

**Comments of CPRE Warwickshire Concerning Washwood Heath (EXAM 137 - 139)**

**Birmingham Development Plan - HS2 / Washwood Heath Update**

Thank you for the new information about the proposed HS2 Rolling Stock Depot at Washwood Heath.

CPRE Warwickshire supports the revised AXA Real Estate proposal for the Washwood Heath Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot, as set out in the AXA Real Estate letter to the House of Commons HS2 Bill Select Committee dated 10 December 2014.

As it happens, CPRE Warwickshire is due to appear before the HS2 Bill Select Committee on Monday 9 March. The statement of evidence is attached. Please see section 1 of the summary and Section 1 of the statement (on page 2). The AXA Real Estate letter of 10 December 2014 (EXAM.139 in the Examination document list) has been submitted by CPRE Warwickshire as a supporting exhibit.

The most relevant section of our evidence to the Select Committee is 1.3-1.4:

1.3 In the original draft Birmingham Development Plan (Dec 2010) the Peddimore area was not proposed for development and was to stay in the Green Belt. The Washwood Heath area was seen as the city's main location for new employment development. However, after HS2 Ltd proposed the Washwood Heath location for the RSMD, the City Council agreed to this and published a revised Development Plan with Peddimore proposed for employment use. This Plan has been subject to Examination but no decision has been reached. ?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" /

1.4 If the depot is redesigned and reduced in landtake, as now proposed by Axa Real Estate (see Axa Letter to Chairman of Committee 10 Dec 2014) it is possible that this consequential effect of HS2 will be removed. Axa state that 33 ha of land out of the original 55 ha can be developed for industry as planned in 2010. This may be sufficient to remove the threat to Peddimore; it should be noted that the Birmingham Development Plan proposes only 40 ha of B2 industrial development at Peddimore, of the type that would have been located at Washwood Heath in the absence of the RSMD. The other 40ha is to be B8 warehousing, which appears to be included to make the overall 80ha site and the B2 uses profitable.

May we add that the land that would become immediately available for B2 employment use if the AXA Real Estate alternative is accepted is stated to be 29 ha. The AXA covering letter states that the total land available under their proposals will be 33 ha. Our reading of the drawing (Pell Frischmann Dwg K26183-SK-015, November 2014) is that the other 4 ha will become available when the RSMD is constructed, being land to the south of the 'Depot Boundary'.

CPRE Warwickshire submits that

- Under the new Washwood Heath proposals, 29 ha becomes available now, and 33 ha in total. This is 72.5% of the size of the 40 ha proposed for B1/B2 uses at Peddimore under Birmingham Development Plan Policy GA6. (Only 40 ha of the overall 80 ha at Peddimore would be B1/B2; the rest can be B8

warehousing and distribution.) In due course a further 4 ha of land for B2 employment use would be available, bringing the total to the equivalent of 82.5% of the 40 ha at Peddimore. In addition there are the jobs that would (eventually) be provided at the RSMD.

- There is no case for the remaining 7-11 ha to be so essential as to amount to 'exceptional circumstances' which would justify removing land from the Green belt at Peddimore. 7-11 ha of employment land may become available through other means during the Plan period.
- The suggestion by developers that land is needed beyond that allocated for Peddimore is unproven and long term. If the large part of the Washwood Heath location that AXA propose is released, the Peddimore allocation and policy should be removed from the Plan.

The response by HS2 Ltd to AXA Real Estate's proposal has not yet been issued. There has been no response to our evidence yet. However, HS2 Ltd may offer some information on its position in response to CPRE Warwickshire's evidence, when it responds to us as Petitioners. (A Transcript will be available of the Committee session, in due course.)

Yours sincerely

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for CPRE Warwickshire