

From: [REDACTED]
To: [West Midlands Interchange](#)
Subject: bjection to proposed changes to West Midlands Interchange DCO
Date: 19 September 2026 12:34:44

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below my representation regarding the proposed changes to the West Midlands Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order.

I am a local resident living in the Brewood area and I participated in the consultation and examination process for WMI, where I raised concerns about the risk of the warehouse development proceeding while delivery of the rail terminal was delayed.

It is therefore deeply disappointing, although unfortunately not surprising, that we have now reached precisely the situation that residents were concerned about.

The rail terminal was fundamental to the case for WMI

WMI was not approved simply as a large warehouse development.

It was approved as a **Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project**. The proposed development included an intermodal rail terminal connected to the West Coast Main Line and up to 743,200m² of rail-served warehousing.

The importance of the rail element was made very clear during the examination. The Examining Authority identified the need for certainty that the rail connection would be delivered and recognised concerns that WMI could become a large road-based warehousing development without it.

These were not hypothetical concerns. **I raised the same concern during the original consultation process.**

The safeguards were deliberate

The final DCO therefore included specific safeguards.

The rail terminal must be completed before the earlier of:

- occupation of more than **186,000m² of warehousing**; or
- six years after the first occupation of more than **47,000m² of warehousing**.

The Examining Authority specifically explained the importance of these controls in providing confidence that the rail facilities would be delivered.

The 186,000m² figure was also not arbitrary. It represented 25% of the total warehouse floorspace.

The developer now wants to change that

The current application proposes changing the time trigger from:

six years after the first occupation of 47,000m²

to:

five years after the first occupation of 150,000m².

Although the 186,000m² limit remains, this is still a significant change. It allows the developer to reach 150,000m² of occupied warehousing before the alternative time trigger even starts to run, rather than the present 47,000m² threshold.

The application also seeks changes to a number of the highway infrastructure triggers in **Requirement 25**.

This is therefore not simply an administrative change. It changes the relationship between warehouse development, rail delivery and the infrastructure intended to deal with the consequences of that development.

The original highway assessment is important

The original assessment did **not assess the effects of more than 186,000m² of warehousing being brought into use without the rail connection and terminal**.

The Examining Authority recognised that the potential traffic and environmental effects of doing so were unknown.

That evidence should not simply be set aside through a "non-material" change.

The developer had the opportunity to get this right

The developer had an extensive DCO examination process in which to establish the amount of warehouse development required, likely occupation rates, funding, the rail delivery programme and the highway infrastructure required.

If those assumptions have now proved wrong, that is a commercial risk for the developer. It should not automatically become a reason for weakening safeguards which were put in place to protect local communities.

The Examining Authority also rejected the developer's attempt during the original examination to include a mechanism allowing the rail requirement to be relaxed,

considering that changes of potentially significant magnitude should instead be dealt with through a formal variation of the DCO.

Impact on Brewood

For residents of Brewood and the surrounding villages, this is not an abstract planning issue.

If the rail terminal is delayed while warehouse development continues, a greater proportion of WMI's freight activity will depend upon road transport.

That means greater pressure on the **A5, A449 and surrounding local roads**, with the potential for additional HGV traffic through local communities.

My objection

I object to the proposed changes and ask the Planning Inspectorate and Secretary of State to consider:

1. Whether moving the 47,000m² time trigger to 150,000m² materially weakens the safeguard securing delivery of the rail terminal.
2. Whether the proposed changes to Requirement 25 delay highway infrastructure intended to mitigate WMI traffic.
3. Whether the original Transport Assessment and environmental assessment provide an adequate basis for the proposed changes.
4. Whether the cumulative traffic effects have been properly assessed, particularly on the A5, A449 and local roads.
5. Whether the proposed changes can properly be characterised as "non-material".
6. Whether the proposal should instead be dealt with through a formal DCO variation procedure, allowing proper examination and consultation.

Most importantly, I ask that the proposed changes are considered in the context of the original decision.

WMI was approved as a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, with the rail infrastructure forming a fundamental part of the development and safeguards specifically included to prevent the warehouses simply being built without it.

Those safeguards were included because the very concern now being raised was identified during the original examination.

I therefore ask that the proposed changes are **refused and the existing DCO requirements remain in place.**

Yours faithfully,

Richard Hancher

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