industrial activities. This is the case, for instance, in objections to the proposed project based upon overnight noise and light disturbance.
6.3.46 One of the most significant issues raised concerns traffic impacts. Lack of clarity on how traffic will be managed and the main access routes to and from the site are fuelling anxiety about the impact of congestion on daily rural life and on commuting journeys. The consultation responses also indicate particular concerns over the impacts of HGV and new employee commuter traffic on local roads, with some importance concerns about the impact of this traffic on the ability of emergency vehicles to operate in the area.

6.3.47 The consultation responses also indicate a widespread view that the local economic benefits of the project have been overstated: that job creation forecasts figures are deceptively high in order to win support; that the jobs will be merely transferred from other locations and will not be for local people; and that the jobs created will be low-skilled. Additionally, a number of the consultation responses cite the relatively low levels of unemployment in the area as a reason for which job creation is not perceived as a local benefit of the project; rather, that job creation is anticipated to bring commuter traffic and further (unwanted) housing development.

6.4 Consultation Area Profiles

Four Ashes

6.4.1 There were 18 responses from Four Ashes residents.

6.4.2 Sentiments towards the project are resoundingly negative. This is mainly connected to concerns about traffic, noise and pollution. There were no site preferences given. There is much work needed to show how these concerns will be mitigated.

Themes/Issues

6.4.3 The main issues arising at Four Ashes were:

- ‘Havoc’ of increased traffic on quiet roads (15),
- pollution (noise (11), emissions (3) and light (4));
- building on the green belt (10);
the impact on wildlife (8).

6.4.4 **Traffic** concerns were mainly that Station Road would become gridlocked, particularly if there was an accident on the M6, and that there were safety issues posed to pedestrians and to the ability of emergency services to use these roads locally in that event.

6.4.5 5 people complained of the impact on their **property values**, requesting compensation for this.

6.4.6 There were (4) expressions of concern about the ability of **local infrastructure** to cope with heavy vehicles, since the Council doesn’t spend money on improving infrastructure.

6.4.7 There were also concerns that the site could become used for **other industrial uses** too, and that this would prevent the site being used for V Fest (which is welcomed because it contributes to the local economy but is infrequent).

Table 6. **Hierarchy of concerns in Four Ashes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Traffic</td>
<td>Road infrastructure (esp. A449/A5) unable to cope/full to capacity</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Station Drive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Straight Mile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vicarage Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HGVs cause accidents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Noise pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Greenbelt</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Wildlife</td>
<td>Heronry at Gailey Reservoir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Impact on property values</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Light pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Impact on views</td>
<td>From houses</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Of landscape views generally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proposed project alterations

6.4.8 Besides requests that the project be relocated or not go ahead at all, there were a number of suggestions to modify the project, including traffic calming measures, noise dampening and screening measures, improvements to local walkways and areas. These include:

- situate the buildings closest to residents and the lorry parking furthest away;
- improving public walkways and the lake and woodlands areas;
- introducing traffic calming measures and traffic lights from new proposed traffic island to the canal bridge;
- installing noise barriers before construction work commences;
- screening the site with trees, and planting these early enough to allow time for them to grow; and
- compensation for depreciations in house values.

Site preference

6.4.9 Nobody made a choice between the options.

6.4.10 Two respondents proposed alternative local brownfield sites: Rugeley; Bescot yard (the marshalling yards at Crewe); the Birch Coppice site, Daventry (no. 7).

Requests for the next consultation
6.4.11 A respondent asked that the developers attend the consultation events.

**Further questions**

6.4.12 Some respondents asked how compensation would be paid; as a cash lump sum or through as a direct purchase of their properties.

**Conclusion**

6.4.13 Issues to be addressed surround traffic (management and improvement of infrastructure). This particularly concerns how to minimise issues caused by the size and frequency of HGVs on the roads, the impact of these on the quality and maintenance needs of the roads, the safety of pedestrians and leisure/activity users who do not have footpaths, and how to prevent HGVs parking on local roads to take their legally required rests.

**Gailey**

6.4.14 There were 33 responses from Gailey residents.

6.4.15 Responses from Gailey were much briefer and had a tendency to list broad issues without going into great depth; traffic, greenbelt and the countryside, and air pollution being the main things mentioned.

**Themes/Issues**

6.4.16 The main concerns were the greenbelt and traffic. There were surprisingly few references to Gailey island roundabout, and more discussion generally of the A449 and the A5.

6.4.17 It was twice mentioned that there are often problems on this stretch of railway line. No more details were given.
### Table 7. Hierarchy of concerns in Gailey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Greenbelt</td>
<td>Housebuilders have had their applications refused for this reason</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Traffic</td>
<td>Full to capacity/Gridlocking</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New employees &amp; rat runs on local roads</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HGVs on local roads with nowhere to turn around</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety (of pedestrians; increase in car accidents)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gailey Island</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delays to school/work commutes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Noise pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Wildlife</td>
<td>Heronry at Gailey Reservoir</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effect on tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Effect on reasons they chose to live there (quality of life, leisure, aesthetic values)</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Light pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Scale and appearance</td>
<td>‘Monstrosity’, ‘ugly’</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In comparison to East Midlands Gateway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Air pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Property devaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 24 hour/Overnight operation</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Views</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Canal conservation</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Potential alternative uses</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Jobs</td>
<td>Guarantee for local people</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where will new workers park</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will encourage unwanted housing development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Enclosure of Croft Lane within developments</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Calf Heath reservoir (proximity to)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Use of CPO powers</td>
<td>Will they be used</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unfair</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Cannock Chase AONB</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Ancient woodland rules</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proposed project alterations

6.4.18 None noted.

Site preference

6.4.19 There were some expressions of preference for the West option because it was believed to provide less noise and disturbance to local residents and less destruction to the canal and to wildlife. On the other hand, another resident argued that there would be greater visual and audio disturbance but the West option was preferred because it wouldn’t require a bridge over the canal.

6.4.20 Requests for the next consultation

6.4.21 The following requests were made:

- consult a much wider area.
- advertise the consultation in person, by email and by post.

Further questions

6.4.22 None noted.

Conclusions

6.4.23 Respondents from Gailey express relatively more concern about the greenbelt than other areas, however its overall areas of concern are the same. Their responses were more general and inquisitive. One particular issue that arose was jobs; details of who they will be for, and concerns that they will require additional housing and parking development.
Penkridge

6.4.24 There were 51 responses from Penkridge residents.

6.4.25 There was a general sentiment of distrust from Penkridge respondents in their responses, as a result of Penkridge initially not being consulted. Residents indicated that they feel deliberately excluded, describing the process in terms like ‘underhand’ and ‘secretive’. One respondent wrote, ‘I feel we are having the wool pulled over our eyes’. On the whole there was also an underlying statement being made that the area has more meaning to people than can be understood on paper. Penkridge residents appreciate the green environment in and of itself, rather than for some particular purpose.

Themes/Issues

6.4.26 The main issue of concern for Penkridge residents was the volume of traffic through the area, which they feel already is overstretched. Some responses highlight the difficulty that traffic congestion causes to those working or attending New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton.

6.4.27 Second to traffic was the greenbelt, with residents expressing concern about destruction of the greenbelt in general an issue, but particularly the scale of the development, which they feel cannot be effectively screen, and the ‘obliteration’ of the landscape. Relatedly, one response also discusses non-designated green areas, which they are important to local people regardless of their environmental issues.

6.4.28 Noise and air pollution were the next big issues.

6.4.29 Some responses also discuss the principle of the project. One response argues that the project is speculative not a real need requested by the industry because all users will have to sign up to pay for the site. One respondent questioned whether rail hubs are beneficial due to a trend towards people want things sooner (i.e. by road).
### Table 8. Hierarchy of concerns in Penkridge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full to capacity/Gridlocking (M6 crashes)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor road infrastructure</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traffic through Penkridge</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delays to school/work commutes</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gailey Island (M54i)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulty getting to New Cross Hospital</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety (of pedestrians; increase in car accidents)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New employees &amp; rat runs on local roads</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability of emergency services to reach accidents</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Similar disruption is accepted infrequently for events, e.g. V Fest</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opening door for further greenbelt development</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insufficient evidence of need</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Should be retained for crops</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Noise pollution</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Air pollution</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Views/Effect on landscape</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Scale and appearance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Too big to be screened</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>24 hour/Overnight operation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Effect on reasons they chose to live there (quality of life, leisure, aesthetic values)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Potential alternative uses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Canal conservation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pollution of canal water</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impact of development on structure and nature along banks</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Jobs (won’t be long-term)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Vibration of residents houses</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Calf Heath reservoir (bank and ground stability)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Use of CPO powers (use would be ‘disgraceful’)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Cannock Chase AONB</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Removal of bridal paths</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Light pollution</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.4.30 A number of residents also listed some things to know about the area, in response to Stage 1 Consultation Question 1. These were:

- traffic already gridlocks the village when there is an accident on the M6. The M54 island and Gailey roundabout are already significant issues. The road is perceived to be used to maximum capacity;
- local services are perceived to be overstretched;
- the canal is a conservation area;
- Cannock Chase is an AONB;
- a public footpath within the site boundary; Penkridge 29;
- the following summary of geographical landmarks: ‘large boulders which I presume to be glacial erratics subsequently utilised as parish boundary marks, a parish boundary post which may date to 1987, an alignment of trees that may indicate the presence of a lost track, for which evidence exists on an old railway plan… and a spot where I have noted dressed sandstone blocks exposed by ploughing. I also have some knowledge of birds seen locally included ringing records, and have noted badger holes in an area not included on the report’; and
- a new housing development, Lyme Hill Meadow, has been consented and is already anticipated to add to traffic problems.

Proposed project alterations

6.4.31 The following alterations to the project as consulted on were suggested:

6.4.32 Construct a direct link between the M6 and the site, diverting from the A449 and Penkridge completely.

6.4.33 The project be moved and downscaled to a more suitable, smaller brownfield site or a site such as Rugeley, where residents welcome development.

Site preference

6.4.34 There were at least 17 preferences for neither option.
6.4.35 Two respondents chose the East option because of noise dampening and more efficient movement of goods.

Requests for the next consultation

6.4.36 The following requests were made:

- that Penkridge and a much wider number of towns and villages be consulted (18). This request is linked to the scale of disruption the project is anticipated to bring;
- that a variety of methods be used to advertise the events, including use of local notice boards, post and email;
- that the consultation be held over a longer timeframe (e.g. a week), including evenings and weekends; and
- that information should be presented on alternative locations and traffic capacity.

Further questions

6.4.37 There were questions over traffic: daily and hourly numbers of HGVS and trains, on train size and speed, and on the additional number of cars, vans and lorries that will be generated in the long-term.

6.4.38 One response questioned how HGVs will be prevented from utilising local roads and whether they will be allowed to travel on single carriageways.

6.4.39 Some responses requested addition details on the management of traffic, pollution and other environmental issues.

6.4.40 One response requested to know the justification for developing the Green Belt.

6.4.41 One response requested further details on the purposes and activities of the development.
6.4.42 One response requested further information on the use of CPO powers in relation to the project.

**Conclusion**

6.4.43 Responses related more generally to traffic, the greenbelt and pollution, rather than to issues such as property values and views from houses, as in Four Ashes and Gailey. Responses from Penkridge were quite specific about traffic issues.

**Calf Heath, Four Crosses and Great Saredon**

6.4.44 There were 64 responses from Calf Heath, Four Crosses and Great Saredon residents (the majority being from Calf Heath). It should be noted that many identically worded responses were sent in. One family of five each sent in the same response. One respondent made two submissions to the consultation.

6.4.45 Again, traffic was the biggest issue, followed shortly by the greenbelt and pollution. Compared to other areas, the spreading of the development across Vicarage Road was a key point of contention. Disruption to the rural way of life and safety concerns relating to traffic also came through strongly. It is felt that an unnecessary RFI is being used as a way to exploit greenbelt exception policies for these purposes.

**Issues/Themes**

6.4.46 The most cited issues raised by respondents from Four Crosses, Great Saredon and Calf Heath were:

- traffic (60);
- the greenbelt (57);
- the scale and appearance (49);
- Pollution (noise (49), air (25) and light (18)); and
- the effect on wildlife and nature (33).
6.4.47 The extension across to Vicarage road is a significant concern due to its impact on the traffic levels on Vicarage road at the A5, and because of its proximity to residential developments. These objections are linked both to the location of the site entrance there (as opposed to directly from the A5) and to a widespread objection to the scale of the project, which is felt to be unnecessarily large compared to other freight interchanges.

6.4.48 42 people also referenced the disruption to quality of life and the rural way of life more broadly. 28 people raised safety concerns due to an increase of traffic and a lack of footpaths in the area.

6.4.49 The scale of the project is a significant issue. A widespread source of objection is that the site is 1.5 times larger than East Midlands RFI. Of the 49 who objected to its scale or appearance, nearly all described the project as a ‘monstrosity’.

6.4.50 Connected to noise complaints, 25 people objected to the site operating 24/7.

6.4.51 Additionally, 20 people objected to the lack of guarantee that the site won’t be used for alternative operations.

Table 9. Hierarchy of concerns in Calf Heath, Great Saredon and Four Crosses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>( f )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Traffic</td>
<td>Congestion of Vicarage Road</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HGVs on roads</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety (of pedestrians; increase in car accidents)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full to capacity/Gridlocking (M6 crashes)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New employees using roads</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Station Drive congestion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If HGVs can’t use A449/minor roads they won’t listen anyway</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stable lane congestion</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility for emergency vehicles</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heavy commercial traffic alighting M6 J12</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Greenbelt</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opening door for further greenbelt development</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Insufficient evidence of need</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Should be retained for crops</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Noise pollution</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Scale and appearance</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>‘Monstrosity’</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Effect on reasons they chose to live there (quality of life, leisure, aesthetic values)/destruction of community</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Local habitat and wildlife</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heronry at Gailey</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Air pollution</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 24 hour/Overnight operation</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 Potential alternative uses</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7 Light pollution</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8 Property devaluation</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9 Proximity to houses and rural community</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10 Views/Effect on landscape</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11 Flooding</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 Calf Heath reservoir (bank and ground stability)</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13 Calf Heath Wood</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14 Cannock Chase AONB</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14 Could disturb old mines</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14 Increase in fly-tipping</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14 Increase in crime</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A number of residents also listed some things to know about the area, in response to Stage 1 Consultation Question 1. These were:

- the area is quiet but traffic is already to capacity. People feel that they have already put up with enough development; the Veolia waste disposal site (3) and the prison;
- local services are perceived to be used to full capacity, and the area already struggles to get high speed broadband or mains gas;
- the area has significant rural character;
- the flat and open landscape makes noise pollution a more sensitive issue than it perhaps would be in other areas; and
- there are mineral reserves that should be fully used up.

**Proposed project alterations**

Suggestions to modify the project include:

- providing access to the development site only from the A5;
- restricting the scheme to the Bericote scheme only;
- situating the site directly off junction 13 of the M6;
- extension of the M6 toll;
- electrification of the rail line;
- provision of improved footpaths around the area;
- purchasing the land in Stable Lane from Woodlands Lane crossroads to Elmhurst to use as a buffer between the site and Calf Heath;
- new traffic management measures; and
- allowing South Staffs District Council all generated business rates to mitigate local impact.

**Site preference**

There were 3 votes in favour of the East Terminal (rail line in centre), and 3 in favour of the West terminal (noise further from residents and terminal and warehousing less obtrusive). A further response argued for the West terminal if the extension across Vicarage Road is removed.
6.4.54 Most advocate halting or relocating the project to a site that (a) has fewer residents; (b) has available brownfield land; (c) has an existing rail freight interchange. 15 responses mentioned brownfield land generally, 14 suggested Etwall and East Midlands Gateway RFIs, and 5 responses suggested Rugeley.

Requests for the next consultation

6.4.55 Few people addressed this question. Of those who did, they requested that their concerns be taken seriously, argued consultations in the past have always been a façade, and asked for further transparency, for example by providing the promised ‘to-scale’ model of the development.

6.4.56 Others asked for multiple meetings per area so that more people can attend and stated that combination of traditional (flyer- ing and posters) and social media methods should be used to advertise the consultation, as many people don’t use the internet.

Further questions

6.4.57 None noted.

Conclusion

6.4.58 Overall, the content across the responses read very similarly, with the same wording occurring frequently. Preferences for the site were also more mixed. The scale and appearance of the site gained much more attention than in other areas, as did the extension of the site across Vicarage Road, as this puts the site in much closer proximity to Calf Heath Village and is anticipated to cause traffic problems along the A449.
Coven

6.4.60 There were 58 responses from Coven residents.

6.4.61 Responses from Coven were overwhelmingly concerned with traffic, however responses were overall constructive and, if the site it to go ahead, the preference is for the East option.

Issues/Themes

6.4.62 The main issue raised in consultation responses from Coven was traffic (43), followed by pollution (noise (24), air (15), light (8)) and the destruction of greenbelt (28), and countryside and wildlife (19).

6.4.63 Respondents were concerned about the impact of increasing activity on the village/rural communities, and on the daily effect on residents close to the development (noise, pollution, road safety).

6.4.64 Regarding the environment, a number of people expressed concern about Calf Heath reservoir, Calf Heath wood, and in particular their ability to access and use the canal which will be enveloped.

Table 10. Hierarchy of concerns in Coven

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>$f$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Traffic</td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full to capacity/Gridlocking (M6 crashes)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HGV drivers and new employees on roads</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety of pedestrians etc./road accidents</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor road infrastructure</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vicarage Road congestion</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Station Road congestion</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gailey Island</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Congestion in Coven village</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability of emergency services to reach accidents</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Straight Mile congestion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main entrance on A449</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.4.65 A number of residents also listed some things to know about the area, in response to Stage 1 Consultation Question 1. These were:

- Coven residents feel they have been subject to a relative lot of development recently and it is changing their rural village character. This is partly due to the increased traffic and development from i54;
- there is only one pelican crossing in Coven; transport concerns are therefore partly about safety;
- there are crested newts at Four Ashes.

**Proposed project alterations**

6.4.66 None noted.
Site preference

6.4.67 The overwhelming preference is that the project be halted, however feedback is much more constructive. In general the East Terminal option is preferred (11 votes in favour) because the rail line is in the centre and it is furthest from Coven residents. There were no votes for the West option. Requests in particular are made for traffic and landscaping measures if it will be located here.

Requests for the next consultation

6.4.68 Advertisement: use of flyers and social media.

6.4.69 Wider consultation area.

6.4.70 Regular updates of developments, not just at consultation events.

Further questions

6.4.71 None noted.

Conclusion

6.4.72 The overall attitude slightly more receptive; issues are expressed in relation to the type of development, traffic and pollution. The tone is of concern rather than absolute objection. Nevertheless, preferences are still stated in terms of which project would be worst, not best.
Brewood

6.4.74 There were 28 responses from Brewood.

6.4.75 Responses from Brewood responses were of a similar nature and sentiment to the wider corpus of consultation responses, however they expressed marginally more concern for specific aspects of wildlife conservation. The overall preference was for the East option.

Issues/Themes

6.4.76 The main concern raised in the responses from Brewood was traffic on the A449 and the A5 (21). There were also concerns for the greenbelt (14) and local wildlife (13). This was followed by concerns for Four Ashes residents regarding noise pollution (12), and light pollution (6), as well as air pollution in general. Three residents complained of anticipated house devaluation.

Table 11. Hierarchy of concerns in Brewood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Traffic</td>
<td>Full to capacity/Gridlocking (M6 crashes)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety of pedestrians, cyclists, etc.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of roads for rat runs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Congested A5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Existing congestion of A449 through Penkridge on market days</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Getting to work on time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Greenbelt</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Wildlife</td>
<td>Need to create wildlife corridors (Calf Wood isolation won’t work)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Noise pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Destruction of rural way of life</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Air pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Light pollution</td>
<td>Jobs are being relocated not created</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will likely be low-skilled</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jobs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Proximity to existing houses/rural community</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Property devaluation (‘devastating’)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>24 hour/Overnight operation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Scale and appearance (‘eyesore’)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Calf Heath Wood (enclosed)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Calf Heath reservoir (bank and ground stability)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Destruction of farmland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Calf Heath reservoir</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
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6.4.77 A number of residents also listed some things to know about the area, in response to Stage 1 Consultation Question 1.

6.4.78 One resident said that lorries frequently get stuck under the bridge at Four Ashes.

6.4.79 Others noted that there are activities/shows at Weston Park, Cosford and Chillington Hall.

6.4.80 Proposed project alterations

6.4.81 Additionally, one respondent requested the inclusion of affordable units on site for commercial use, such as studios, workshops and multi-use spaces.

6.4.82 Site preference

6.4.83 7 respondents preferred East because it was nearest to the M6. One preferred the West option (reason unspecified).

6.4.84 Five recommended relocating the RFI to brownfield land.
6.4.85 One expressly supported the scheme and preferred the East option, but also expressed surprise that the RFI will not be located at Bescot Sidings or Washwood Heath.

6.4.86 Requests for the next consultation

6.4.87 The following requests were made:

6.4.88 exhibitions should be held Brewood (at Jubilee Hall), Wheaton Aston (at the village hall) and Penkridge (at the Haling Dene Centre).

6.4.89 regular updates on the project’s progression should be distributed by email to all residents.

6.4.90 Further questions

6.4.91 None noted.

6.4.92 Conclusion

6.4.93 Brewood residents, being slightly further from the development, expressed the same general concerns over traffic, the greenbelt and wildlife. Their concerns over noise were largely concerns for the nearby residents, not necessarily themselves. Proportionally, they expressed marginally more concerns for the wildlife in the area, particularly noting the need to create wildlife corridors. They were also marginally less combative in their responses.
7. Further afield

North of Four Ashes

There were 2 responses from areas north of the site that do not fall within specific areas studied.

One respondent, from Coppenhall, expressed a desire to counter ‘NIMBY’ attitudes by arguing that Stafford has become a dormitory town for Birmingham, suffers from lower employment and a sharp decline in its industrial base. The respondent stated highlighted the economic benefits of the proposed project for the region, and in places such as Rugeley who have experienced the closure of the power station, although there will be serious implications for the locality which must be resolved (such as noise and traffic in and around Penkridge and Dunston).

Another respondent, from Stafford, gave their support for the project on the basis that they welcome any move from road to rail.

East of Four Ashes

There were 5 responses from areas east of the site that do not fall within specific areas studied.

Responses from the wider area eastwards of Four Ashes echo the responses from those closer to the development; citing traffic (congestion, parked HGVs and safety of pedestrians, cyclists, riders, etc.), pollution, the development of the green belt as core concerns.

One respondent preferred the West option because it didn’t require a bridge over the canal to be constructed.

One respondent focussed on local environmental impacts, raising issues with the limited access to local reservoirs and canals, and ‘destruction’ of nature and wildlife.
6.4.105 West of Four Ashes

6.4.106 There were 10 responses from areas west of the site that do not fall within specific areas studied. Response came from Codsall, Bishop’s Wood, Wheaton Aston and Lapley.

6.4.107 Responses from these areas expressed concerns over: the capacity of road infrastructure to cope with increases in traffic, air and noise pollution levels resulting from HGV traffic through villages, exacerbation of congestion around Gailey Island, development of the green belt (as opposed to other non-green belt areas close to the M6) and of agricultural land, the scale of the project, loss of leisure use, risk of flooding, and the consultation area:

6.4.108 Environmental concerns surrounded the assurance that the channels allowing the reservoir to exit to the canal is kept clear, the potential of flooding of the A5, preservation of the landscape around the site and screening, and loss of agricultural land. On the other hand, one respondent was pleased with conservation of greenspace and wildlife measures and requested this be maximised.

6.4.109 Regarding leisure use, requests were made to improve the pathway around the reservoir and to upgrade the service road and car parks associated with the sailing club. Two responses cited concerns surrounding loss of leisure use of the canal towpath.

6.4.110 Three people raised issue with the scale of the project.

6.4.111 One respondent questioned the need for WMI given the underuse of Donnington RFI.

6.4.112 Regarding the consultation process, three residents (from Shareshill, Wheaton Ashton and Lapley) objected to not having been consulted.

6.4.113 Two respondents preferred the East layout, stating that it would minimise disruption and is closer to M6. One respondent preferred the West layout due to the proximity of the East layout to residents.
6.4.114 South of Four Ashes

6.4.115 There were 2 responses from areas south of the site that do not fall within specific areas studied.

6.4.116 One respondent proposed that The Gateway in Brierley Hill be considered as an alternative location. They stated that the site has a freight line serving the TATA Steel site, that regeneration is sought for the area and that the economic benefits would be welcomed.

6.4.117 The second response highlights highway safety issues, suggesting: traffic lights on Four Crosses Lane, a dual carriageway along A449 Gailey Island/M6 J12 and onwards to A4601, and from the A460/A5/A34 junction to Cheslyn Hay.

6.4.118 Responses from unknown locations

6.4.119 There were nine responses from unknown locations.

6.4.120 These responses were representative of the public responses as a whole; mostly expressing concern over traffic, air pollution, and the greenbelt and wildlife.

6.4.121 Three respondents requested compensation for the impacts of the development.

6.4.122 Three of the responses preferred the East option because of its proximity to the M6 and allowance for more direct servicing of warehouses by rail. Two suggested that the project be relocated to a brownfield site.

6.4.123 Conclusion

6.4.124 Overall, responses from further north and south were much more positive, emphasising the regional economic potential of locating an RFI in the area. Responses further East, West and from unknown (but seemingly local) areas echo the responses of the core consultation areas, raising no new issues.
7. How the project has evolved

7.1.1 Following the completion of Stage 1 consultation, FAL has updated its proposals in a number of ways in response to feedback and with the benefit of further technical studies. This section deals first with the way in which the project has evolved in response to the general themes that emerged from the Stage 1 Consultation. It then goes on to explain how the project layout and mitigation measures have attempted to respond to feedback from particular areas (organised by post-code).

7.2 Evolution of the Project in Response to General Themes

Alternative Sites Assessment [Document 7.2]

7.2.1 The project team is aware of the need to demonstrate that there is no better site suitable or available to meet the need for an SRFI in this area. The Wolverhampton to Penkridge Rail corridor in South Staffordshire has been identified in successive studies undertaken for the public authorities as being one of the best regional locations for a SRFI. A detailed draft Alternative Sites Assessment (ASA) has been produced as part of this consultation setting out the steps that have been taken to retest whether alternatives may be available. The ASA methodology is based on best practice elsewhere and has been closely reviewed by planning officers from South Staffordshire District and Staffordshire County councils.

7.2.2 The ASA has taken a thorough approach using all available sources of data. The work demonstrates that there are no alternative suitable sites able to meet the important criteria of scale and accessibility to road and rail networks. As part of the ASA the project team examined additional sites suggested by the public through the Stage 1 Consultation. The ASA has also been subject to challenges and rigorous testing from South Staffordshire District and Staffordshire County Councils.
7.3 Loss of Green Belt Land

7.3.1 Objection to the loss of Green belt land was one of the most common themes from respondents to Stage 1 of the consultation. Proposals for development in the Green Belt are by definition inappropriate and it is for the applicant to demonstrate very special circumstances. The lack of any suitable alternative sites and the weight to be given to the planning merits of the scheme are part of the planning balance to be made. The draft Planning Statement (document 7.1) sets out the context of the Green Belt in this area and the reasons why the project team are asking the Secretary of State to recognise the very special circumstances that justify the use of this land for a SRFI.

7.3.2 It is common ground with the district council that employment and housing needs cannot be satisfied locally without the development of Green Belt land. This much was made clear through the examination of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy, which promotes a review of the Green Belt to meet local needs and development needs arising in the Black Country, for which there is no urban capacity. This arises because the existing Green Belt boundaries have not been reviewed for many years, despite the increased need for both housing and employment. That need has reached extreme proportions both locally and more widely, with the West Midlands authorities recognising that there is not a single site available for development of more than 25 hectares in the region. Across the West Midlands all planning authorities have recognised that a Green Belt review is required and Local Plans such as Birmingham’s are promoting major Green Belt releases as the only means of meeting the agenda for growth.

7.3.3 The development plan system has not been able to resolve the outstanding need for large scale rail freight distribution sites but there is way of meeting that need without the development of Green Belt land.

7.3.4 The WMI proposals do involve large scale development in the Green Belt but the government policy set out in the National Policy Statement (the NPS) recognises that developers may not be able to find suitable sites for SRFI development without the selection of Green Belt sites.
7.3.5 The WMI site represents less than 1% of the South Staffordshire Green Belt in a location which is already affected by significant urban development. It does represent development in the countryside and it would reduce the openness of this part of the Green Belt but it would not cause towns to merge and it is contained within clear boundaries, which would be reinforced by the layout, mounding and planting proposed.

7.4 Layout

7.4.1 At Stage 1 Consultation FAL and the project team presented two alternative layout options and asked for opinions on each. The majority of responses from the public did not answer the question directly, preferring instead to object or suggest other sites altogether. However, of those who did respond the preference was marginally for the east terminal option, except in the Gailey area (which preferred the west) and the Calf Heath area (which had a mixed opinion).

7.4.2 In addition to feedback from the public the project team also engaged with other relevant stakeholders and experts to assess the relative merits of each proposal. There were particular concerns raised by the public and by experts regarding the impact of the layout on the Canal Conservation Area. The East option would have required a rail bridge over the canal to deliver trains to the rail terminal. Whilst the location of the terminal within the development had some advantages these were outweighed by other factors. In particular the impact of the bridge on that section of the Canal Conservation Area in the north of the site. This was a significant factor in ultimately developing a western option to take forward for Stage 2 consultation. Other factors included an assessment that an eastern terminal would limit the ability to plan the masterplan layout with the flexibility that would reduce local environmental effects. In addition, clear feedback was received from rail freight operators that a western terminal was to be preferred because it would provide a more efficient SRFI, with a greater ability to receive, load and unload trains more quickly and efficiently.

7.4.3 With the benefit of all of the feedback from Stage 1 Consultation the project team spent many months honing both options to get them as good as they could be before making a recommendation to FAL as to the best one to
pursue. As part of this exercise the team took account of the environmental impacts, community impacts, market advice and soundings from rail freight operations experts. In working both schemes up to take account of these impacts a significant number of changes were made to the illustrative masterplans. These have now been incorporated into the illustrative masterplan layout and parameter plans proposed as part of this consultation.

7.4.4 A summary of the layout changes is set out in section 3 of the draft Planning Statement and reproduced below.
7.4.5 The following principal changes were made to the Illustrative Masterplan as a result of the Stage 1 Consultation and further assessment undertaken between Stage 1 and Stage 2 Consultation (the changes accord with the numbering on Figure 1 above).

1. Internal roads and the A5 roundabout have been relocated 30m to the east to reduce impact on the setting of the Canal Conservation Area and the two listed buildings\(^1\), as a result of expert heritage advice.

2. A 20m landscape buffer has been introduced along the western boundary of illustrative Unit 3030, to enhance ecological connectivity through the Site.

3. The rail terminal layout has been refined to allow the rail terminal to accept full-length 775m trains without splitting. This has required the reconfiguration of Gravelly Way and the introduction of a new road bridge.

4. The rail terminal footprint has been reconfigured and reduced, allowing for additional landscape screening to the A449 and to minimise the impact of the terminal on residents on Station Drive.

5. Additional mitigation land has been brought into the scheme to mound and landscape so as to reduce the impact of the terminal on the residents of Station Drive.

6. Additional land has been brought into the scheme to create a community park to the south of the development.

7. The layout of the buildings to the south of Vicarage Road has been altered to retain existing veteran trees, hedgerows and pond and to reduce the impact on

\(^1\) Wharf Cottage and the Roundhouse, both Grade II listed
Calf Heath village through detailed landscaping changes and by altering the buildings to be single sided units.

8. The amount of green space across the scheme has been increased, with ecological and pedestrian connectivity enhanced within the Site.

9. Negotiations to enter purchase agreements have been started with a number of properties that were in close proximity of the Site or within the Site. This will reduce any hardship caused by the scheme on local residents.

7.5 Highways and Traffic

7.5.1 Traffic has been a universal concern from the local community and from the local authorities representing their constituents. Traffic impact was the number one concern from five out of the six local post code areas. There have been a number of scheme development responses to this issue. Most notably to agree that the new road through the site from the A5 to the A449 should be publicly accessible in order to make this the principal route between the two trunk roads and the M6 as well as providing an easy route for WMI traffic.

7.5.2 Traffic modelling to assess the base traffic flows against those anticipated when the scheme reaches maturity has been carried out and rigorously tested with Highways England and with the local highways authority - Staffordshire County Council. This work is not fully complete but the emerging conclusions are set out in the Transport and Access chapter (15) of the draft Environmental Statement being published as part of Stage 2 consultation. The modelling work demonstrates that the traffic generated by the WMI scheme can be accommodated within the capacity of the highway network,

7.5.3 This work recognises the significant benefits that the new link road from the A5 to the A449 will give to the area in relieving the congested conditions that affect the Gailey roundabout and improving local traffic flow. The traffic and highways work has then looked at other mitigation measures proposed to address concerns raised by local people at Stage 1 consultation. The
package of traffic mitigation measures is summarised in 10.2.8 to 10.2.15 of the draft Planning Statement and reproduced below for ease:

7.5.4 The Proposed Development includes a number of features embedded into the design proposals to improve access to the Site and to make overall improvements to the road network serving the Site. The project will include a Sustainable Transport Strategy, Framework Travel Plan and HGV Management Plan. The former sets out a range of measures to deliver improved pedestrian and cycle access, including new infrastructure and addressing existing issues with crossings, footways and cycleways, as well as improvements to the canal towpath. The Sustainable Transport Strategy also outlines possible enhanced bus provision which could include a mix of additional public services and dedicated WMI buses. These measures have been taken into account in the assessment.

7.5.5 The highway impact and mitigation has been based on the assessment process identified in the Transport Assessment and from identifying local concerns and areas of stress on the existing highway. Notably these included the Gailey Roundabout at the junction of the A5 and A449 and Station Road/Station Drive. This has resulted in a number of specific mitigation measures².

7.5.6 Given the location of the site and the proposed infrastructure it is possible to provide a new route for all vehicles to travel from the A5 east to the A449 south and vice versa. This provides vehicles with a choice of routes between the A5 and A449 and reduce the demand on the Gailey Roundabout giving the road network greater resilience.

7.5.7 Currently the junction of Station Drive and the A449 is subject to peak period queuing. Station Drive and Station Road also have a number of properties with direct frontage and there is a low railway bridge which can give rise to problems of over height vehicles. It is proposed to ban the

² In accordance with NPS paragraph 5.213
right turn from the A449 into Station Drive. Vehicles requiring direct access will need to utilise the new roundabout to turn around, further north at the junction with Gravelly Way. This has the result of reducing the total number of vehicles using Station Drive and Station Road.

7.5.8 It is also proposed to provide a turning area on the west side of the low railway bridge on Station Drive. This means that HGVs which do inadvertently turn into Station Drive can turn around without blocking the road or undertaking a dangerous movement, such as reversing back to the A449.

7.5.9 It is proposed that Crateford Lane would be made one way eastbound. This means that egress is maintained for local residents whilst preventing existing ‘rat running’.

7.5.10 The highway works proposed will minimise the impacts of the Proposed Development, in particular delivering an improvement to the operation of the Gailey Roundabout by providing an alternative route for movements between the A5 and A449.

Conclusion on Highways and Traffic matters

7.5.11 Based on the inclusion of the embedded mitigation measures, no significant adverse effects are anticipated during the construction or completed development phase of the Proposed Development as a result of transport and access.

7.5.12 The mitigation strategy will provide a net benefit for the local road network by providing greater resilience on the strategic road network around the site, measures to manage traffic on local roads and improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
7.6 Noise

7.6.1 Noise was an issue linked to concerns over traffic impacts but also due to the operation of the rail terminal and the warehousing units. A significant number of respondents wanted reassurances over the noise levels of the operation of the SRFI and unsurprisingly it was the number two concern for respondents from the Four Ashes and Gailey postcodes, which include Station Drive and Croft Lane.

7.6.2 Detailed noise studies have taken place and as a result the layout has been amended in a number of areas in order to introduce a range of noise attenuation measures. Our noise consultant has been closely involved in optimising and adjusting the masterplan layout to limit noise impacts. These measures include extensive bunding to screen properties from sources of noise and this can be seen on the illustrative layout and cross section drawings as part of Stage 2 Consultation. An example includes the warehousing proposed in the south east of the site, closest to Calf Heath village. There, additional landscaping has been introduced and the principal unit has been designed as ‘single sided’ so that its servicing activity can be oriented away for the community with the warehouse acting as its own noise barrier. The location of the rail interchange west of the WCML also has benefits in this respect, as the principal rail activity is concentrated adjacent to the existing rail line and the Four Ashes industrial estate, rather than introducing new rail activity into the area east of the canal. Extensive landscaping and screening is proposed to protect the properties on Station Drive from noise and lighting impacts from the terminal.

7.6.3 A detailed assessment of the noise impacts of the scheme and proposed mitigation measures are set out in Chapter 13 of the draft Environmental Statement.

7.6.4 The assessment demonstrates that the proposals meet the noise policy tests set out in the NPS. The layout and screening of the development which is embedded in the masterplan limits noise impacts, whilst FAL is also committing to a high specification for the built fabric of the warehouses to limit the noise effects of activity from within the warehouses.
7.6.5 For a limited number of residential properties, the assessment forecasts high noise impacts and for these properties FAL is proposing a bespoke Noise Insulation Scheme, notwithstanding the fact that the forecast noise levels are well below those which would trigger noise insulation under government insulation schemes. With the proposed mitigation, the internal noise environment of all affected properties would fall within the standards set for new housing under the World Health guidelines and British standards.

7.7 Visual Impact

7.7.1 At Stage 1 Consultation and throughout the development of the project there has been considerable thought given to the visual impacts of the proposals and how to mitigate these from a number of sensitive areas. These included local residents living in the Gailey/Croft Lane, Calf Heath or Four Ashes/Station Drive areas; the Canal Conservation area and further afield from the AONB at Shoal Hill.

7.7.2 Changes to the scheme to respond to these concerns include the following:

- A reduction in the height parameters of the buildings to a maximum of 30m to the ridge. The proposal at Stage 1 was up to 36m.

- A restriction on the highest buildings (up to 30m) to a central part of the development zones where they are least visible from Shoal Hill AONB.

- The development of a Green Infrastructure (GI) plan to soften the impacts of the buildings on the surrounding areas. The GI proposals and a wider assessment of landscape and visual matters are detailed in Chapter 12 (Landscape and Visual) of the draft Environmental Statement and summarised in the Design and Access Statement (document 7.5).

- The new link road from the A5 has been moved 30m to the east to reduce any impact on the setting of the conservation area. As a result, it has allowed for the introduction of an additional landscape buffer
zone of green planting between the eastern edge of the canal and the new link road. This change helps to mitigate impacts on the conservation area and on residential properties in this part of Croft Lane.

- Additional land has been brought into the scheme to create a community park to the south of the development and to help to mitigate impacts on the Calf Heath and Hatherton areas.

7.8 Evolution of the Project in response to comments at Stage 1 Consultation from local areas

Gailey and Croft Lane

7.8.1 The project has sought to respond to the comments made by residents of Gailey and Croft Lane, whilst continuing to generally refine the Proposed Development to minimise the potential impact on the local community.

7.8.2 A new Community Park, Croft Lane Community Park, is proposed to provide a significant buffer between the existing Gailey and Croft Lane community and the Proposed Development. It would also provide an area for habitat creation, mitigating the wildlife impacts and contribute towards the enhancement of retained woodlands. The park would provide a high quality new recreation area for the community. Sensitive drainage design and water attenuation will also be incorporated into the park, with a number of water attenuation areas included.

7.8.3 The Community Parks, as well as improvements to the Canal environment, will improve the permeability of the site for local residents.

7.8.4 A new road would run through the Site, from the A5 to the A449, via two new roundabouts which would be installed on the roads. The two roundabouts, along with the new road, would help to relieve the existing congestion at Gailey roundabout along the A5 and A449, in addition to creating an alternative route for traffic through the Site.
7.8.5  It is also proposed that the canal side environment would be enhanced, particularly through upgrading the canal tow path in agreement with the Council and River Trust.

7.8.6  As part of the Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy, bunding and a planting strategy are proposed to create a screen to enhance the immediate environment and to limit the potential visual and noise impact of the Proposed Development from viewpoints and sensitive receptors outside the Site.

7.8.7  FAL will prepare for approval an Employment and Skills Plan in advance of commencement. This would define working partnerships between FAL, tenants and public and education sector stakeholders and will help to secure the maximum local benefit from these new jobs (during both construction and operation). Consultation with these partners is already underway.

7.8.8  Furthermore, given the relatively high number of unemployed residents in the Travel to Work Area (‘the TTWA’), the development is anticipated to provide substantial regional employment benefits. There is a good match of skills between the jobs that would be created at WMI and the occupational characteristics of those seeking work in the TTWA.

**Calf Heath**

7.8.9  The project has sought to respond to the comments made by residents of Calf Heath and the surrounding area, whilst continuing to generally refine the Proposed Development to minimise the potential impact on the local community.

7.8.10 A new Community Park, Calf Heath Community Park, is proposed to provide a significant buffer between the existing Calf Heath community and the Proposed Development. It would also provide an area for habitat creation, mitigating the wildlife impacts and contribute towards the enhancement of retained woodlands. The park would provide a high
quality new recreation area for the community. Sensitive drainage design and water attenuation will also be incorporated into the park, with a number of water attenuation areas included.

7.8.11 The Community Parks, as well as improvements to the Canal environment, will improve the permeability of the site for local residents.

7.8.12 The layout of the proposed development has also been changed following the first round of consultation. In particular, the proposed buildings have been revised in order to retain more hedgerows and mature trees south of Vicarage Road, whilst Unit 5020 of the Illustrative Masterplan has been revised to be a single sided unit with the building itself acting as a screen from servicing and other activity in order to limit noise and visual effects from Calf Heath Village.

7.8.13 A new roundabout would be introduced to Vicarage Road. This would provide an alternative access into the Proposed Development (with the A5 roundabout providing primary access to the Site), but would also allow oversized HGVs the opportunity to turnaround prior to reaching the low (12ft 3in) bridge\(^3\) between Station Drive and Station Road, potentially reducing collisions and helping to minimise the potential impacts of traffic on the local area.

7.8.14 As part of the Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy, bunding and a planting strategy are proposed to create a screen to enhance the immediate environment and to limit the potential visual and noise impact of the Proposed Development from viewpoints and sensitive receptors outside the Site.

**Four Ashes including Station Drive**

7.8.15 The project has sought to respond to the comments made by residents of Four Ashes, Station Drive and the surrounding area, whilst continuing to

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\(^3\) A coach is around 14ft 4in in height
generally refine the Proposed Development to minimise the potential impact on the local community.

7.8.16 The location of the rail terminal has been amended as a result of the Stage 1 Consultation, with further bunding and landscaping between the terminal and the residential properties on Station Drive.

7.8.17 A new HGV turning point would be introduced on Station Drive, just before the low bridge under the railway.

7.8.18 There would be ‘no right turn’ going north from the A449 into Station Drive in order to encourage vehicles to use the new link road via the new roundabout proposed on the A449. Any vehicles seeking to access existing properties and businesses on Station Drive from the south would be able to turn at the proposed roundabout on the A449.

7.8.19 Both of these highways improvements would seek to reduce the chance of congestion and vehicle collisions with the low bridge between Station Drive and Station Road.

7.8.20 Crateford Lane would also be made one-way (west to east), to reduce the opportunity for ‘rat running’ off the new proposed A449 roundabout.

7.8.21 As part of the Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy, bunding and a planting strategy are proposed to create a screen to enhance the immediate environment and to limit the potential visual and noise impact of the Proposed Development from viewpoints and sensitive receptors outside the Site.

7.8.22 The two new Community Parks, at Calf Heath and Croft Lane, will help to mitigate the impacts of the Proposed Development on local wildlife. These Community Parks, as well as improvements to the Canal environment, will improve the permeability of the site for local residents.
Coven and Brewood

7.8.23 The principal mitigation measures for the Proposed Development, as noted above, seek to address many of the concerns raised by respondents from Coven and Brewood.

7.8.24 The Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy has also considered and has sought to minimise the impact of the Proposed Development on the settlements of Coven and Brewood.

7.8.25 The proposed new road that would run through the Site, from the A5 to the A449, via two new roundabouts, would help to relieve the existing congestion at Gailey roundabout and along the A5 and A449, in addition to creating an alternative route for traffic through the Site should any issues arise at the Gailey roundabout.

7.8.26 Crateford Lane would also be made one-way (west to east), to reduce the opportunity for ‘rat running’ off the new proposed A449 roundabout, seeking to reduce the potential impact of traffic on surrounding communities.

Penkridge

7.8.27 The principal mitigation measures for the Proposed Development, as noted above, seek to address many of the concerns raised by respondents from Penkridge.

7.8.28 The consultation area for Stage 2 Consultation has been extended to include Penkridge.

7.8.29 The proposed new road that would run through the Site, from the A5 to the A449, via two new roundabouts, would help to relieve the existing congestion at Gailey roundabout and along the A5 and A449, in addition
to creating an alternative route for traffic through the Site should any issues arise at the Gailey roundabout.

7.8.30 We are also proposing an HGV Routing and Signage Strategy which focusses movement to and from the WMI development via the appropriate sections of the strategic road network.

7.8.31 To deter HGVs from using the A449 between Gailey Roundabout and the M6 Junction 13, i.e. through Penkridge, HGV traffic will be banned from using this route unless it is a local journey (with origin or destination along the A449 south of J13 of the M6) or if the M6 is closed between J12 and J13. This could be enforced using Automatic Number Plate Recognition ANPR camera technology – a method widely used to manage HGV routing. If HGV’s are found to be using that section of the A449 inappropriately, action would be taken including the potential to issue fines.
8. Appendices

8.1 Consultation strategy

8.1.1 As published on 8 June 2016
1. Introduction

The West Midlands Interchange is a proposal for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) with warehousing and other associated development that would be built on land west of Junction 12 of the M6 at Four Ashes in South Staffordshire.

The West Midlands Interchange would be linked directly to the West Coast Mainline, one of the country’s principal freight routes, and will be well placed to serve South Staffordshire, the Black Country and the West Midlands.

When built, it would provide around 800,000 square metres of new rail served warehousing and room for the region’s important logistics industry to grow. These proposals would create up to 8,500 new jobs.

Four Ashes Limited (FAL) is bringing forward this proposal, which needs to be granted a Development Consent Order (DCO) by the Secretary of State for Transport before it can be built.

It will be approximately 18 months before we can apply for development consent to build the West Midlands Interchange. Before then we need to talk to local communities, residents and businesses to ensure we can make our proposal the best it can be.

This document sets out how we will consult with the community during the first of our two stages of consultation. Stage 1 Consultation will focus on early stage proposals for the project, before we develop more detailed proposals for Stage 2 Consultation in early 2017.

More information on this will be available in the consultation documents themselves.

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<td>Monday 13 June to Sunday 24 July 2016</td>
<td>Stage 1 (Non-Statutory) Consultation: Early stage proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 2017</td>
<td>Stage 2 (Statutory) Consultation: Detailed proposals</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Application for a DCO submitted</td>
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<td>Examination process</td>
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*The dates for Stage 1 (Non Statutory) Consultation are fixed. All other dates set out above are indicative only. FAL hopes to achieve these timescales but will ensure that its proposals are as good as possible before submitting an application for a DCO. The timescales for examination and decision by the Secretary of State are fixed once the process begins.*
2. Project background

2.1 Why do we need the West Midlands Interchange?

A SRFI is something that has been long identified as essential for the future prosperity of the West Midlands region. The region’s trunk roads are already congested, the West Midlands’ strong manufacturing and logistics industrial base is growing and there is a shortage of suitable quality development land for large scale rail served logistics warehousing. Without fast, reliable transport links the region may not be able to take full advantage of the global business and investment opportunities predicted in the future.

The Government’s policy is to encourage the shift of goods from road to rail to help reduce carbon emissions and provide economic benefits. It believes a network of strategic rail freight interchanges across the UK will help realise its vision. Rail freight produces 70% less CO2 than road freight, up to 15 times less nitrogen oxide emissions and nearly 10 times less particulates, as well as de-congestion benefits.

2.2 Where do you propose to build it?

Following extensive research with a number of regional partners over many years, we have selected a site in the region of 260 hectares next to a branch of the West Coast Main Line, south west of where the A5 meets the M6 at junction 12.

2.3 Why this location?

This area was identified as one of the best locations in the West Midlands for an SRFI as early as 2007. The proposed location is considered uniquely suited to meet the need for a large scale SRFI in this part of the country because:

- it is located on a branch of the West Coast Main Line and where the M6, the A5 trunk road and the A449 trunk road come together;
- it is large enough to accommodate a SRFI and to achieve the critical mass required to attract frequent train movements and operators;
- it meets specific pressing local needs for modern rail served distribution facilities in the north western part of the West Midlands, particularly Staffordshire and the Black Country where there is a strong manufacturing base and automotive and aerospace industries; and/
- it offers businesses proximity to markets particularly where product is perishable.

2.4 Who is behind the scheme?

Four Ashes Limited is led by Kilbride Holdings, a company specialising in rail infrastructure to serve business and industry. Kilbride Holdings has developed projects for Jaguar Land Rover in Halewood and Castle Bromwich. Kilbride Holdings is one of three partners in Four Ashes Limited, along with privately owned international property group Grosvenor Group and Piers Monckton, who is the primary landowner.

The partners of Four Ashes Limited are committed to delivering a rail served development which will bring significant sustainable social and economic benefits to South Staffordshire, the Black Country
and the wider region, through responsible design and by taking into account community interests and environmental considerations.

2.5 Regional benefits

The WMI project would boost the West Midlands economy by:

- strengthening the logistics and freight industry and its supply chain, thereby offering new opportunities for the efficient movement of goods for local businesses
- connecting key local markets with ports and a national network of rail served distribution centres
- unlocking wider commercial opportunities by bringing the prospect of high quality rail freight connections to the region
- encouraging inward investment to the region.

The WMI project would create a broad range of well-paid and skilled new jobs across the West Midlands, as well as opportunities for lower skilled employment by:

- creating up to 8,500 jobs in South Staffordshire and the Black Country
- securing existing manufacturing, logistics and freight jobs in the region
- generating additional jobs across a broad spectrum of business sectors
- strengthening businesses and boosting prosperity in the region.

The WMI project would promote regional sustainability by:

- connecting the national road and rail freight networks to Staffordshire and the north of Birmingham
- making freight distribution more cost-effective and productive
- removing HGV journeys from the M6 and the strategic road network, thereby saving carbon, easing congestion and increasing safety
- improving resilience to meet 21st century market demands.
3. Process

3.1 Planning Act 2008

The Planning Act 2008 as amended (‘the Act’) sets out a planning process for projects considered to be ‘Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects’ (NSIPs).

In view of their national importance, the NSIP classification covers developments such as energy generating stations of a certain size, new highways, new gas and overhead electric lines, as well as a range of other infrastructure projects. To be considered an NSIP, a Rail Freight Interchange must be over 60 hectares in size and have the capacity to handle four or more goods trains a day. The West Midlands Interchange proposal is in the region of 260 hectares with the capacity to handle approximately 10 goods trains per day.

The planning process for NSIPs is different to that for most planning applications. Instead of applying for planning permission from the appropriate council covering the site, we will have to apply to the Planning Inspectorate for development consent. The Planning Inspectorate will examine our application before recommending to the Secretary of State (for Transport in this case) whether the proposals should receive consent. The Secretary of State then makes the final decision.

Before we submit an application for development consent, we will be carrying out detailed pre-application consultation.

3.2 Pre-application consultation

Projects applying for development consent under the Act have to carry out pre-application consultation that fulfil certain requirements before they can be accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate. In addition to consulting various statutory bodies and people whose land may be affected, the Act sets out how the community should be consulted.

We propose to consult on our proposal this summer while it is at an early stage in its development (Stage 1) before we bring forward more detailed proposals early next year for Stage 2 Consultation. Stage 1 Consultation will be non-statutory consultation, in that it is not being carried out to fulfil the requirements of the Act.

Stage 2 will be ‘statutory consultation’, which is required to fulfil the requirements identified in the Act. How we intend to consult with the community during Stage 2 will be published in a ‘Statement of Community Consultation’ before the start of consultation.
4. Stage 1 Consultation

4.1 Consultation period

Stage 1 Consultation on the West Midlands Interchange will run from Monday 13 June 2016 to midnight on Sunday 24 July 2016.

4.2 Who we are consulting

During Stage 1 Consultation we are consulting with the local community, residents and businesses located in the immediate area of the site, and with the general public. Those living or working within an identified ‘consultation zone’, and those who have registered for updates, will receive information by direct mail. The consultation zone extends approximately 2km from an indicative site boundary, with small extensions to ensure villages or groups of houses are wholly included. A map of this consultation zone can be found in Appendix 1.

We will also be writing to the Parish Councils, councillors and Members of Parliament who represent the area.

At the same time as consulting with the community, we will be consulting with landowners, statutory consultees and local authorities.

4.3 Consultation documents

- Newsletter – it covers the project in outline and the Stage 1 Consultation process, as well as directing people to where more information can be found and details of public exhibitions. Included with this newsletter are two layout options for the West Midlands Interchange that we are consulting on.

- Consultation Overview Document – this is the primary consultation document for Stage 1. It will contain:
  - Background to the project
  - Preliminary proposals
  - Information about potential benefits, effects and impacts of the proposals.

- Environmental Report – a technical document setting out early environmental considerations and information about the proposals.


- Feedback Form – to help collect people’s views during the consultation process. The form will guide feedback on a number of issues which we are specifically interested in at this stage of the project’s development, but there will also be dedicated space to make any additional comments. The feedback form will be available as a printed version but also online at our project website.

  Note: We will accept and consider all written feedback received during the consultation period whether or not it has been provided using the feedback form.
4.4 Information availability

In order to make our consultation easily accessible, information during consultation will be available through a number of channels.

Copies of the Newsletter and Feedback Form will be sent to all residential and business addresses identified by the Royal Mail within the consultation zone, and to those who have registered for updates.

More information about the proposals is available:
- online at the project website [www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk](http://www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk)
- at public exhibitions
- by post - we will send a copy of the Consultation Overview Document, which contains more information about the project, free of charge on request
- at local information points – during their normal opening hours, copies of all consultation documents can be viewed at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brewood Library</td>
<td>Newport Street, Brewood, Stafford, ST19 9DT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penkridge Library</td>
<td>Bellbrook, Stafford, ST19 5DL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Staffordshire Council</td>
<td>Wolverhampton Road, Codsall WV8 1PX</td>
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</table>

4.5 Public exhibitions

During Stage 1 Consultation we will hold three public exhibitions. These will be held early in the consultation period to allow people to discuss specific issues with the project team and have time to fully consider their responses.

A range of times and locations have been selected to increase the number of opportunities for people to attend an event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 30 June 2016</td>
<td>2pm to 7pm</td>
<td>The Haling Dene Centre, Cannock Road, Penkridge, Stafford, ST19 5DT</td>
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<td>10am to 2pm</td>
<td>Calf Heath Village Hall, Straight Mile, Calf Heath, Wolverhampton, WV10 7DW</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 Promotion

We will use a range of communication channels to promote the consultation period, access to information and the public exhibitions. These will be timed to promote consultation just before and at the start of the consultation period, to ensure that people hear about it in good time and to promote the consultation deadline.

- Direct mail – a copy of our Newsletter and Feedback Form will be sent by first class Royal Mail to residents and businesses within the consultation zone set out in Appendix 1.
• **Newspaper advertisement** – quarter page colour adverts will be placed in the Express and Star, and Birmingham Mail during the first week of the consultation to promote the public exhibitions.

• **Press releases** – will be issued to a number of regional media outlets to seek coverage at the start and end of consultation.

• **Posters** – will be available on request to any business, Parish Council or other interested body who would like to use them to help promote the consultation.

4.7 How to give us your views

Feedback can be sent to us through any of the channels below. The deadline for responding is midnight on Sunday 24 July 2016. Responses received after this date may not be considered as part of the responses to Stage 1 Consultation.

• **Online Feedback Form** – can be completed on our project website [www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk](http://www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk)

• **Email** – you can email us your feedback via [contactus@communityrelations.co.uk](mailto:contactus@communityrelations.co.uk)

• **Freepost** – the Feedback Form, or any other feedback, can be posted to the freepost address below. If using this freepost address please write it exactly as shown, on a single line, otherwise it may not be delivered.
  FREEPPOST WMI

5. ‘Hard to Reach’ groups

In conjunction with South Staffordshire Council and Staffordshire County Council, we have identified a range of ‘hard to reach’ groups specifically related to the consultation zone.

In order to ensure that ‘hard to reach’ groups are encouraged to get involved in Stage 1 Consultation, we will prepare materials to be accessible, clear and relevant. We will also make sure that:

• The Newsletter and Consultation Overview Document are as clear and concise as possible.
• The freepost address and freephone number are prominent on all published material.
• The Newsletter and Consultation Overview Document are available in alternative forms on request (e.g. large print, Braille, languages other than English).
• Exhibitions are held at times and places that are convenient and as accessible to as many people as possible. Anyone requiring special requirements to attend an event will be invited to contact us via the communications channels identified on advertising materials.
• Press releases are issued to relevant local publications.
• Advertisements are placed in local publications.
• Information is sent directly to people’s addresses within the consultation zone.
• Representatives of ‘hard to reach’ groups are sent copies of the Newsletter.
6. Next steps

6.1 Feedback

The project team will review and consider all the feedback it receives during Stage 1 Consultation. The findings of Stage 1 Consultation, along with details of how we have used the information received in the evolution of the project design, will be published in an Interim Consultation Report, which will be one of the documents included in Stage 2 Consultation.

6.2 Stage 2 Consultation

We plan to carry out Stage 2 Consultation in early 2017 on the detailed project proposal.

In advance of consultation, we will prepare a draft Statement of Community Consultation which will set out how we intend to consult, and seek comments on it from South Staffordshire Council and Staffordshire County Council before it is published on our website and promoted.

7. Contact us

To contact the community relations team, please use the details below.

Freephone: 0800 377 7345
Post: FREEPOST WMI
Email: contactus@communityrelations.co.uk
Website: www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk/contact-us
Appendix 1: Consultation Zone
8.2 Consultation materials

Newsletter
Stage 1 Consultation

The West Midlands Interchange is a proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange immediately west of Junction 12 of the M6 in South Staffordshire.

The project is being proposed by Four Ashes Limited (FAL). We would like to hear your views on our proposals at this early stage. After this first stage of consultation, we will review the feedback we have received and develop more detailed proposals, which we plan to consult on in early 2017.

This newsletter includes a short overview of the project, as well as details of where you can find out more information and how to tell us what you think.

Stage 1 (Non-Statutory) Consultation runs from Monday 13 June 2016 to Sunday 24 July 2016

Stage 2 (Statutory) Consultation will be held in early 2017

About the project

A Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SFRI) is a large distribution park linked into the strategic rail and road system, capable of accommodating warehouses for the storage, processing and movement of goods for manufacturers, retailers and consumers.

The current proposals for the West Midlands Interchange include:

- an intermodal rail freight terminal with connections to the West Coast Main Line (WCML), accommodating approximately 10 trains per day including container storage and associated HGV parking;
- around 800,000 square metres of rail served warehousing and associated service buildings and may also include some manufacturing and processing activities;
- new road infrastructure and works to the existing road infrastructure;
- a new junction on the A5 that will be the main road access into the site.

Central to the proposals is a Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy (LGIS) for the site. This will include best practice landscape design and community woodland, as well its future management.
Key benefits

The WMI project would boost the West Midlands economy by:

- strengthening the logistics and freight industry and its supply chain, thereby offering new opportunities for the efficient movement of goods for local businesses
- connecting key local markets with ports and a national network of rail served distribution centres
- unlocking wider commercial opportunities by bringing the prospect of high quality rail freight connections to the region
- encouraging inward investment to the region.

The WMI project would create a broad range of well-paid and skilled new jobs across the West Midlands, as well as opportunities for lower skilled employment by:

- creating up to 8,500 jobs in South Staffordshire and the Black Country
- securing existing manufacturing, logistics and freight jobs in the region
- generating additional jobs across a broad spectrum of business sectors
- strengthening businesses and boosting prosperity in the region.

The WMI project would promote regional sustainability by:

- connecting the national road and rail freight networks to Staffordshire and the north and west of Birmingham
- making freight distribution more cost-effective and productive
- removing HGV journeys from the M6 and the strategic road network, thereby saving carbon, easing congestion and increasing safety
- improving resilience to meet 21st century market demands.

What we are consulting on

During Stage 1 Consultation, we would particularly like to hear your views on the following topics to help us refine our proposals:

- Local information, issues and concerns
- Two layout options
- Any other thoughts or feedback you have about the project.

About us

FAL is led by Kilbride Holdings, a company specialising in rail infrastructure to serve business and industry. Kilbride Holdings has developed projects for Jaguar Land Rover in Halewood and Castle Bromwich. Kilbride Holdings is one of three partners in FAL, along with privately owned international property group, Grosvenor Group, and Piers Monckton, who is the primary landowner.

Mission statement

The partners of FAL are committed to delivering a rail served development which will bring significant sustainable social and economic benefits to South Staffordshire, the Black Country and the wider region, through responsible design and by taking into account community interests and environmental considerations.
The proposed location is considered uniquely suited to meet the need for a SFRI in the area and the growing demand for rail-served warehousing serving South Staffordshire, the Black Country and the West Midlands. Independent research has shown that this should be treated as a priority.

FAL looked at many sites in the West Midlands area. The WMI site at Four Ashes was chosen because:

- the site can accommodate the most up to date trains allowed on the network, maximising efficiency
- the site is located on a branch of the WCML, has access from both directions of travel and the capacity for additional freight trains
- this section of rail line has two tracks, as opposed to the four-track main section of the WCML through Rugeley to the east. This makes it easier to connect to a SRFI, avoiding the need for a complex rail junction
- the M6 is one of the busiest roads for freight in the UK. The WMI location is where the M6, the A5 trunk road, the A449 trunk road and the Strategic Freight Network for Rail meet, providing a unique opportunity to move goods between road and rail
- the site is large enough to accommodate a SRFI and achieve the critical mass required for success.

Next steps

After the consultation, feedback will be analysed and reviewed by FAL while further developing our proposals. A report on the feedback and how it has shaped the project design will be published with detailed proposals during our Stage 2 Consultation in early 2017. Stage 2 Consultation will be ‘statutory’ consultation as set out by the Planning Act 2008.

Due to its national significance, the West Midlands Interchange will require a specific type of planning permission known as a Development Consent Order (DCO) from the Secretary of State for Transport, instead of planning permission from the local planning authority. We hope to submit an application for a DCO in autumn 2017 and if it is accepted, the application will be examined by the Planning Inspectorate. During this stage, people who have registered to have their say will be invited to participate in the examination process. When the examination is complete, there will be a further six months before a decision is made by the Secretary of State, which is likely to be in early 2019.
Where to find out more

More information about the proposals can be found:

- **Online** at the project website www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk
- **At public exhibitions** during the consultation period
- **By post** - we will send a copy of the Consultation Overview Document, which contains more information about the project, free of charge on request
- **At local information points** - during their normal opening hours, copies of all consultation documents can be viewed at:
  - Brewood Library, Newport Street, Brewood, Stafford, ST19 9DT
  - Penkridge Library, Bellbrook, Stafford, ST19 5DL
  - South Staffordshire Council offices, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall WV8 1PX

How to tell us your views

Feedback can be sent to us through any of the channels listed below. The deadline for responding is midnight on Sunday 24 July 2016. Responses received after this date may not be considered as part of Stage 1 consultation.

- **Online feedback form** – can be completed on our project website www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk
- **Email** – you can email us your feedback via contactus@communityrelations.co.uk
- **Freepost** – the feedback form, or any other feedback, can be posted to the freepost address below. If using this freepost address please write it exactly as shown, on a single line, otherwise it may not be delivered.
We are consulting on proposals for a new Strategic Rail Freight Interchange west of J12 of the M6, including:

- A new rail freight terminal with connections to the West Coast Main Line
- Around 800,000 square metres of rail served warehousing and associated buildings
- New road infrastructure and a new junction on the A5
- The creation of around 8,500 new jobs

Come to one of our public exhibitions to learn more about the proposals and speak to members of the team:

**Thursday 30 June 2016**, 2pm to 7pm
The Haling Dene Centre, Penkridge, ST19 5DT

**Friday 8 July 2016**, 3pm to 8pm
Coven Memorial Hall, Brewood Road, WV9 5DL

**Saturday 9 July 2016**, 10am to 2pm
Calf Heath Village Hall, Straight Mile, W10 7DW
Stage 1 Consultation
13 June 2016 to 24 July 2016

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- A new rail freight terminal with connections to the West Coast Main Line
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www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk
0800 377 7345
contactus@communityrelations.co.uk

Four Ashes Ltd
Press release

Public’s views sought on West Midlands Interchange

Four Ashes Limited has launched a public consultation on its plans to build a major new strategic rail freight interchange (SRFI) to serve South Staffordshire and the West Midlands.

Consultation on early design options for the scheme starts on Monday June 13 and will run until Sunday July 24. Four Ashes Limited is encouraging interested members of the public and businesses to have their say at this early stage in the project’s development.

A number of public exhibitions are scheduled, where people can look at plans and documents and discuss the project first hand with members of the project design team.

The exhibitions are:
- Penkridge: Thursday 30 June from 2pm until 7pm
  The Haling Dene Centre, Cannock Rd, Penkridge, Stafford ST19 5DT
- Coven: Friday 8 July from 3pm until 8pm
  Coven Memorial Hall, Brewood Road, Coven, WV9 5DL
- Calf Heath: Saturday 9 July from 10am until 2pm
  Calf Heath Village Hall, Straight Mile, Calf Heath, Wolverhampton, WV10 7DW

The initial proposals outline development of a large SRFI on land west of junction 12 of the M6 in southern Staffordshire. It is hoped that such a scheme could boost the regional and local economy and create up to 8,500 jobs in South Staffordshire and the Black Country. It would also be part of a national network of similar interchanges helping to transfer long distance freight movements from road to rail and easing congestion on the motorway network.

The Managing Director of Four Ashes Limited, Peter Frost, said: “The West Midlands Interchange is a large distribution park featuring a rail freight terminal with rail connections to the West Coast Main Line.

“The development will be made up of warehouses for the storage, processing and movement of goods for manufacturers, retailers and consumers and will connect the West Midlands to a wider strategic national network of rail served distribution centres and ports. It’s the type of project that the region’s businesses and economic organisations have said they urgently need and it is supported by a national government policy to encourage freight movements off the roads and onto rail.

“Getting people involved early is vital so that community and regional stakeholders’ views are considered in the emerging scheme design. The masterplan outlines how key parts of the development
could be arranged and so at this stage we want to know what people think of our two preliminary design options and to give us any information they think is relevant.

“This first round of consultation is non-statutory and we will be using the feedback people give us now to help us develop our proposals to the detailed design stage. We will then consult on our detailed proposals early next year.”

The privately-funded project is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, which means it needs a Development Consent Order from the Secretary of State for Transport before it could be built, rather than a planning application which is decided by the local planning authority.

An application is not expected to be submitted until autumn 2017, and consultation with nearby communities, residents, businesses and other organisations is a crucial part of the development process.

The company announced the West Midlands Interchange project in April this year. For more information about the West Midlands Interchange, the consultation process, or to find out how to get involved and register for project updates, visit www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk.

/ends

For media enquiries or to request an interview please call 0800 377 7345 or email contactus@communityrelations.co.uk.

Notes to editors

The West Midlands Interchange project is being developed by Four Ashes Limited. Kilbride Holdings is one of three partners in Four Ashes Limited, along with privately owned international property group, Grosvenor Group, and Piers Monckton, who is the majority landowner. Kilbride Holdings has developed projects for Jaguar Land Rover in Halewood and Castle Bromwich.

Mission statement

The partners of Four Ashes Limited are committed to delivering a rail served development which will bring significant sustainable social and economic benefits to South Staffordshire, the Black Country and the wider region, through responsible design and by taking into account community interests and environmental considerations.

Key benefits

The West Midlands Interchange project would boost the West Midlands economy by:

- strengthening the logistics and freight industry and its supply chain, thereby offering new opportunities for the efficient movement of goods for local businesses;
• connecting key local markets with ports and a national network of rail served distribution centres;
• unlocking wider commercial opportunities by bringing the prospect of high quality rail freight connections to the region; and
• encouraging inward investment to the region.

The West Midlands Interchange project would create a broad range of job opportunities in South Staffordshire including well-paid and new skilled jobs, as well as opportunities for lower skilled employment by:
• creating up to 8,500 jobs in South Staffordshire;
• securing existing manufacturing, logistics and freight jobs in the region;
• generating additional jobs across a broad spectrum of business sectors; and
• strengthening businesses and boosting prosperity in the region.

The West Midlands Interchange project would promote sustainability by:
• connecting the national road and rail freight networks to Staffordshire and the north and west of Birmingham;
• making freight distribution more cost-effective and productive;
• removing HGV journeys from the M6 and the strategic road network, thereby saving carbon, easing congestion and increasing safety; and
• improving resilience to meet 21st century market demands.

**Government policy**

According to the Government’s National Policy Statement (NPS) for National Networks, which sets out policy for Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges (SRFIs), there is a compelling need for an expanded national network of SRFIs. Tonne for tonne, rail freight produces 70% less carbon dioxide than road freight, up to 15 times less nitrogen oxide emissions and nearly 10 times fewer particulates, as well as de-congestion benefits.
Exhibition boards
Welcome

Welcome to our exhibition about the initial proposals for the West Midlands Interchange. The West Midlands Interchange is a proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) immediately west of Junction 12 of the M6 in South Staffordshire.

The project would add to the UK’s growing logistics industry; helping businesses import and export cheaply and efficiently, and customers receive their products quickly. The West Midlands Interchange has the potential to provide up to 8,500 new jobs while supporting regional businesses and encouraging investment into the area.

This is our first stage of consultation and the draft proposals are still in an early stage of development.

Your views are important in helping us shape the proposals. More detailed proposals will be consulted on early next year once we have considered all feedback from the consultation and carried out additional design work.

About us

Four Ashes Limited (FAL) is led by Kilbride Holdings, a company specialising in rail infrastructure to serve business and industry. Kilbride Holdings has developed projects for Jaguar Land Rover in Halewood and Castle Bromwich. Kilbride Holdings is one of the three partners in FAL, along with privately owned international property group, Grosvenor Group, and Piers Monckton, who is the primary landowner.

Mission statement

The partners of Four Ashes Limited are committed to delivering a rail served development which will bring significant sustainable social and economic benefit to South Staffordshire, the Black Country and the wider region through responsible design and by taking into account community interests and environmental considerations.
The need for SRFIs

Rail freight terminals are the freight equivalent of stations for passengers and rail freight is playing an increasingly significant role in logistics, meeting the changing needs of the logistics industry. SRFIs can provide the logistics support which allows: retailers to keep their shelves stocked; the different components in automotive production to be collected; and also enables e-commerce businesses to deliver goods to millions of people’s front doors in ever reducing timescales.

Policy considerations for the determination of SRFI projects are set out in a Government document called the National Policy Statement (NPS) for National Networks (December 2014). The NPS sets out the Government’s vision for the transport system as a driver of economic growth and attaches particular importance to the use of rail for the transport of freight across the country.

“The Government has concluded that there is a compelling need for an expanded network of SRFIs. It is important that SRFIs are located near to the business markets they serve – major urban centres, or groups of centres – and they are linked to key chain supply routes.”
(NPS paragraph 2.56)

“New [SRFI] facilities need to be located alongside major rail routes, close to major trunk roads, as well as near to the conurbations that consume the goods.”
(NPS paragraph 2.45)

“Proposed new rail freight interchanges should have good road access as this will allow rail to effectively compete with, and work alongside, road freight to achieve a modal shift to rail.”
(NPS paragraph 4.64)

In relation to Green Belt locations, the NPS advises that Green Belts are often situated around cities and major urban areas and therefore:

“Promoters of SRFIs may find that the only viable sites for meeting the need for regional SRFIs are on Green Belt land.”
(NPS paragraph 5.172)
The proposals

A SRFI is a large distribution park linked into both the rail and strategic road system to maximise efficiency and sustainability, and is capable of accommodating the large warehouses necessary for the storage, processing and movement of goods for manufacturers, retailers and end consumers.

The current West Midlands Interchange proposals include the following principal elements:

- an intermodal rail freight terminal with connections to the West Coast Main Line, accommodating approximately 10 trains per day with the capability to receive trains of up to 775m long and including container storage and associated HGV parking;
- around 800,000 square metres of rail served warehousing and ancillary service buildings. They may also include some manufacturing and processing activities;
- new road infrastructure and works to the existing road infrastructure;
- a new principal access from the A5 into WMI; and
- demolition of existing structures, where necessary.

The layout of West Midlands Interchange is far from fixed at this stage in the design process and we welcome your views on the two different options for the layout of the proposals.
The site

The map below is our current site boundary. The final boundary of the proposals may alter based on discussions with landowners, consultation feedback or further development of our proposals.

The site is made up of a large area in the east known as Calf Heath Quarry where sand, gravel and minerals are excavated; a patchwork of agricultural fields with hedgerows and trees to the west and south of the quarry and an area of mixed woodland known as Calf Heath Wood. To the south lies the Bericote development site, the chemical works operated by St Group and the Four Ashes industrial area. The area south of Vicarage Road is made up of agricultural fields with trees and hedgerows.

Central to our proposals will be a Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy. This will include best practice landscape design and community woodland, as well as provision for its future management.

The final redline boundary and our Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy will be part of the next stage of consultation, which will be held early next year.
Local history

The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal was constructed in 1772, designed by James Brindley as part of a wider plan to link the cities of Hull, Bristol and Liverpool. The canal formed a crossroads with the A5 at Gailey, where freight could be moved between road and canal. The Gailey Marina incorporates Hatherton Junction, which was used to link the canal to the Cannock Extension Canal. This branch was closed in 1949.

The Grand Junction Railway was constructed in 1833, running from Newton Junction near Warrington to Birmingham. It was amalgamated with other railways in 1846 to create the London and North Western Railway, then becoming a part of the London, Midland and Scottish Railway system in 1923. The Four Ashes railway station was built by the Grand Junction Railway in 1837 and operated till 1959 when it was closed to passenger traffic. The Rugby-Birmingham-Stafford Line loop from the West Coast Main Line, which runs past the site, passes the former station.

The Midland Tar Distillers built a refinery at Four Ashes in 1950 to refine tar acids. The site has since been occupied by St Group. More recently the Four Ashes Industrial Estate and Veolia’s Energy Recovery Facility have been built in the area.

Most recently, Bericote has received outline permission for 900,000 sq ft of distribution space at Four Ashes.
Why this site?

The location is uniquely suited to meet the need for a SRFI and rail served warehousing serving South Staffordshire, the Black Country and the West Midlands. Independent research has shown that it is needed in this area and should be treated as a priority.

FAL looked at many sites in the West Midlands area. The West Midlands Interchange site at Four Ashes was chosen because:

- The site can accommodate the most up to date trains allowed on the network, maximising efficiency
- The site is located on a branch of the West Coast Main Line, has access from both directions of travel and the capacity for additional freight trains
- The section of rail line has two tracks, as opposed to the four-track main section of the West Coast Main Line through Rugeley to the east. This makes it easier to connect to a SRFI, avoiding the need for a complex rail junction
- The M6 is one of the busiest roads for freight in the UK. The WMII location is where the M6, the A5 trunk road, the A449 trunk road and the Strategic Freight Network for Rail meet, providing a unique opportunity to move goods between road and rail
- The site is large enough to accommodate a successful Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and provides the scale of operations needed.

![Map of surrounding strategic road and rail network](image-url)
Illustrative masterplan
East Rail Terminal

This plan shows a potential layout for the West Midlands Interchange including the rail terminal location and new road and rail infrastructure.

The East Terminal Option positions a 750m rail terminal plus associated facilities to the east of the rail line, in the centre of the site. Using this facility the terminal would be able to accept full length trains without the need to split them in the sidings. This option has the rail terminal access points to the east of the existing West Coast Main Line and would require a new rail bridge over the existing canal.

Substantial landscape screening would be provided to the south and west of the rail terminal in addition to the comprehensive landscape scheme throughout the site.

The layout is illustrative only and elements will change as the proposals are developed. More detailed proposals will be consulted on during the next stage of consultation.
Illustrative masterplan
West Rail Terminal

This plan shows a potential layout for the West Midlands Interchange including rail terminal location and new road and rail infrastructure.

This option has the rail terminal access points to the west of the existing rail line. The trains would be split in two in the reception sidings and then moved into the terminal. The West Terminal Option can accommodate 775m trains in the reception sidings and 395m sections in the rail terminal area. The container stacking area will be alongside the rail terminal area with all the facilities to the west of the West Coast Main Line.

Substantial landscape screening would be provided to the south and west of the rail terminal in addition to the comprehensive landscape scheme throughout the site.

The layout is illustrative only and elements will change as the proposals are developed. More detailed proposals will be consulted on during the next stage of consultation.
Benefits

The project will boost the West Midlands economy by:

- Strengthening the logistics and freight industry and its supply chain
- Connecting key local markets with the ports and a national network of rail served distribution centres
- Unlocking wider commercial opportunities
- Encouraging inward investment to the region.

The project will create a broad range of well-paid and skilled new jobs across the West Midlands, as well as opportunities for lower skilled employment by:

- Creating up to 8,500 jobs in South Staffordshire and the Black Country
- Securing existing manufacturing, logistics and freight jobs in the region
- Generating additional jobs across a broad spectrum of business sectors
- Strengthening businesses and boosting prosperity in the region.

The project promotes regional sustainability by:

- Connecting national road and rail freight networks to Staffordshire and the north of Birmingham
- Making freight distribution more cost-effective and productive
- Removing thousands of HGV journeys from the M5 and the strategic road network, thereby saving carbon, easing congestion and increasing safety
- Improving the ability of British businesses to meet 21st century market demands.
Transport

SRFIs reduce the number and length of HGV trips on the national highways network.

Without a SRFI, freight arrives in the UK either by ship or the Channel Tunnel. It is then typically driven to national distribution centres before being sent on to regional distribution centres, local distribution centres and then customers.

The introduction of SRFIs removes the first main HGV journey to an international distribution centre and potentially to a regional distribution centre. This benefit improves as the network of SRFIs grows.

The benefit also works in reverse, simplifying export logistics and the return trip for freight containers (whether full or empty).

The rail terminal would include reception sidings, where freight trains would be held between arrivals, processing and departure. The site’s road network will link the warehousing to the rail terminal with rail lines also linking directly into a number of individual warehouse units. The terminal facility would also be available for the movement of goods associated with existing businesses who are not based at the site.

We are working closely with Network Rail, Highways England and the highways teams of local councils.

"Network Rail is supportive of the West Midlands Interchange proposal and will be engaged with the Four Ashes team as it progresses through the normal process of rail technical investigation, planning and design."

Guy Bates, Head of Freight Development, Network Rail
Transport

Identifying and reducing potential transport impacts on the local area will remain a key focus of our proposals as the scheme develops.

At this early stage, we are proposing three access points into the West Midlands Interchange site plus an additional gated emergency access.

A Travel Plan will be created as part of the application. This will include a strategy for sustainable travel for employees, which may include a bespoke bus service.
Planning process

Due to its national significance, the West Midlands Interchange will require a specific type of authorisation known as a Development Consent Order (DCO) from the Secretary of State for Transport. This is instead of planning permission from the local planning authority (such as South Staffordshire Council or Staffordshire County Council).

This process for ‘Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects’ was set out in the Planning Act 2008.

Pre-application consultation is a key part of the DCO process. Effective consultation leads to better proposals. It is important that the consultation process begins at an early enough stage to allow the proposals to be influenced by feedback.

Once we have finalised our proposals we will submit an application to the Planning Inspectorate. If they accept it, the Planning Inspectorate will carry out an examination of the DCO in which the public can participate. They will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will make the final decision.

Next steps

Thank you for visiting our exhibition. Please speak to a member of the team if you have any questions. Our first stage of consultation runs from Monday 13 June 2016 to Sunday 24 July 2016.

During this consultation we are asking for views on our early proposals. After this first stage of consultation, we will review the feedback we have received and develop more detailed proposals, which we plan to consult on in early 2017.

Any issues raised during consultation will be considered by the project team in the development of the proposals. Feedback from Stage 1 consultation will be presented in an Interim Consultation Report, published during Stage 2 consultation. Feedback from Stage 2 consultation will be presented in the Consultation Report submitted as part of our final application.
Anticipated timeline

Stage 1
(Non-Statutory) Consultation

Stage 2
(Statutory) Consultation on detailed proposals, having considered the comments we received at Stage 1

Submission
The application will then be prepared, taking account of all of the work done and the feedback received. It will then be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate

Examination
Subject to the application being accepted (one month), there will be a pre-examination stage (approximately three months). The Examination of the application will then take place. During this stage, people who have registered to have their say will be invited to provide their views

Decision
Within three months of the Examination, the Planning Inspectorate will prepare a report on the application to the Secretary of State for Transport, including a recommendation. The Secretary of State then has a further three months to make a decision

The Secretary of State then has a further three months to
Feedback form
Stage 1 Consultation

Four Ashes Limited (FAL) is consulting on proposals for a new Strategic Rail Freight Interchange near to junction 12 of the M6 at Four Ashes. This feedback form is part of our first stage of consultation, which will run from Monday 13 June 2016 to Sunday 24 July 2016.

More information about the proposals is available:

- **Online** at the project website www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk
- **At public exhibitions** during the consultation period
- **By post** - we will send a copy of the Consultation Overview Document, free of charge, on request
- **At local information points** - during their normal opening hours, copies of all consultation documents can be viewed at:
  - Brewood Library, Newport Street, Brewood, Stafford, ST19 9DT
  - Penkridge Library, Bellbrook, Stafford, ST19 5DL
  - South Staffordshire Council offices, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall WV8 1PX

**How to tell us your views**

Feedback can be sent to us through any of the channels listed below. The deadline for responding is midnight on Sunday 24 July 2016. Responses received after this date may not be considered as part of Stage 1 Consultation.

- **Online feedback form** – can be completed on our project website www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk
- **Email** – you can email us your feedback via contactus@communityrelations.co.uk
- **Freepost** – this feedback form, or any other feedback, can be posted to the freepost address below. If using this freepost address please write it exactly as shown, on a single line, otherwise it may not be delivered.

Website: www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk
Email: contactus@communityrelations.co.uk
Freepost: FREEPOST WMI
Freephone: 0800 377 7345

Four Ashes Ltd
What we are consulting on

During Stage 1 Consultation, we would like to hear your views on the following topics to help us refine our proposals:

**Local information, issues and concerns**
To help us develop the best proposals possible, including mitigation measures, we would like to hear about anything you think would be relevant concerning the local area, any specific issues you would like to see addressed, or any concerns you may have about potential impacts.

**Layout options for the site**
We are considering two options for the laying out of the various elements of the project, in particular the location of the rail terminal and the associated road and rail infrastructure. We would like to hear your opinion on both options. The layout options presented as part of this consultation are illustrative only and many elements of the proposals may change as the project is developed in more detail.

We would also welcome any other comments you have about our project at this stage.

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**About you**

- **Name:** 
- **Address:** 
- **Postcode:** 
- **Email:** 
- **Telephone:** 
- **Age:**  
  - □ 15-24  
  - □ 25-44  
  - □ 45-64  
  - □ 65+  
- Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?  
  - □ Yes  
  - □ No  
- If so, which organisation: 

**Data protection**

Personal information that is supplied to FAL in response to this consultation will be treated confidentially and handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The information may be disclosed or shared with FAL’s contractors and advisors who are working on the West Midlands Interchange project. This will allow the team to fully consider the responses and use them in the development of the project. Upon submission of FAL’s application for development consent under the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State may require FAL to supply copies of all consultation responses received. If a request is made, FAL is under legal obligation to supply copies of the responses. By submitting a consultation response to FAL, a respondent agrees that FAL may supply a copy of their response to the Secretary of State via the Planning Inspectorate, if required to do so.
Question 1
Is there any information about the site or surrounding area that you would like the project team to be aware of? 
*This could include details of footpaths you use or locations we should examine carefully.*

Question 2
The two layout options show the potential location of the proposed rail terminal and related road and rail infrastructure. Do you have any comments about the two layout options? What do you like or dislike about each option? 
*The layout options presented as part of this consultation are illustrative only and many elements of the proposals may change as the project is developed in more detail.*
Question 3
Are there any specific issues or areas of concern that you would like to highlight? We will review all feedback we receive to help us develop our proposals. How these issues have been considered in shaping the scheme designs will be explained during our next stage of consultation.

Question 4
We will be consulting again in early 2017 with more detailed information about the scheme design. Is there anything specific about the consultation process you would like to see at the next stage of consultation? For example, this could include different ways of being kept informed or additional venues for public exhibitions.

Question 5
Please let us know if there are any other comments or suggestions you would like to make.
8.3 List of statutory consultees engaged during Stage 1

- Abbey Power Generation Limited
- Brewood and Coven CP
- British Energy Generation (UK) Limited
- Canal and River Trust
- Cannock Chase AONB Unit
- Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group
- Centro
- Danske Commodities A/S
- Department for Transport
- Dong Energy RB (UK) Limited
- E.ON UK Plc
- EDF Development Company Limited
- EDF Energy Nuclear Generation Limited
- EDF Energy Renewables Limited
- Energetics Electricity Limited
- Energetics Gas Limited
- Energy Assets Pipelines Limited
- ENGIE Power Limited
- ES Pipelines Limited
- ESP Connections Limited
- ESP Electricity Limited
- ESP Networks Limited
- ESP Pipelines Limited
- Esso Petroleum Company Limited
- Fulcrum Pipelines Limited
- GB Developers Limited
- GTC Pipelines Limited
- Harlaxton Energy Networks Limited
- Hatherton CP
- Health and Safety Executive
- Health and Social Care Information Centre
- Health Education England
- Health Research Authority
- Highways England
- Highways England Historical Rail Estate
- Historic England
- HS2 Ltd
- Independent Pipelines Limited
- Independent Power Networks Limited
- Indigo Pipelines Limited
- International Power Ltd
- Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust
- LNG Portable Pipeline Services Limited
- London and Continental Railways Limited
- Midland Expressway Limited
- National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc
- National Grid Gas Plc
- National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
- National Patient Safety Agency
- National Treatment Agency
- NATS Ltd
- Natural England
- Natural England (Regional office) North Mercia
- Network Rail
- Network Rail (High Speed) Limited
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- NHS Blood and Transport
- NHS Business Services Authority
- NHS Commissioning Board
- NHS Commissioning Board Authority
- NHS Litigation Authority
- NHS Trust Development Authority
- Npower Direct Limited
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Peel Electricity Networks Limited
- Public Health England
- Quadrant Pipelines Limited
- Rail and Safety Standards Board
- Royal Mail
- Rugeley Power Generation Limited
- RWE Generation UK Plc
- Saredon CP
- Scottish Power Generation Limited
- Severn Trent Water Ltd
- South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula Clinical Commissioning Group
- South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula Clinical Commissioning Group
- South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- South Staffs Water
- Sow and Penk IDB
- SSE Generation Limited
- SSEPG (Operations) Limited
- Stafford and Surrounds Clinical Commissioning Group
- Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent NHS Trust
- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- The Canal and River Trust
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- The Coal Authority
- The Crown Estate Commissioners
- The Electricity Network Company Limited
- The Environment Agency
- The Environment Agency - Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Midlands
- The Forestry Commission
- The NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement
- The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust
- The Secretary of State for Transport
- UK Power Distribution Limited
- UK Power Reserve Limited
- Uniper UK Limited
- University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust
- Utility Assets Limited
- West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority
- Western Power Distribution (West Midlands Plc)
- WINGAS Storage UK Limited