

From: [Save Towcester Now](#)
To: [Northampton Gateway](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Project – Non-Material Change TR050006 - Response from Save Towcester Now
Date: 26 September 2022 18:33:49

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From
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Save Towcester Now represents more than 1,000 residents and has over 3,900 signatures to a petition to protect this area from unsuitable and inappropriate warehouse development. We wish to extend our opposition to the proposed amendment requested by SEGRO to the original Development Consent Order granted in October 2019 for the Northampton Gateway.

This new proposal from SEGRO breaches the National Policy Statement for National Networks, the national Strategic Rail Freight Interchange policy and the DCO granted for the Northampton Gateway. At the time the application was original approved the clear intention and statement was for “a rail terminal capable of handling at least four inter-modal trains per day” it also stated that it “must be constructed and available for use BEFORE THE OCCUPATION OF THE WAREHOUSING” and that it “SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED ANY COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY UNTIL THE RAIL CONNECTION WAS OPERATIONAL”. This new amendment would permit up to 80% of the site (i.e. the vast majority) to be up and running **before** any rail connection, and therefore road serviced only, with the very real risk that the site could operate in perpetuity on that basis.

Save Towcester Now strongly objects to the SEGRO proposal being considered as a non-material amendment, when it is clearly the opposite. The resultant increase in traffic/light/air and noise pollution on the whole area between the M1, Towcester, Stony Stratford and the surrounding villages would be acute and intolerable. The stress on the strategic road network – the A43/A5 and particularly the Tove roundabout (which has already received pinch point funding and yet continues to be congested) – will have regional and national economic repercussions. The M1 is often closed or slow moving, which has a knock-on effect on all the surrounding roads with the local villages being used as rat-runs to avoid those blockages. National Highways will confirm there is an existing and pressing problem with traffic congestion in Towcester centre and to allow this change to go ahead would only make that situation worse.

In the same way as the traffic modelling for the AL1-4 developments on the A43/A5 is out of date, so too are the traffic surveys and analysis for this application which were compiled in 2019 and based on the premise of a rail head terminal. We therefore request that updated traffic/noise and pollution data is gathered as part of the DCO amendment in advance of any

decision being made on this application.

SEGRO have always been fully aware of the building constraints of this project from the outset yet it appears they are cynically seeking to change from a speculative build to a contract build operation, entirely for their own financial benefit. We know they have been marketing the units this year, with proposed occupation from Q4, which is both misleading and contradicts the original DCO.

We therefore request your support to oppose this amendment and ensure that the original DCO is enforced and fully complied with. A dangerous precedent would be set if SEGRO is allowed to retrospectively change the terms of their planning consent which would green-light other developers to disregard previous commitments, side-step local planning and breach national government policy. SEGRO was originally granted planning permission for this site on the basis that it was a strategic project, being a rail freight interchange – please ensure that remains the case.

Thank you for your consideration of the above.

Yours faithfully

Save Towcester Now