

Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited

HINCKLEY NATIONAL RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Chapter 6:

EIA scope and general methodology

January 2022

This document forms a part of a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) for the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange project.

A PEIR presents environmental information to assist consultees to form an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of a proposed development and provide feedback.

This PEIR has been prepared by the project promoter, Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited. The Proposed Development is described in Chapter 3 of the PEIR and is the subject of a public consultation running from 12 January to 9 March 2022.

Details of how to respond to the public consultation are provided at the end of Chapter 1 of the PEIR and on the project website:

<http://www.hinckleynrfi.co.uk/>

This feedback will be taken into account by Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited in the preparation of its application for a Development Consent Order for the project.

Chapter 6 ◆ EIA scope and general methodology

INTRODUCTION

- 6.1. This chapter explains how the scope of the EIA has been determined and then sets out the general methodology for the assessment. Further topic-specific explanations of the assessment methodology are provided in later chapters of this PEIR. This chapter ends with an outline of the proposed structure of the ES that will accompany the DCO application for the HNRFI.

THE SCOPE OF THE EIA

Geographic scope

- 6.2. The geographical coverage of an EIA is defined by the area of land that may be affected by the development, the nature of the current environmental conditions and the manner in which environmental effects are likely to be generated. Whereas land within the boundary of a development site – in this case defined by the draft Order Limits shown in figures 1.1 and 1.2 of this PEIR – forms a focus of the assessment, the influence of many predicted environmental effects can extend beyond the immediate Project Site boundary. Where identified and relevant, these effects are also being assessed as part of the EIA for the project. Wider study areas relevant to individual EIA topics are defined in the chapters that follow.
- 6.3. The geographical extent of the EIA also takes into account the potential implications of related and unrelated development activities. The potential cumulative effects of the Proposed Development in association with other developments during construction and in operation are taken into account in individual PEIR chapters and in Chapter 19: *Cumulative, in-combination and transboundary effects*.

Temporal scope

- 6.4. The envisaged construction phasing for the HNRFI is outlined in Chapter 3: *Project description* of this PEIR.
- 6.5. The preliminary assessments presented in this PEIR are based, largely, on the comparison of anticipated environmental effects with current or recent baseline environmental conditions. This is with the exception of topics such as transport and traffic, air quality, and landscape and visual effects, which factor in future baseline changes into assessments in defined future year impact scenarios. These approaches are explained in further detail in the relevant chapters.

Technical scope

- 6.6. In order to ascertain the technical scope of the EIA, a scoping process has twice been

undertaken. Chapter 1: *Introduction* of this PEIR explains that TSH applied originally to the Secretary of State for an opinion on the scope of the EIA in March 2018, with the Secretary of State’s EIA Scoping Opinion being published the following month.

6.7. As Chapter 1 of this PEIR explains, subsequent assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development on road traffic indicated that the scope of the EIA needed to be extended. In particular, transport modelling suggested that the proposed upgrade of M69 Junction 2 would change patterns of existing non-HNRFI-related road traffic in the locality, creating new routes on the local road network with consequential environmental effects. In response TSH requested an updated EIA scoping opinion from the Secretary of State, submitting an updated EIA scoping report on 12 November 2020. A new EIA scoping opinion was adopted by the Secretary of State on 22 December 2020 (‘the 2020 Scoping Opinion’).

6.8. The 2020 Scoping Opinion took into account responses from the following consultees.

- Aston Flamville Parish Council
- Blaby District Council
- Burbage Parish Council
- Cadent Gas Limited
- Earl Shilton Town Council
- Elmesthorpe Parish Council
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Harborough District Council
- Health and Safety Executive
- Highways England
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
- Historic England
- Leicestershire County Council
- Natural England
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Public Health England
- Royal Mail Group Limited
- Sapcote Parish Council
- Sharnford Parish Council
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- SP Energy Networks
- Stoney Stanton Parish Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Wigston Parva Parish Council

6.9. Paragraph 3.3.4 of the 2020 Scoping Opinion notes the Applicant’s intention to consult relevant statutory consultees to inform and agree the ES methodology. The outcomes of this dialogue and the Applicant’s response are explained in the topic-based chapters of

this PEIR.

- 6.10. Paragraph 3.3.9 of the 2020 Scoping Opinion advises that an ES should contain the timescales upon which the surveys which underpin the technical assessments have been based. Survey work for the HNRFI project is in progress but the dates of the survey work on which the preliminary environmental information in this report is based are identified in the topic-based chapters of this PEIR.
- 6.11. Paragraph 3.3.9 of the 2020 Scoping Opinion states that an ES should include details of difficulties (for example technical deficiencies or lack of knowledge) encountered compiling the required information and the main uncertainties involved. Difficulties encountered to date are identified in the topic-based chapters of this PEIR.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

EIA methodology

- 6.12. The ES will explain the Applicant's approach to EIA, including scoping, the collection of baseline environmental data, consultations, an assessment of likely significant environmental effects, the identification of mitigating measures, and the assessment of residual effects. The ES will identify the methods used for the collection of data and the identification and assessment of likely significant environmental effects. Any assumptions made will be clearly identified.
- 6.13. The detailed methodology employed for the assessment of individual environmental topics is explained at the beginning of the chapters that follow. These methodologies have the following activities in common:
- establishing the existing 'baseline conditions' – in other words the existing status of the HNRFI Site and surroundings and their environmental characteristics;
 - consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees throughout the application process – including this PEIR;
 - consideration of relevant local, regional and national planning policies, guidelines and legislation relevant to EIA and to the topic;
 - consideration of technical standards for the development of significance criteria;
 - review of secondary information, previous environmental studies and publicly available information and databases;
 - physical surveys and monitoring;
 - desk-top studies;

- computer modelling;
- professional judgement.

6.14. Environmental effects will be considered on the basis of their magnitude, duration and reversibility.

Significance criteria

- 6.15. The significance of environmental effects arising from the construction and operation of the HNRFI, and associated infrastructure will be reported in the ES with the assistance of a series of standard matrices. The matrices will describe the sensitivity of receptors that have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development and the magnitude of any effects that are likely to arise. The magnitude of effect and sensitivity of receptors will be cross referenced to give an overall significance of effect for any potential impact. Where it is not possible to quantify effects, qualitative assessments will be carried out, based on available knowledge and professional judgement.
- 6.16. The assessments will generally follow the structure and use the terminology outlined in Tables 6.1 – 6.3 overleaf, which have been used in this PEIR. Each of the following chapters of this PEIR explains how significance criteria and thresholds have been applied for the environmental topic under consideration. In a limited number of cases, significance criteria might need to differ depending on the conditions encountered at the HNRFI Site.
- 6.17. Potential mitigation measures will include embedded mitigation through design or standard control measures, which would be used to produce an initial assessment of effects, and any further specific mitigation that would be taken into account to produce an assessment of residual effects. These measures will be described in the ES, with provisions to ensure their implementation is included in the draft DCO.
- 6.18. Having regard to the character and location of the Proposed Development and in accordance with Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations 2017, the assessment will take into account:
- (a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
 - (b) the nature of the impact;
 - (c) the transboundary nature of the impact (see below);
 - (d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;
 - (e) the probability of the impact;
 - (f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
 - (g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development (see below);
 - (h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

6.19. The assessment will include consideration of the interaction between environmental factors assessed, including population and human health; biodiversity; land, soil, water, air and climate; and material assets, cultural heritage and landscape.

Table 6.1: The measurement of environmental effects - receptor sensitivity

Sensitivity	Example
Very High	Internationally designated site (e.g. Ramsar / SPA / World Heritage).
High	Nationally designated site (e.g. SSSI) / designated Landscape (e.g. NP) / principal aquifer / main watercourse / human health.
Medium	Regionally designated ecology / heritage site / secondary aquifer / minor watercourse.
Low (or lower)	Locally designated ecology / heritage site; area of hardstanding / brownfield land / industrial site / site of low ecological value.
Negligible	No sensitivity to change.

Table 6.2: The measurement of environmental effects – magnitude of impact

Magnitude		Example
Major	Adverse	A permanent or long-term adverse impact on the integrity and value of an environmental attribute or receptor.
	Beneficial	Large scale or major improvement of resource quality; extensive restoration or enhancement; major improvement of attribute quality.
Moderate	Adverse	An adverse impact on the integrity and/or value of an environmental attribute or receptor, but recovery is possible in the medium term and no permanent impacts are predicted.
	Beneficial	Benefit to, or addition of, key characteristics, features, or elements or improvement of attribute quality.
Minor	Adverse	An adverse impact on the value of an environmental attribute or receptor, but recovery is expected in the short-term and there would be no impact on its integrity.
	Beneficial	Minor benefit to, or addition of key characteristics, features or elements; some beneficial impact on attribute or a reduction in the risk of a negative impact occurring.
Negligible	Adverse	Very minor loss.
	Beneficial	Very minor benefit.
No change		No change would be perceptible either positive or negative.

Table 6.3: The measurement of environmental effects – significance of effect

		Magnitude of impact				
		No change	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major
Receptor Sensitivity	Very high	Neutral	Slight	Moderate	Large	Very large
	High	Neutral	Slight	Moderate	Large	Large
	Medium	Neutral	Slight	Slight	Moderate	Large
	Low	Neutral	Slight	Slight	Slight	Moderate
	Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Study areas

6.20. Given the scale of the Proposed Development and the diverse nature of the environmental effects being assessed, it is not possible to define a single standard study area for all environmental topics considered. Instead, appropriate study areas have been defined and justified in the respective topic-based chapters of this PEIR, where relevant, based on recognised topic-specific guidance.

IN-COMBINATION AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

6.21. Schedule 4(5)(e) of the EIA Regulations 2017 requires the EIA to take into account the ‘*cumulation of effects with other existing and / or approved projects taking into account any existing environmental problem relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources*’.

6.22. Schedule 4(5) of the Regulations requires also that:

‘The description of the likely significant effects on the factors specified in regulation 5(2) should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development.’

Methodology for cumulative assessment

6.23. The Planning Inspectorate’s Advice Note 9: *Using the Rochdale Envelope* (version 3, July 2018) states that:

‘The potential cumulative impacts with other major developments will also need to be carefully identified such that the likely significant effects can be shown to have been identified and assessed against the baseline position (which would include built and operational development). In assessing cumulative impacts, other major development should be identified through consultation with the local planning authorities and other relevant authorities. Applicants should have regard to the staged approach to cumulative effects assessment set out in Planning Inspectorate’s Advice Note Seventeen: Cumulative Effects Assessment’.

- 6.24. The Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 17: *Cumulative Effects Assessment* (version 2, August 2019) provides a four-stage approach to Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA). This staged CEA process has been followed to identify a 'long list' and then to establish the 'short-list' of developments for the CEA in order to ensure that it is appropriately focussed and proportionate. Using the guidance provided, developments have been identified by reference to local knowledge, published information and consultation with local planning authorities in the area.
- 6.25. Prior to submission of the DCO application, this process and list of projects will be reviewed as part of the iterative nature of CEA, as part of the EIA. The EIA will consider the cumulative effects of the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.
- 6.26. This PEIR also considers the interrelationships between different aspects of the Proposed Development (also termed in-combination or synergistic effects). This is where receptors experience multiple potentially non-significant effects that might collectively become significant. These will be considered through a matrix-based approach.
- 6.27. The outputs from the CEA and interrelationship assessments identified to date are described in Chapter 18 of this PEIR.