Welcome Consulting the community



Welcome to this public exhibition for Rail Central, a proposed new strategic rail freight interchange (SRFI) in Northamptonshire.

Rail Central would be a major new logistics and distribution hub – the proposed site is where the West Coast Main Line meets the Northampton Loop Line alongside the A43 and near the M1. The project is being brought forward by Ashfield Land, an experienced property development company with a strong track record.

Rail Central is considered to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.

Around this time next year, we intend to submit our final plans to the Planning Inspectorate, the government body responsible for NSIPs. The Planning Inspectorate will examine the proposals and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State who will make the final decision. Consultation is taking place over the coming months and we look forward to discussing the plans with local residents and other interested parties.

Further information on the project and the planning process is provided in these exhibition panels.



WHY ARE WE CONSULTING?

Consultation is a key part of the design and planning process.

Through the comprehensive consultation that we're carrying out, the local community and other interested parties will all have the opportunity to learn more about the draft plans, ask questions and give their views.

All feedback will be recorded and considered, along with technical matters, before the plans are finalised and the Development Consent Order (DCO) application is submitted. restoration and landscaping, habitats, mitigation and other relevant issues.

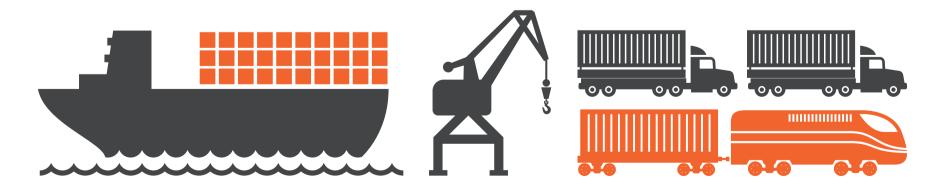
At the exhibitions, members of the full project team are available to answer questions and explain the proposals. Questions can also be asked via email and post.

Comments and feedback need to be provided in writing – please use the feedback form.

This exhibition provides further information about the plans, their potential effects and the consenting process.

Ashfield Land is also consulting on preliminary environmental information which explains the proposed approach to land Comments will be considered and recorded within the Consultation Report that will form part of the application submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

Thank you for visiting this exhibition – we hope you will find it helpful in explaining the proposals and how consultation can contribute to the scheme.



What is a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI)?



A SRFI is a major rail freight interchange with distribution buildings integrated into the design and operations. The development must be of a certain scale and have the right capabilities to technically be a SRFI, including connections to both strategic rail and road networks.

"A Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) is a large multi-purpose rail freight interchange and distribution centre linked into both the rail and trunk road system. It has rail-connected warehousing and container handling facilities and may also include manufacturing and processing activities."

National Planning Statement for National Networks (NPS NN), 2014



The purpose of a SRFI is to enable freight to be transferred between transport modes (road and rail), encouraging long-distance freight to use railways rather than roads and delivering important local, regional and national benefits, including:

- Reducing congestion on roads by using rail for the majority of its journey
- Reducing carbon emissions and helping to protect the environment and meet climate targets
- Creating new jobs and boosting the economy

National need

Moving goods and products around the country effectively and efficiently is crucial for the economy, for competitiveness, and for the environment.

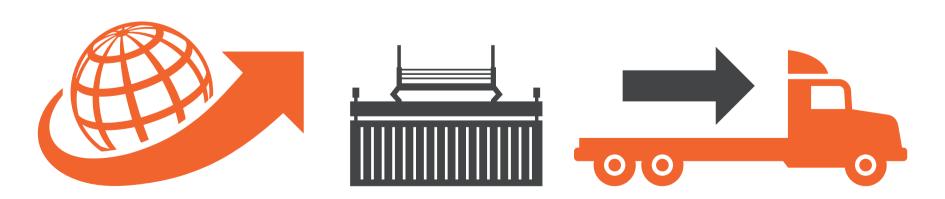
Connecting manufacturers and suppliers to consumers quickly, safely and sustainably makes a big difference and is something the Government is encouraging through its planning policies (ie the National Policy Statement on National Networks). Using rail to transport a greater percentage of UK freight is at the heart of the Government's vision for overall freight distribution. This means building more capacity and better facilities to encourage a shift from roadbased logistics to seeing more freight travelling on the national railway network. In response to this national drive towards increased freight on rail, proposals for Rail Central are being brought forward.

The case for SRFIs is established in government policy:

"The Government has concluded that there is a compelling need for an expanded network of SRFIs. It is important that SRFIs are located near the business markets they will serve – major urban centres, or groups of centres – and are linked to key supply chain routes. Given the locational requirements and the need for effective connections for both rail and road, the number of locations suitable for SRFIs will be limited, which will restrict the scope for developers to identify viable alternative sites."

Northamptonshire is the UK's centre for logistics – it is strategically located in the middle of the UK and directly connected to the strategic road and rail networks.

Section 2.56, NPS NN, December 2014

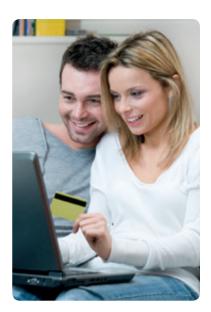


SRFIs: How they work – buildings



The aim of an SRFI is to make best use of rail in the freight journey by maximising rail trunk haul and minimising some elements of the secondary distribution leg by road through co-location of other distribution and freight activities. SRFIs are a key element in reducing the cost to users of moving freight by rail and therefore important in facilitating the transfer of freight from road to rail.

> Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Policy Guidance, Department for Transport, 2011



All the things that we purchase for home or business reach us by complicated "supply chains" connecting suppliers with stores and consumers. This generates a significant amount of freight traffic - around 1.5 billion tonnes per annum in Great Britain.



The links in these supply chains may also span the entire globe, with many of these goods arriving at our ports in containers – over 2 million in 2012, carrying over 30 million tonnes of goods.

In order for these supply chains to continue to deal with an ever-growing

SRFIs provide another key link in the supply chain, hubs from which various "spokes" extend by road and rail to ports, Channel Tunnel and other SRFIs or RFIs. These hubs are home to a variety of companies and their warehouses, bringing together significant volumes of freight activity in one place – important for making high-volume rail freight services as effective as possible, given each freight train can move the equivalent of up to 40 lorry loads.

The companies on site therefore benefit from being close to motorways and main lines, improving access and keeping delivery costs down. The rail freight interchange facilities can also be used by other companies located in the surrounding area.



population and product ranges, the "logistics" industry needs more warehousing to store the goods, and more transport services to move these goods to and from the warehouses.

The vast majority of goods are moved by road in lorries, but over the last 20 years a growing number of companies have been making use of rail instead to undertake the long-distance haul, leaving road haulage to make the relatively short-distance deliveries at each end.

However, in order for rail to respond to these growing demands, there need to be suitable locations where freight can be easily transferred between road and rail. This is where SRFIs come in. The Government supports the need for an expanded network of SRFIs, as at present there are only six such sites in England and Scotland, compared to hundreds of other warehousing and distribution sites which have no rail access at all.

If the demand for new warehousing and greater access to the rail network is to be satisfied, more SRFIs will need to be developed to service national and regional markets, in sites close to the strategic road and rail networks.

SRFIs: How function drives design







How do goods get transported through a SRFI?

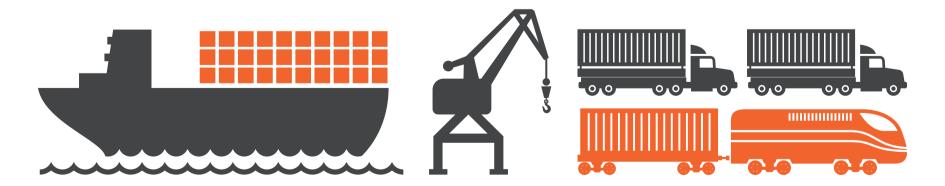
HERE ARE SOME INDICATIVE EXAMPLES OF HOW GOODS COULD MOVE THROUGH RAIL CENTRAL, BASED ON HOW EXISTING SRFI OPERATE ELSEWHERE:

- A train of containers arrives from a port, mainland Europe or even as far away as China, with goods destined for delivery across the whole of Great Britain, the containers are unloaded and the goods taken into the warehouses for storage and sorting into outbound deliveries
- 2. Some goods may come from railconnected factories elsewhere in Great Britain or mainland Europe, with trains of conventional wagons being taken directly into a warehouse for unloading
- 3. Goods bound for destinations outside the Midlands are then moved out by road or rail, with those to places further afield being able to move by rail, eg to Scotland or the South East

What facilities do SRFIs provide?

To deliver the scenarios opposite, the types of facilities which Rail Central would be expected to provide include:

- Warehousing, in a range of building sizes to suit market requirements – Some of these warehouses would have provision for direct rail siding access into or alongside the building if required by occupiers
- Direct connections onto the trunk road and main line rail networks – Rail Central is unique amongst SRFI in being accessible from two separate main line routes
- Rail sidings for berthing trains on site, Rail Central is being designed to cater for maximum-length (775m) trains;
- 4. Like a conveyor belt, trains are then reloaded with outbound containers and goods for their return journey, taking further long-distance lorries off the roads.
- Container handling Rail Central is being designed for use with electricallypowered overhead gantry cranes
- Servicing facilities for vehicles and drivers –these will enable drivers to take their statutory rest breaks whilst on site
- Associated infrastructure and development.



The site: A strategic location



The site covers approximately 250 hectares of land between Milton Malsor and Blisworth, south west of Northampton and bounded on three sides by strategic infrastructure in the form of the West Coast Main Line, the Northampton Loop Line and the A43.

The rationale for this location is driven by its strategic location and direct connections to key rail and road networks.

The proposed location for Rail Central combines three of the most important factors for SRFI operations:

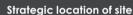
- 1. Direct connections to the national rail network – with Rail Central offering connections to both the Northampton Loop Line and the West Coast Main Line.
- 2. Direct connection to the strategic road network – with Rail Central offering direct access to the A43 dual carriageway within just two miles of the M1.
- 3. Central location within the UK Northamptonshire is the UK's centre of gravity for distribution / logistics, with excellent access to national and regional markets.

The strategic location of the site ensures it is particularly well located to deliver the objectives of government policy in terms of facilitating higher proportions of freight on rail and encouraging what's called 'modal shift' – which means moving more long-distance goods by rail rather than road within the overall UK transport network.



In addition to the key transport infrastructure and site location, which make this site suitable for SRFI use, the site also benefits from a number of other attributes including its topography (it is generally flat and provides a suitable footprint for the uses and form of development proposed).









Project evolution: Understanding the constraints and opportunities of the site



This plan summarises the way we've assessed the various constraints and opportunities across the site.

This provides the design cues for why we're proposing what we're showing on the draft plans – and they show the relationship between fixed infrastructure (ie the railway and road connections), natural features, and areas for potential development.

This assessment includes:

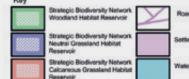
- Siteing of buildings relative to local communities and residential areas
- Rail access from Northampton Loop Line and West Coast Main Line
- Road access from the A43 and M1
- Natural features waterways, site terrain and landscape

By understanding these constraints and opportunities in detail, we're able to identify the type of development and scale and mass of development which may be suitable for the site. Importantly, we can also look at any mitigation that might be appropriate.

Key Constraints and Opportunities

- ·Views from local villages (particularly Milton Malsor to the north and Bilsworth to the south),
- ·Effect of the development on public footpaths that cross the site,
- ·Working with the existing local landscape character and green infrastructure,
- Existing vegetation pattern including wooded areas and field boundaries,
- Existing watercourses running across the site,
- Working with existing landform















Undulating Claylands -The Tove Catchment Key View in Towards Application Site



Application Boun

Local Character Area 138 Undulating Fields and Valley Bugbrooke and Daventry

Project evolution: Balancing national need and local impact



We have been carrying out local and technical assessments and engaging with stakeholders, technical consultees and landowners to help inform the development of draft plans.

Since late 2015, the Rail Central team has been engaging with local groups, elected representatives and the media through briefing meetings and telephone briefings, including with local MPs, economic bodies and parish councils. Activities have included:

- Environmental Scoping in December 2015, the Rail Central team published the Environmental Statement Scoping Report which explains the proposed approach to assessing and managing effects on the local environment. Issues considered included air quality, archaeology, biodiversity and socioeconomic impacts.
- Informal local consultation in January 2016, we posted a briefing leaflet to more than 2,500 local residents and businesses and, in February, set up the Local Liaison Group to facilitate our ongoing engagement with parish councils. This process has helped us to informally disseminate information to local communities, explain our approach and identify issues for further discussion and consideration.

 SoCC Consultation – in February to April 2016, Rail Central consulted South Northamptonshire District Council, Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council on the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC). This describes how Ashfield Land intends to consult with the local community and has been informed through feedback from the local councils.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

This project is subject to environmental impact assessment, which means that an environmental statement will be prepared setting out whether the project is likely to have significant environmental effects. Preliminary environmental information (PEI) has been produced which explains the proposed approach to assessing the environmental effects of the project.

BALANCING NATIONAL NEED WITH LOCAL IMPACT IS INHERENT WITHIN THE NSIP PLANNING PROCESS.

Rail Central is a large-scale SRFI in line with national need but it will be planned with full regard to the local setting and context.

To inform how we're approaching design so that we can achieve that important balance, we've completed a programme of initial environmental surveys and investigations. This is contained in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report.

We have looked at potential impacts on:

- Air quality
- Agriculture
- Archaeology and built heritage
- Ground conditions, drainage and flood risk
- Ecology
- Ongoing discussions with landowners
- Ongoing ground investigations and technical assessments to help inform the design process

Discussions have also taken place with:

- Network Rail to optimise main line arrangements for the initial phase of rail services
- Local councils South Northamptonshire Council and Northampton Borough Council
- Highways discussions with Highways England and Northamptonshire County Council
- Prospective operators and customers, such as Eddie Stobart and DHL.

- Noise and vibration
- Utilities
- Landscape and visual amenity
- Highways; and
- Socio-economics









Rail Central: In summary



The project is to construct a new Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI), a major new logistics and distribution hub with the potential to underpin Northamptonshire's position as the UK's premier location for logistics, to support the regional economy, and to deliver 8,000 new jobs.

The scheme would deliver:

- New links to the national road and rail networks
- Up to 8,000,000 sq ft of railserved logistics space with storage and distribution warehouses and ancillary office accommodation
- Additional offsite highway improvements
- Around 8,000 new jobs and investment in the local and regional economy

Other components of the scheme include:

- Vehicle and driver service
 facilities
- Potential for wider development, such as a new hotel and public house / restaurant, or training and innovation centre facilities, or a country park
- Associated access, ground works, highways, landscaping and other accompanying infrastructure work would also be provided.



"Northamptonshire is well located, at the crossroads of the national road and rail network and with strong international links"

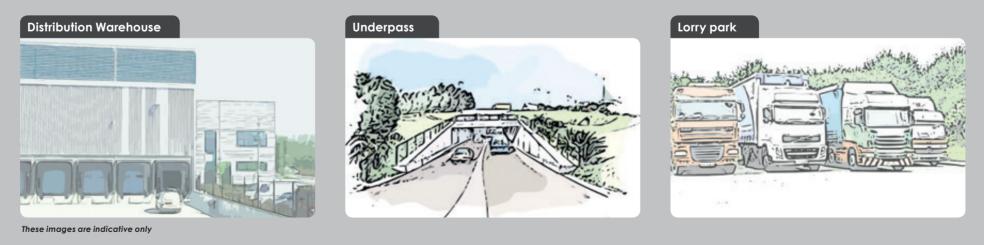
The Northamptonshire Road Freight Strategy, Northamptonshire County Council, December 2013 (page 11)

"..we will aim to increase the options available to freight companies when moving goods and encourage a shift to rail and water."

Northamptonshire Road Freight Strategy, Northamptonshire County Council, December 2013 (page 10)



ARTIST'S IMPRESSIONS



Wider development



We understand that the community will have concerns over the potential impacts which a scheme the size and scale of Rail Central may have, and will want to influence how we mitigate any potential impacts on the local community.

The area to the west of the A43 will provide for development which supports the main rail freight uses but, at the same time, has the potential to offer uses which might also benefit local communities. There is also the potential to accommodate natural features with public access into the north eastern part of the site by Milton Malsor. Feedback would be welcomed on any uses or new areas of public open space which might be of interest or value to you.

POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR WIDER DEVELOPMENT

- You may feel that additional investment in local skills is required in order to meet the future employment needs for Rail Central. You may have views on whether this need should be met by an onsite science / engineering training and innovation centre to encourage people to consider careers in engineering / logistics
- You may be concerned that there will be impacts on existing public rights of way or other community facilities, and feel that this should be mitigated by the creation of new footpaths or a new area of open space or a country park, or new community facilities
- A new hotel may be provided to meet the needs of Rail Central, and you may have views on how this could also reduce impacts on and offer benefits to the community by, for example, providing additional facilities for the local community.



These images are indicative only

We would welcome your views on how you think impacts could be mitigated. Please use your feedback form to let us know your thoughts.

Design and landscaping



We've carried out detailed technical assessments to help shape our draft plans. Through these assessments, we're building up a comprehensive understanding of the landscape of the site. Over the coming months we'll be developing this further and producing detailed designs for landscaping and boundary treatments. We have a draft landscape strategy and will have a comprehensive landscape design plan by the time we submit our DCO application next year.

Effective landscaping and boundary treatments will contribute to mitigating the visual effects of the scheme.

How we use land for landscaping; what we do with bunding, planting and screening; how we select tree and plant species, and how we use contours, trees and foliage can all make a difference.

Your comments and feedback can help to shape that landscape design plan. We would welcome your views to add to our understanding of the site and to feed into our proposals.



These images are indicative only

What landscaping and boundary treatments would you like to see? Do you have any other suggestions?

Illustrative landscape plan

- Earth profiling and associated woodland planting,
- Work with identified landscape character network and strategic biodiversity network,
- Divert watercourse and look to improve ecological value,
- Divert existing public rights of way and look to provide enhanced footpath connectivity
- Community led development of landscape buffer along edge of Milton Malsor



Landscape and visual effects



The landscape and visual assessment has identified features that may be sensitive to change, such as the character of the existing landscape and the existing visual amenity experienced at specific viewpoint locations, including views from residential properties. The main landscape aspects that have the potential to experience landscape change are:

- The loss of agricultural fields, hedgerow and trees within the site
- The landscape character of the site itself
- The surrounding landscape character.

The main views that may experience visual change are:

Residents of individual properties and footpaths in proximity to the site – the potential for closerange views of the proposed development will be considered, particularly from upper storey windows in properties, and also from publicly accessible routes such as Barn Lane.

Milton Malsor – Views within the southern extent of Milton Malsor, including residential properties and users of publicly accessible footpaths that enter the site, may experience relatively closerange views of the proposed development and the assessment will seek to identify opportunities to screen views.

Blisworth – Views from the eastern extent of Blisworth, specifically on Courteenhall Road and on publicly accessible routes that lead northwest from the village, have the potential to experience views of the proposed development. However, much of the village of Blisworth would not experience views of the proposed development due to screening by the intervening landform and vegetation cover.

Gayton – Eastern areas of the village may have elevated views of the site, though existing vegetation and the changing topographical levels mean that these are likely to be limited.

Grand Union Canal – Views of the site are likely to be limited as there is an existing strong hedgerow boundary. However, we are currently assessing this further and will seek to mitigate

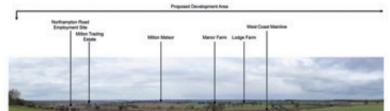
effects by providing extra planting where appropriate.

VP9 VP1 VP8 VP12 VP8 VP13 VP13 VP3 Bibinicitii VP3

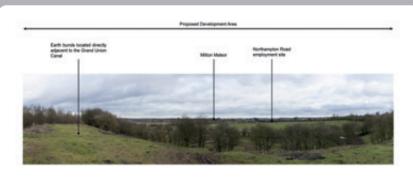
OUR APPROACH TO ASSESSING KEY VIEWS

The views below are some of these we have identified as representing important views. Where appropriate, we will create visualisations to illustrate how the completed development may affect existing views.



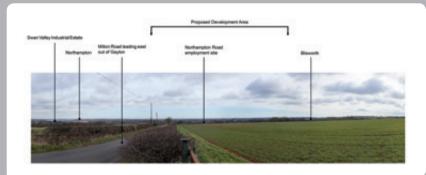


VP1: View from Barn Lane, Milton Malsor

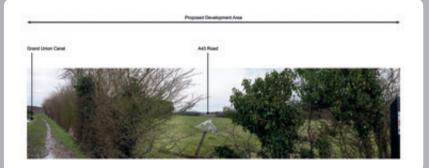


VP6: View from Footpath KX16 in the SW extent of the site

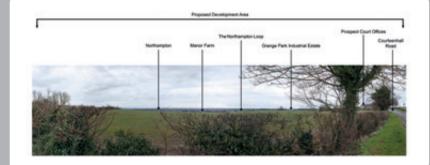
VP4: View from Footpath RD1, Blisworth



VP8: View from Milton Road, Gayton



VP12: View from the Grand Union Canal towpath



VP13: View from Courteenhall Road, Blisworth

Access and connectivity



The ultimate purpose of Rail Central is to respond to Government policy for shifting traffic from road to rail as well as to meet consumer demands for how goods and products are connected to all of us as customers. Overall, Rail Central will result in a net reduction of HGV movements on the UK strategic highway network.

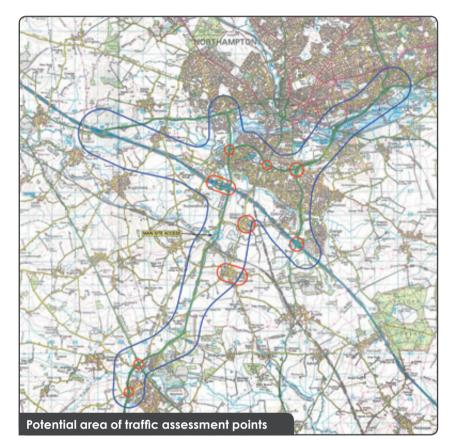
A NEW RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE

The scheme will take rail access from two points on the national network.

Connections both ways onto the Northampton Loop (used by existing freight trains passing through the area) will handle most of the anticipated rail freight services calling at the site, via a new intermodal terminal sited close to the main line, with sidings and handling equipment to enable fast transfer of containers between trains and road vehicles, or for intermediate storage on site. Secure parking will be provided for HGVs arriving at the interchange, together with ancillary facilities for drivers and vehicles, in amenity, administration, servicing and workshop buildings. Rail access will also be provided to up to three of the larger warehouses on site, the access arrangements determined by the warehouse occupiers.

Additional connections into the West Coast Main Line would provide scope for a "layby" loop and platform, for use by a smaller number of express freight services calling at the site, to enable fast transfer of time-sensitive freight between rail and road vehicles, the smaller and lighter express trains being able to leave and join the main line at faster speeds than intermodal or conventional freight train services.



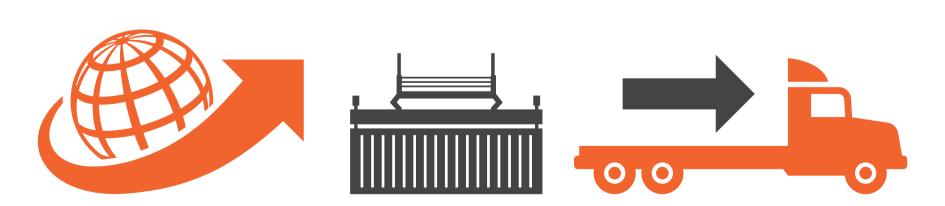


TRAFFIC MODELLING

In liaison with Highways England and Northamptonshire County Council we are in the process of undertaking traffic modelling to assess what impact Rail Central will have and what mitigation may be necessary. This will form part of our DCO submission.

To date, we have carried out initial assessments at a number of key junctions and are working with Highways England and Northamptonshire County Council to help inform our understanding of the potential traffic impact.

Rail Central has the potential to create around 8,000 new jobs. Making sure that employees can get to and from the site will be another crucial part of the overall strategy for transport and access.



Transportation and highways



Our proposals include:

 An underpass at Northampton Road.

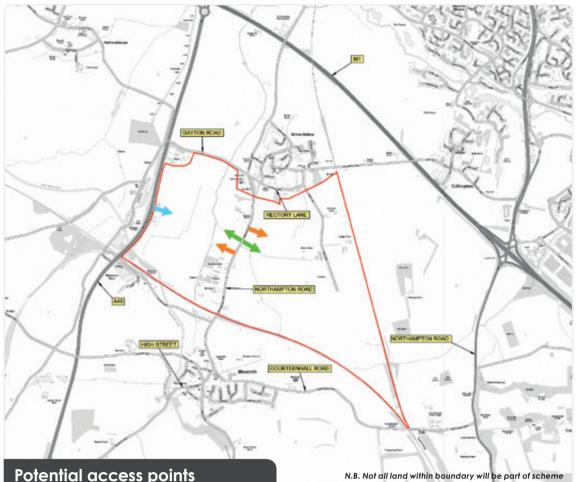
This will provide a road link between both parts of the scheme. This is designed to prevent HGVs using Northampton Road and passing through nearby villages (except in an emergency).

 New pedestrian and cycle entry points on Northampton Road. Existing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists will be enhanced on the local road network to encourage locally-based employees to travel without using a car.

 New bus stops on Northampton Road. It is anticipated that bus service frequencies and routes would be enhanced to connect the scheme. A new private shuttle bus is also planned to connect the warehouse units on the site with the bus stops on Northampton Road.

HIGHWAYS UPGRADES

HGVs and staff coming to and from the site need to access it easily, safely and efficiently - so we are considering various potential highways upgrades including to:



Potential access points

Appropriate parking will be provided, whilst also reflecting the need to encourage sustainable travel. As the plans progress, we will also develop a detailed travel plan explaining our approach towards encouraging sustainable travel.

This could include a number of initiatives such as:

- Investing in the local bus network
- Establishing strong cycle connections
- Upgrading local footpaths to the site

ROAD ACCESS

Road access to the site will be taken from a new junction on the A43.

This will provide access to a central spine road which will serve the entire site. There is also the potential for a secondary vehicle access on Northampton Road, the use of which would be restricted.

Proposed new junction with A43

- A new junction with the A43
- M1 Junction 15A
- M1 Junction 15
- A45 Queen Eleanor roundabout
- A5076/Towcester Road roundabout
- A5076/A5123 roundabout

A lorry park facility will be provided which will remove the potential for drivers to park on the wider local highway network if arriving at the site early.



Transportation and highways

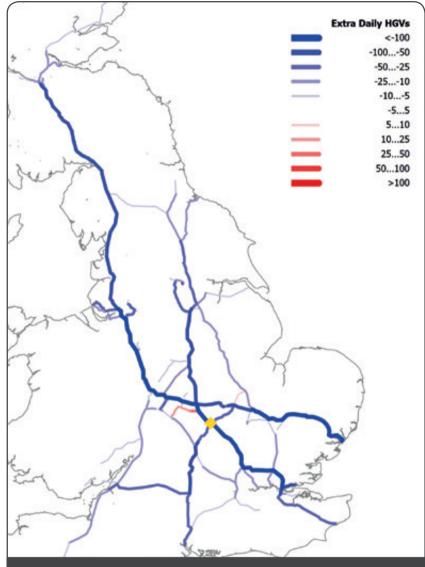


MANAGING HGV MOVEMENTS

Various measures will be explored to help manage HGV movements and minimise disruption. With agreement from Highways England and Northamptonshire County Council, such measures could include:

- Variable Message Signs to advise drivers of any incidents and alternative routes
- Vehicle booking systems HGV deliveries allocated with time slots
- Smart GPS tracking systems advising HGV drivers of any delays and alternative routes
- Integrated Fleets route optimisation to minimise empty running of HGVs
- On-site lorry park and truck stop with ancillary facilities available

Further traffic management measures such as 20mph zones, weight restrictions and controlled parking in local villages will also be investigated (in discussion with local parish councils).



Projected change to HGV movements

CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC

Construction traffic impacts will also be examined in detail – with reference to site phasing – and a detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will prescribe routes and delivery time restrictions to help minimise disruption. There is also the potential to use rail connections for construction deliveries. What views or ideas do you have on local transport improvements?

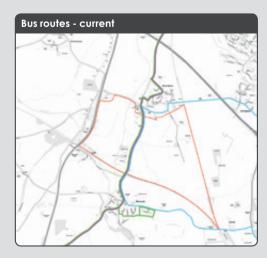
Are there any sensitive routes HGVs should avoid during construction and / or operation?

Please use your feedback form to let us know.

WALKING ROUTES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Several public rights of way cross the site and will need to be diverted. Options for the diverted routes are currently being considered, but any diverted routes would be provided to a high standard and set within the landscaped areas of the development. If you have any comments on diversion of public rights of way please let us know in the feedback forms. The potential to extend or supplement the current bus services will also be examined further.









The NSIP planning process



Rail Central is defined as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ('NSIP') under the Planning Act 2008 due to its scale and components.

This means that an application will need to be submitted for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate (PINs). Once it has received the application, PINs will examine the plans and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will then make the final decision on whether consent should be granted or refused. The process is governed by legislation, which specifies set timescales for the examination and determination of the application.

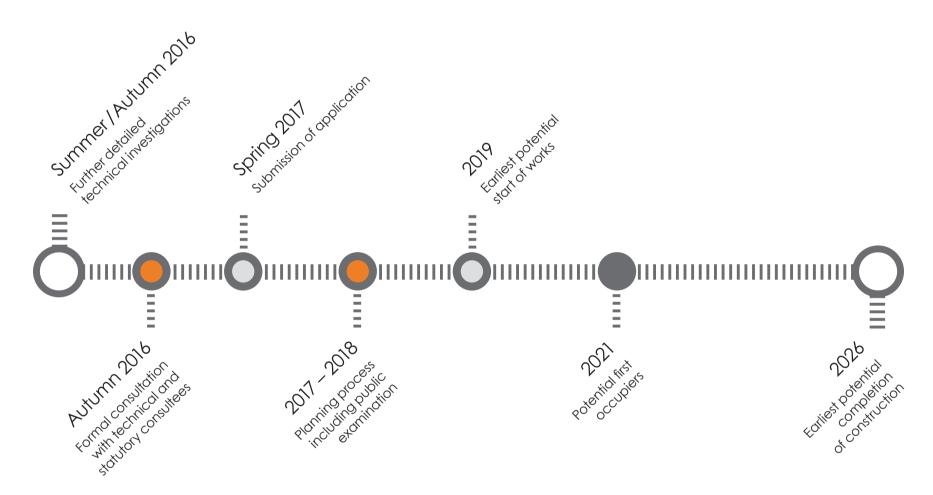
Local communities, councils and others with an interest in the project have an important role to play in contributing to the development of the plans before the application is submitted.







WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Thank you for visiting this exhibition.

Consultation is an important part of the planning process and provides a valuable opportunity to understand local views and have regard to them in the design and planning process.

Please provide your comments and feedback using a feedback form. These are available at this public exhibition. Feedback can also be provided by email and Freepost using the project contact details.

Please provide all feedback by 30 September 2016.

All consultation feedback will be considered by the project team as the proposals are taken forward.

Summaries of feedback will be included in the Consultation Report, which will be submitted with the application for development consent.



www.railcentral.com

railcentral@camargue.uk

0845 543 8967 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.30pm FREEPOST Rail Central There is further information on the planning process on the National Infrastructure Planning website at:

www. infrastructure. planning in spectorate.gov. uk