

Rail Central:

Technical information,
visualisations and plans



This document has been published for information following a request at a Local Liaison Group (LLG) meeting

Introduction

Rail Central is a proposed new strategic rail freight interchange (SRFI) in Northamptonshire.

It is located where the West Coast Main Line meets the Northampton Loop Line to the south west of Northampton.

In addition to the SRFI, the proposals include highway improvements to several junctions, with a major upgrade to J15A of the M1.

The DCO application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 21 September 2018. For full application details please visit: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

What is in this pack and what does it show?

At the Local Liaison Group (LLG) meeting held on 17 July 2018, members of the group – which includes representatives of parish councils – requested that further visual information be shared with the community related to the updated landscaping treatment and screening proposal between the Rail Central main site and local villages.

The purpose of this additional visual material is to enable a better understanding for how the increased landscaping bunding and screening would work. The photomontages show the result of enhanced mitigation following Rail Central's commitment to lowering proposed building heights and increasing landscape treatment in the northern part of the site in response to feedback.

This summary explains the plans, what they show, and how they display the changes made. The remainder of this pack is made up of plans and illustrations which show the specific designs and viewpoints.

Please note AOD refers to Above Ordnance Datum, which means above sea level.

Parameters, illustrative and landscape masterplans

As explained at the 17 July LLG meeting, we have split the proposed **Development Zone 3** into two separate zones (3a and 3b) and have **reduced the proposed maximum building height limit in Zone 3a by 3.5m** from 18.5m to 15m.

The proposed landscape bund, which would lie to the north of Zone 3a has been increased in height by 2m – from 92m to 94m AOD along the majority of its length with the section of the bund adjacent to the intermodal area remaining at 97m AOD.

In addition, the bund that is proposed to the north of Development Zone 1 has also been increased by 2m (from 85m to 87m AOD) and been extended by approximately 100m to the north.

The parameters, illustrative and landscape masterplans show these changes.

Cross sections

Page 6 shows a series of cross sections taken from the northern parts of the site.

These illustrate the changes proposed, including where building height reductions and increased landscaping bunding (denoted by orange in the plans) has further mitigated visual impact.

These cross sections show specific and significant improvements in visual screening of the development from Milton Malsor; this particularly concerns Rectory Lane (Section I-I and J-J), Collingtree Road (Section G-G) and Gayton Road (Section D-D).

The increase in the bund height will mean that the mitigation planting will provide a more effective screen in a quicker time than previously.

Updated draft photomontages

Also provided in this pack at pages 7 to 12 are updated draft photomontages from Barn Lane (viewpoint 1) and the public footpath near Towcester Road (viewpoint 17).

The two sets of photomontages illustrate how the enhanced mitigation has changed and improved the views towards the development at Year 1, Year 7 and Year 15. The benefits are shown by comparing visualisations before the decision was taken to enhance the screening (in response to feedback) with the new and enhanced mitigation and the adjusted designs.

The photomontages display how the enhanced mitigation at the northern end of the site has further screened the view towards the development, particularly as the planting establishes and matures.

All views are illustrative and Year 1 shows the scheme as if it were fully built out in the first year, which is hypothetical because of the intended phased construction programme (ie the visualisation shows a 'worst case scenario').

Viewpoint 1 shows the view of the development from Barn Lane and is illustrative of the views from Rectory Lane.

These photomontages show that the gantry cranes would not be seen from this specific viewpoint because they would be screened by the hedgerow and trees adjacent to Barn Lane.

Garden planting, roadside trees and hedgerows running along the length of Barn Lane would partially filter and screen the view of the intermodal area including the gantry cranes and container storage from other nearby views.

At these locations, the proposed new landscape bunds would restrict views of the lower portions of the gantry cranes and container storage area, including low level activities within the intermodal area itself, such as HGVs and cars moving around. However, we anticipate the higher parts of the most northern crane may be seen from properties on Rectory Lane in the early years of operation, before the mitigation planting has grown and become established.

What is contained within this pack?

- **Parameters masterplan** – this explains what we are seeking consent for. The final layout of the warehouses will be determined by market demand but will remain within the limits of this parameters plan;
- **Illustrative masterplan** – this explains the preferred layout of the warehouses, but will ultimately be determined by market demand;
- **Illustrative landscape masterplan** – this demonstrates one way in which required mitigation for the main site could be developed to include more than 100 ha of landscaped areas and pocket parks, including green corridors;
- **Cross sections** – these illustrate the changes made to reduce visual impact at the northern section of the site;
- **Photomontages** – these show views to the site (viewpoint 1 and 17) at Year 1, Year 7 and Year 15 before and after building height reductions and enhanced landscape treatment.

Parameters masterplan

The parameters masterplan is what we are seeking consent for and sets the boundaries and limits of the built areas. The final layout of buildings and warehouses within each zone will be determined by market demand.

The masterplan shows how changes have been made in response to feedback:

- Zone 3 has been split into Zone 3a and Zone 3b
- Including a commitment to lower building heights in Zone 3a (maximum of 15m instead of the previously proposed 18.5m)



Illustrative masterplan

This illustrative masterplan demonstrates one possible way of bringing forward the development proposals in accordance with the proposed parameters.



Illustrative landscape masterplan

This illustrative landscape masterplan shows the proposed range of updated landscaping, screening and bunding measured at the northern part of the site.

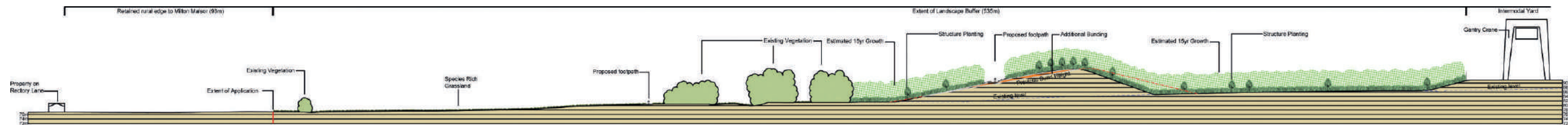
In response to the recent LLG discussion, this plan identifies the locations of the cross sections shown in the next section:

- Rectory Lane (I-I)
- Rectory Lane (J-J)
- Collingtree Road (G-G)
- Gayton Road (D-D)

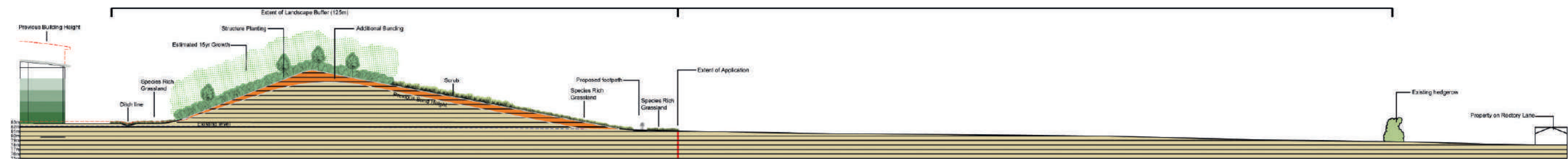


Cross sections

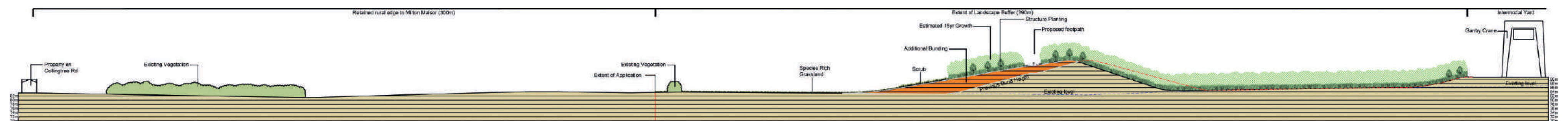
These cross sections show the enhancements to landscaping treatment and bunding (changes to bunding denoted by orange in the plans) at the northern end of the site. The cross sections correlate with the illustrative landscape masterplan.



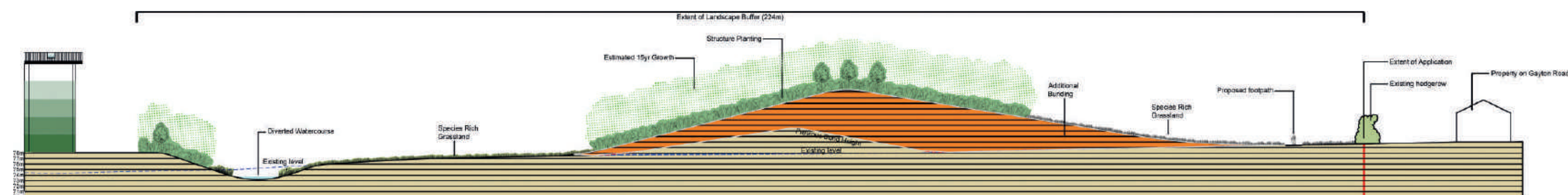
Rectory Lane (I-I)



Rectory Lane (J-J)



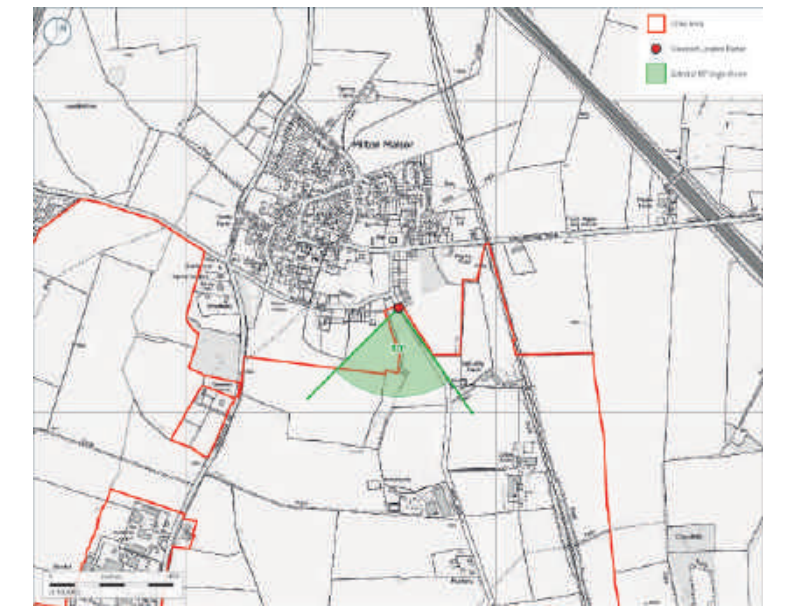
Collingtree Road (G-G)



Gayton Road (D-D)

Photomontages – view from Barn Lane (viewpoint 1)

This photomontage is the view from viewpoint 1 on Barn Lane showing the landscaping and bunding and how this screens the proposed development. It is based on the illustrative masterplan and shows Year 1, Year 7 and Year 15 before and after the recent changes. It demonstrates how the alterations to bunding and planting and building height reductions have further screened the view of the development, particularly as that planting matures.



Year 1 – winter

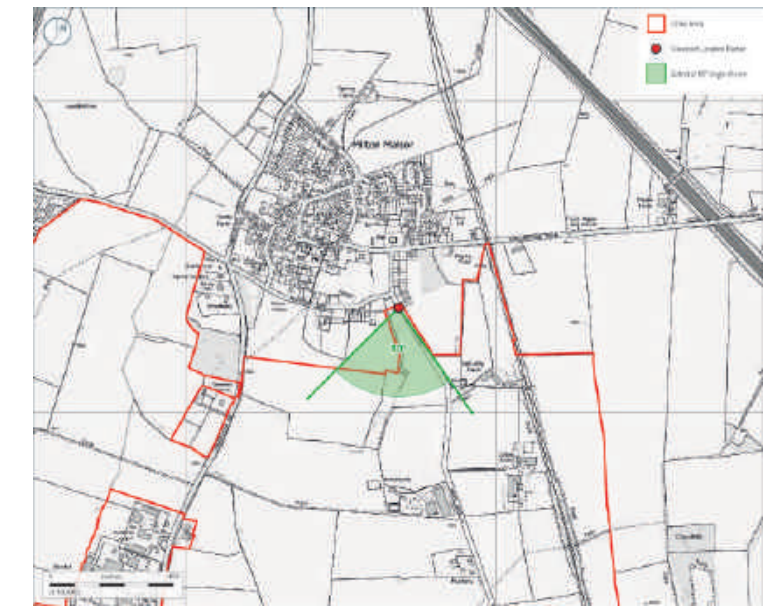


Before recent changes



After

Photomontages – view from Barn Lane (viewpoint 1)



Year 7 – summer

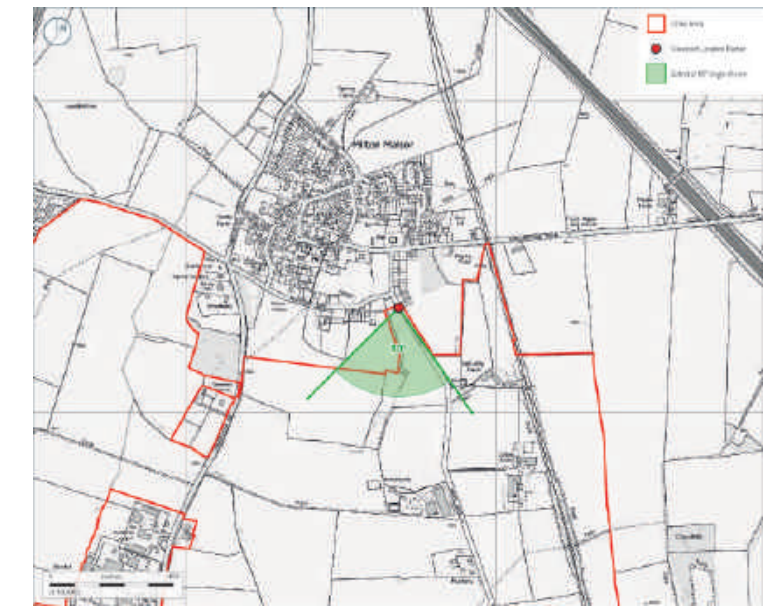


Before recent changes



After

Photomontages – view from Barn Lane (viewpoint 1)



Year 15 – summer



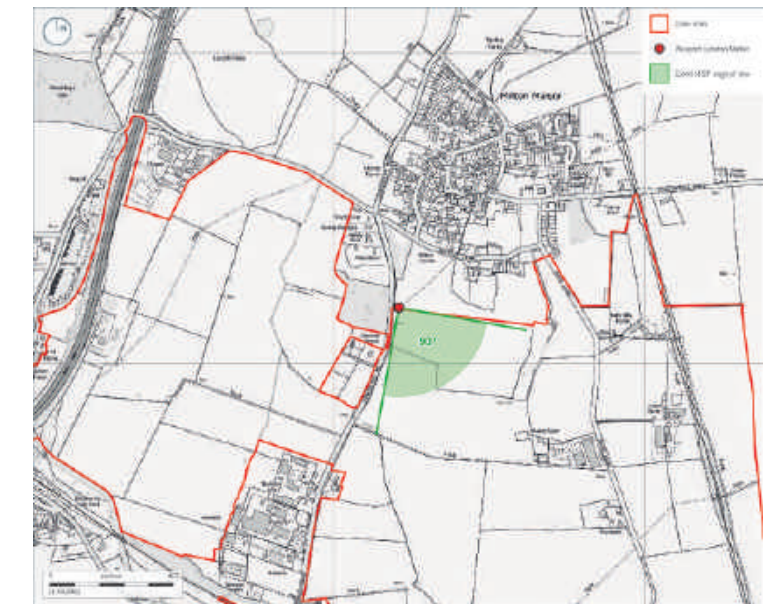
Before recent changes



After

Photomontages – view from Towcester Road public footpath (viewpoint 17)

This photomontage is the view from viewpoint 17 at the public footpath near Towcester Road showing the landscaping and bunding and how this screens the proposed development. It is based on the illustrative masterplan and shows Year 1, Year 7 and Year 15 before and after the recent changes. It demonstrates how the alterations to bunding and planting and building height reductions have further screened the view of the development, particularly as that planting matures.



Year 1 – winter

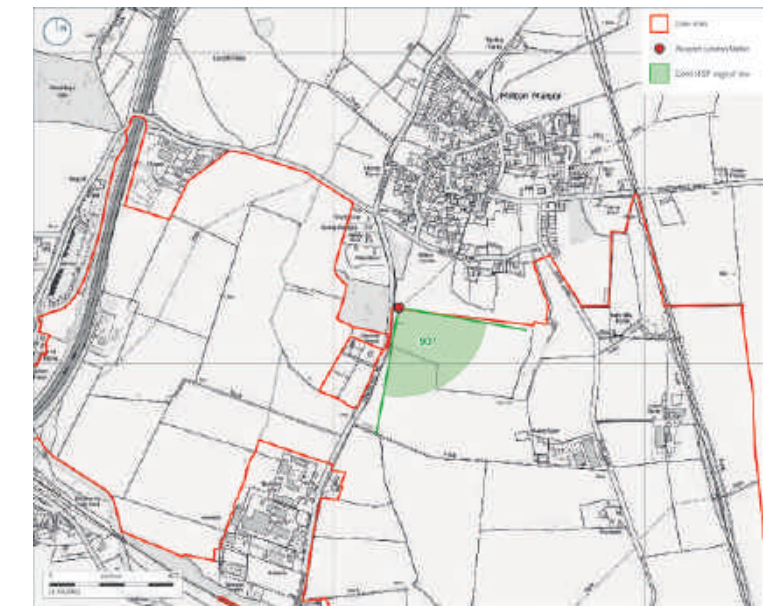


Before recent changes



After

Photomontages – view from Towcester Road public footpath (viewpoint 17)



Year 7 – summer

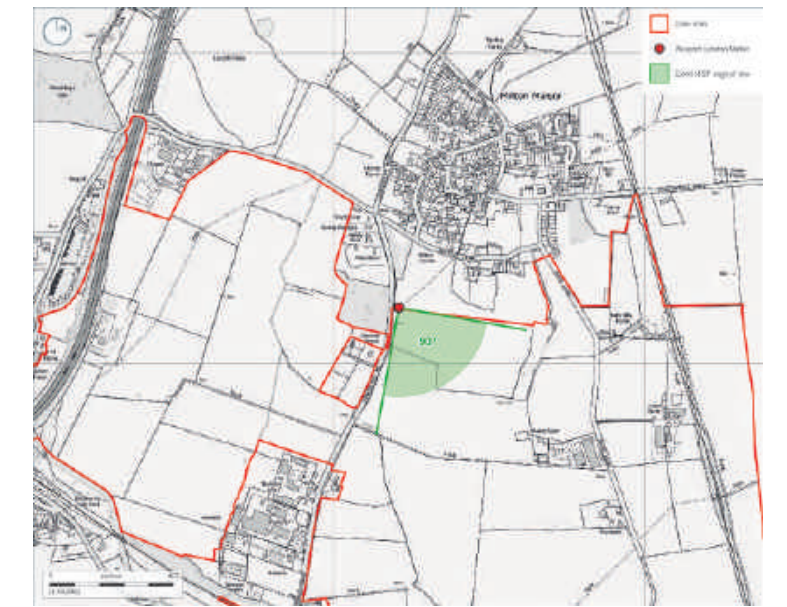


Before recent changes



After

Photomontages – view from Towcester Road public footpath (viewpoint 17)



Year 15 – summer



Before recent changes



After



More information

Please note these plans are indicative and for information. They are subject to change.

For further information please visit: www.railcentral.com

You can also e-mail us via railcentral@camargue.uk or telephone our information line (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.30pm) on 0845 543 8967 (please note calls are charged at local rates).

There is further information on the planning process on the National Infrastructure Planning website at: www.infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk