

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Northampton Gateway](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Submission: Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange – Non-Material Change TR050006 Consultation  
**Date:** 20 September 2022 10:27:00

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Hello

I wish to lodge my opposition to the amendment requested by SEGRO to the original Development Consent Order (DCO) granted in October 2019 for the Northampton Gateway:

a) SEGRO's proposal is a clear breach of the in place DCO, and of the clear assurances given at the time to the local community. When granted, the in place DCO clearly stated that: 'a rail terminal capable of handling at least four intermodal trains per day ... must be constructed and available for use before the occupation of any of the warehousing' and it specifically prohibited any commercial activity until the rail connection was operational. It is this obligation that SEGRO wish to ignore.

b) SEGRO's proposed amendment would allow up to 80% of the site to become operational in advance of any rail connection i.e. services by road freight only, opening the door to the site operating in perpetuity without any rail connection with all that means for traffic flows, noise and pollution locally and on surrounding roads, including the wider local area affected whenever M1 traffic is diverted (officially or unofficially) - an all too common occurrence these days.

c) As such the proposal is clearly NOT a non-material amendment.

d) Whilst I note National Rail's comments about the challenges they face, and the developers investment to-date in the rail freight element, I urge you to discount both as concrete assurances were given regarding the rail freight element and the development was agreed on the basis of both despite much local opposition and scepticism. Crucially, if obligations freely entered into are not, so early on in the development to be met in full, then how can we have any confidence they will ever be met? We can't is the only answer. In this regard I also note the apparent absence of any firm timescales i.e. 'by this week of this year' in their new proposal.

e) How can we, the public, ever have confidence in planning decisions when developers, having agreed to conditions/obligations in order to secure approval of their proposal, are permitted to then have those conditions/obligations removed or otherwise nullified? The answer is 'we can't' or so it increasingly seems in this part of the country. In this case for example, the developer will have (or should have - and if they did not then it is their fault and they should bear the cost) allowed for a variety of contingencies in respect of the risks involved in the development and made plans accordingly. What has happened, taking what SEGRO and National Rail have said at face value, is one such risk and the cost of it coming to pass should be born by them and not the local community/environment. In short, SEGRO were or should have been fully aware of the risks of such a delay and they alone should be made to live with the consequences to their 'bottom line'. That is the risk they, as developers, take and they should be held to that.

Accordingly I strongly oppose their proposed amendment and, instead, believe that you should ensure that the original DCO is complied with in full. If SEGRO is allowed this amendment it will also further undermine the confidence the community has in the integrity of the Planning System, an outcome I for one fear.

I would also urge you to require updated traffic surveys and analysis given the length of time since the original ones were undertaken, PLUS an unequivocal statement from National Rail regarding the **current** ability (capacity) of the West Coast Mainline to accommodate the suggested tonnage etc. envisaged by SEGRO and its partners as I am led to believe that many in the industry have concerns about this aspect - concerns that fuel the cynicism with which many view SEGRO's intentions regarding the rail freight element of the development and the likelihood of it being achieved within the next 10 years.

Kindest regards

Alex Lohman

