

Planning Policy and Projects

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Christine Symes

Department for Communities and Local Government

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November 9th 2011

Dear Madam,

Appeal by Helioslough Ltd

**Land in and Around Former Aerodrome, North Orbital Road, Upper Colne Valley,
Hertfordshire**

Application REF 5/09/07/08

Thank you for sending me the representations from interested parties relating to the Court Order quashing the decision of the Secretary of State with regard to the above application.

I do not wish to comment upon all of the additional information that has been submitted, much of which does not appear to be relevant to the outstanding issues relating to this application.

I would, however, like to take the opportunity to respond to St Albans City & District Council's suggestion in the penultimate paragraph of its letter that there are "*errors of judgement apparent in the reasoning*" behind Slough Borough Council's decision to refuse permission for SIFE.

This assertion appears to be based upon paragraph 8.5 of the report by Steer Davies Gleave that the statements in the Committee report that "*SIFE will not be able to serve the Great Western Mainline in a westerly direction*" and that "*all trains using SIFE will have to pass through London*" are wrong.

Whilst it may be technically possible for trains from the west to use the planned inter track loop to reverse, or alternatively proceed to Acton to reverse, both of these would be convoluted movement for trains coming the short distance from Southampton and take up two train paths on the second busiest freight corridor into London.

As a result Goodman have made it clear in their application that "*it is not envisaged that train services would originate or depart to the west of SIFE.*" (para 6.11 "Need Case and Site Operation Document).

The planning application for SIFE has therefore been prepared, considered and determined on this basis.

I do not consider this to be material to the Secretary of State's determination of the application and do not consider that there is a need to re open the Inquiry to consider this or any other issue.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'P' and 'S' joined together, followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Paul Stimpson
Head of Planning Policy and Projects