

Proposed West Midlands Rail Freight Interchange

I recently wrote about the proposed Rail Freight Interchange and invited you to a public meeting in Penkridge in May. At least two hundred people attended. The group 'Stop the Gailey Freight Hub' explained why they, and I, oppose the proposals.

The reason I am writing again is because the developers have announced a phase of consultation in which they invite your views. The consultation is now open and closes on **Wednesday 30th August 2017**.

It is vital that everyone who wishes to do so has their say about these proposals. Please note that **this is not a normal planning application**. The decision will not be made by our local planning authority, South Staffordshire Council. The West Midlands Interchange has been classified as a 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project' (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008 which means that as local residents, you have only two opportunities to have your say.

The current consultation is what is called the "pre-application stage" where the developer is required by law to ask the public for their opinion. The developers will then have to apply to the Planning Inspectorate for a 'Development Consent Order'. The Planning Inspectorate will then make a recommendation to 'permit' or 'refuse' to the Secretary of State for Transport who will have the final say. All this means that it is vital that local residents make their voices heard to the developer before **Wednesday 30th August 2017**. I would therefore be very grateful if you could do one or all of the following.

Go to one of the five exhibitions

Calf Heath Village Hall, Straight Mile, Calf Heath, WV10 7DW – **Tuesday 11th July 2017 – 3pm to 8pm**
Brewood Jubilee Hall, Bargate Street, Brewood, ST19 9BB – **Wednesday 12th July 2017 – 2pm to 7pm**
The Haling Dene Centre, Cannock Road, Penkridge, ST19 5DT – **Thursday 20th July 2017 – 3pm to 8pm**
Calf Heath Village Hall, Straight Mile, Calf Heath, WV10 7DW – **Friday 21st July 2017 – 2pm to 7pm**
Coven Memorial Hall, Brewood Road, Coven, WV9 5DL – **Saturday 22nd July 2017 – 10am to 2pm**

And/or send feedback to:

By post: FREEPOST WMI

By email: contactus@communityrelations.co.uk

Online: www.westmidlandsinterchange.co.uk

Later in the year, or in early 2018, we expect the Planning Inspectorate to conduct their own consultation. That will be your second chance to have your say. But I respectfully suggest that you respond on both occasions.

I am working alongside my colleague in South Staffordshire, Gavin Williamson MP, in opposing these proposals on behalf of residents. They will greatly increase traffic on the A5 and A449 as well as building on a large area of Greenbelt land. Rail freight is important, but we believe that there is at least one suitable brownfield site in the region where there is interest in hosting a rail freight interchange.

I realise that everyone has many calls on their time, so I would greatly appreciate it if you are able to respond to the consultation. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Lefroy
Member of Parliament for the Stafford Constituency