

London Colney Parish Council strongly object to the proposed Rail Freight Terminal Ref 5/2006/1680 on the following grounds:

### Green Belt

The depot would involve losing some 300 acres of designated Green Belt land in the area. The proposed use is contrary to St. Alban's Council's Plan, Policy 1 regarding issues surrounding Green Belt land and usage. The developers state that this development can be justified as being sited in the Green Belt under a 'special circumstance' clause in the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 2. The Parish Council dispute the assertion that special circumstances apply to this application for the following reasons. It is generally accepted that rail freight is viable only over longer distances 100 – 200 miles. We have assessed evidence from Network Rails Draft Strategy on Route Utilisation, which looks at the position up until 2015. The Draft Strategy indicates that the Midland main line is not considered to be a key freight route either now or in the future and is only specifically mentioned once in the entire document. It is not well connected cross-country to a major port or the main hub of freight traffic in the midlands. The proposed terminal does not compare with Daventry, which has been quoted for comparison in this regard. If anything the Midland main Line will be stretched to cope with the expected increase in passenger traffic alone over this period.

### Traffic

The developers state that the freight terminal itself will generate some 3000 lorry movements per 24 hours. The planned exit onto the A14 will mean at least half of the lorry traffic travelling south towards London Colney in order to join up with the M25 and A1. Added to this must be the vehicular movements of the 3000 workforce. Many of the employees (according to the developer's consultant) will not live locally as the rate of pay, likely to be at about the national minimum wage level would not give them financial access to housing in this area. Therefore we could predict another potential 6,000 traffic movements emanating from the site per day. Also, the proposed by-pass around Park Street will take the current lorry traffic from the industrial park straight onto the A14. The Parish Council is dismayed at the inevitable impact these increased traffic movements would have on the road network surrounding London Colney and on the London Colney roundabout. The traffic lights at the London Colney roundabout, only relatively recently installed after years of lobbying, would need to be readjusted to cope with the extra volume of traffic. This would result in longer waiting times for residents of London Colney wanting to exit the village and the inevitable tailback that would occur in London Colney High Street, a highly populated residential area.

### Environmental Impact

London Colney is a large community which already exists at the centre of major road networks and there are plans to widen the M25 within fifteen years. At certain times following accidents, bad weather or during maintenance traffic becomes virtually static and can quickly overload secondary routes in the area. This development would further harm our environment, as it would increase the level of noise and air pollution caused by extra vehicular movements and congestion on already busy roads. The prevailing air stream is from the southwest which means that the village would be particularly affected.

London Colney Parish Council is not convinced that the rail element of this proposal will bring environmental relief and is **merely a sideshow to what is basically a road operation.**