

## **Submission to Planning Inspectorate on DCO BC0410001**

I am writing to outline concerns, shared by myself and the local community, regarding Development Consent Order BC0410001 for the proposed development south of East Midlands Airport. After reviewing the documentation and engaging with residents and community groups, I believe several aspects of the proposals require further scrutiny. However, the main issue is the initial allocation of this site as a Freeport Site.

It is unclear from the documentation provided in the original business plan when the site was incorporated into the 'Freeport' land designation. How and where place-based schemes are applied really does matter, and there is a concern that the site in Leicestershire was an 'additional' site rather than part of the original proposal.

Many residents, including Protect Diseworth, have also been working to determine the question of whether this land should ever have been included within East Midlands Freeport. The site is open agricultural land, forming a long-established rural buffer between the airport and nearby villages. Its separation from existing commercial zones raises doubts about the logic of incorporating it into the 'Freeport' site, which is intended to support port-related development.

As the only inland Freeport in the UK, East Midlands Freeport was always going to be managed differently to the other 11 sites which are around seaports, however, the UK Government has highlighted that there are some key principles:

*“Our port regions have proud industrial heritages and strong economic potential, but in many cases are doing less well than the rest of the country. Freeports are all about securing their economic future, and that of the UK as a whole, by reorienting regional economies towards innovative, low-carbon sectors like renewables and advanced manufacturing.*

*They will put us at the forefront of the green industrial revolution and create high-quality jobs all across the UK, in the communities where they are needed most.”*

Of the 3 sites in the East Midlands Freeport, we have:

**A site in South Derbyshire** – this site is adjacent to the Toyota Car Manufacturing site, with the intention to expand this corridor as an automotive, aerospace, logistics and advanced manufacturing.

**Rushcliffe, in Nottinghamshire** – is a site of the Radcliffe Power station. The last coal fired power station in the UK to close, to be transformed from an energy-generation site into a zero-carbon technology, manufacturing and innovation hub.

**North West Leicestershire** – appears to be inconsistent with principles normally used to define strategic development boundaries. Freeport status is intended for well-connected sites suited to high-value economic activity, yet the land south of the airport lacks the infrastructure, landscape characteristics, and planning context associated with such designations. In addition, Freeports were quite clearly about promoting economic growth in areas doing less well; this part of

Leicestershire does not meet this criteria. The DCO does not provide a clear, evidence-based justification for why this specific location is essential to the project.

Community groups have questioned whether the boundary was drawn to enable speculative expansion rather than meet demonstrable operational need, and the absence of transparent criteria risks undermining confidence in the process.

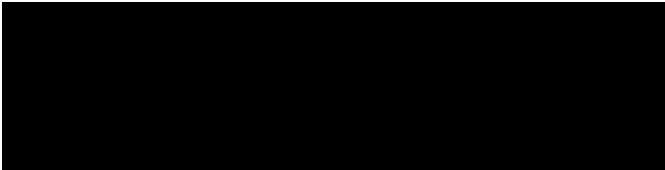
The proposed development would also result in the loss of farmland and the erosion of the rural setting of Diseworth, Long Whatton and the surrounding areas. This land maintains separation between settlements, preserves local character, and supports biodiversity. Once industrialised, the change would be irreversible, and villages would lose an important part of their identity and landscape context.

Residents have also raised wider concerns about the impacts of the development, including the adequacy of traffic modelling, increased HGV and service-vehicle movements, environmental effects on air quality, noise, and biodiversity, and limited evidence that the scheme would deliver high-quality employment. Many feel consultation has lacked clarity and meaningful engagement. These issues highlight the need for careful examination of both the site's suitability and the broader implications of the proposals.

I would also like to draw to your attention the outstanding planning application on part of the site from Manchester Airports Group (MAG), which is yet to go before the North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) Planning Committee. You can find a copy of my objection to this application on the planning portal of NWLDC under reference 24/00727/OUTM.

Finally, it has to be considered, that North West Leicestershire District Council has approved more Warehouse capacity than any other District/Borough Authority in Leicestershire in recent years, and the logistics sector already employs 21,000 people locally. This growth, whilst positive in reference to job creation, has been detrimental to the landscape and is causing concerns to residents from across the constituency. I am ambitious about our economy and the quality of jobs we create in our area and am concerned that this proposal will not deliver what we need.

I therefore ask that the points raised consistently by residents and community groups, are given full and careful consideration during the examination of this DCO.



**Amanda Hack MP**  
North West Leicestershire