

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) is submitted to inform the Section 42 Consultation phase for Rail Central. It takes the format of a draft Environmental Statement ('ES'), prepared under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the 'EIA Regulations') (**Ref.1.1**). A final ES will accompany an application for a development consent order (DCO) (the 'Application') for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange ('SRFI'), as well as associated highways works including modification of Junction 15a of the M1 ('J15a') and other facilities. In total, these works are termed the 'Proposed Development'. The Application will be made by Ashfield Land Management Limited and Gazeley GLP Northampton s.à.r.l (the 'Applicant').
- 1.2 This PEIR considers the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Development, both within the area that falls within the DCO Order Limits (the 'DCO Order limits', or simply 'Order Limits') and in the surrounding area. The Study Area where such effects could potentially arise is described in each technical chapter (Chapters 9-25) of this PEIR.
- 1.3 The Proposed Development comprises two Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and Associated Development (as outlined in **Chapter 5: The Proposed Development**). The NSIPs are the Main SRFI Site and works to J15a of the M1.

## Project Overview

- 1.4 A SRFI is a large rail-served distribution park linked into both rail and the strategic highway network, capable of accommodating the large warehousing necessary for the storage, processing and movement of goods for manufacturers, retailers and end consumers. The aim of an SRFI is to optimise the use of rail in the freight journey by maximising rail trunk haul and minimising some elements of the secondary distribution leg (final delivery) by road, through co-location of other distribution and freight activities.
- 1.5 SFRIs are a key element in reducing the cost to users of moving freight by rail and are important in facilitating the transfer of freight from road to rail, thereby reducing trip mileage of freight movements on both the national and local road networks.
- 1.6 For the purposes of this PEIR the Proposed Development includes the following key elements; this list is not exhaustive and the Proposed Development is described in more detail in **Chapter 5: The Proposed Development**:
  - Demolition of existing buildings and structures;
  - An intermodal freight terminal with direct connections to the Northampton Loop Line, capable of accommodating trains of up to 775m long, including up to 3 gantry cranes, container storage, a train maintenance depot and facilities to transfer containers to Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV);

- An express freight terminal with direct connections to the West Coast Main Line, capable of accommodating trains of up to 240m long, a freight platform with associated loading and unloading facilities;
- Up to 702,097 sq m (Gross External Area) of rail connected and rail served warehousing and ancillary service buildings including a lorry park, terminal control building and bus terminal;
- New road infrastructure including a new separated access point on the A43 (T), an internal site underpass (under Northampton Road) and necessary utilities infrastructure;
- Strategic landscaping and open space including alterations to public rights of way, the creation of new ecological enhancement areas and publicly accessible open areas, flood attenuation, and the partial diversion of the Milton Malsor brook;
- Improvements to J15a of the M1, including pre-development works, widening and signalisation of the existing northern roundabout and approaches, reconfiguration of the existing southern roundabout to provide a signalised T-Junction, providing a new two lane free flow slip on the A43 (south bound) and providing a new link road between the southern junction to M1 northbound on and off slips.
- Ecological mitigation to the south-west of the J15a, to mitigate habitat loss at the Main SRFI Site, and landscaping around the junction
- Minor highways works at 16 identified junctions and improvements to a cycleway and footpath between Blisworth, south of the Main SRFI Site and Milton Malsor north of the main site. These works are generally within existing highways land and works would include widening of carriageways, signalisation works and signage improvements.

1.7 For the purposes of this PEIR the Proposed Development is described in relation to the following elements:

- 'Main SRFI Site' (including the A43 access and all rail infrastructure);
- 'J15a works' (including ecological mitigation for the Main SRFI Site); and,
- 'Minor highways works'.

## **EIA Overview**

1.8 Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') is a formal process in which the likely significant effects of certain types of development projects on the environment are identified, assessed

and reported upon. The process must be followed in order for the effects to be taken into account before a decision is made on whether consent for the project should be granted. Although this PEIR is not a formal ES (in that it is not supporting an application for consent) it has been prepared in accordance with the principles of EIA.

- 1.9 The Applicant recognises that the Proposed Development falls within Schedule 2, 10(c) and (d) of the EIA Regulations (**Ref 1.1**) as an intermodal facility, and railway, which owing to its nature, scale and location, has the potential to give rise to significant effects on the environment. The Applicant has therefore commissioned Turley to coordinate an EIA for the Proposed Development.
- 1.10 This PEIR has been compiled by Turley and presents the preliminary results of the EIA being carried out by a number of technical specialists. Assessments are ongoing and further results and assessment will be presented in the final ES to be submitted alongside the DCO application in due course. The specialists, in addition to the Applicant's wider design team, are presented in **Table 1.1**, along with their respective disciplines.
- 1.11 The PEIR has been prepared in accordance with the EIA Regulations. It considers the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development during the construction stage, as well as during the subsequent operational stage, and decommissioning stages (insofar as decommissioning can be reasonably predicted at this stage). The PEIR takes into account the mitigation measures that have been integrated into the planning and design of the Proposed Development to prevent, reduce and, where possible, offset significant adverse effects. It then evaluates the significance of the residual effects.
- 1.12 Consistent with guidance and good practice, Turley prepared an EIA Scoping Report and sought a formal EIA Scoping Opinion from the Planning Inspectorate ('PINS') on the issues to be addressed in the EIA. Results from this are provided in **Chapter 4: Overview of Consultation**, and also in the technical chapters in the relevant "Scoping and Consultation" sections. Further information on how the scope of the EIA was defined is provided in **Chapter 7: 'EIA Assessment Methodology'**.
- 1.13 The Main SRFI Site falls within the administrative boundary of South Northamptonshire Council (SNC). The proposed works at J15a of the M1 span both SNC and Northampton Borough Council (NBC) areas. Minor highways works are also required, which fall within both local authorities.
- 1.14 SNC and NBC are statutory consultees during the Application. However, the Application will be determined by the Secretary of State, taking into account the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development as determined through the EIA process of which the final ES submitted with application for DCO consent will form part.

## Planning Context & Need for the Development

- 1.15 The proposed SRFI is an infrastructure project, and thus the following National Policy Statement (NPS) is relevant to the decision-making process:
- *National Networks National Policy Statement (December 2014) (NN NPS) (Ref. 1.2)*
- 1.16 The NN NPS provides the primary basis for the consideration of a nationally significant SRFI. It provides a bespoke policy framework for the infrastructure that is necessary to meet identified national needs. It contains detailed guidance, on a topic by topic basis, to guide both applicants and the decision maker in their detailed approach to nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) in respect of their function, design, assessment and mitigation.
- 1.17 Under Section 104 of the Planning Act (2008) (hereafter referred to as the ‘PA2008’)– **Ref 1.8**) an application for a SFRI must be determined in accordance with the NN NPS, except in limited specific circumstances. The NN NPS sets out matters which the decision maker is required to consider. The acceptability of the Proposed Development against these matters is considered in the separate ‘Planning Statement’.
- 1.18 The national need and policy drive for rail freight is set out in both the relevant NN NPS and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In summary, current national planning policy seeks to move as much road-based freight as possible onto less carbon intensive modes of transport, including rail and water transport.
- 1.19 The NPPF is explicit that it does not contain specific policies for NSIPs, which are determined ‘in accordance with the decision-making framework set out in the PA2008 and relevant national policy statements for major infrastructure’. However, matters that the decision maker considers ‘important and relevant’ when making decisions on applications for development consent may include the NPPF.
- 1.20 For completeness, relevant legislation, national policy, best practice and other guidance, and local policy, is referenced within this PEIR, and assessed within the accompanying Planning Statement.
- 1.21 The relevant statutory Development Plan for the Proposed Development comprises the:
- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (adopted December 2014) (**Ref. 1.3**);
  - South Northamptonshire Local Plan (adopted 1997) (Saved Policies) (**Ref.1.4**); and
  - Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (adopted July 2017) (**Ref.1.5**);

- Northampton Local Plan Saved Policies (adopted 1997) (**Ref.1.6**);
- Northampton Central Area Action Plan (adopted April 2013) (**Ref.1.7**).

1.22 Details of relevant legislation and policy and the approach to its consideration is set out at **Chapter 6 ‘Legislative and Policy Context’**.

### **Legislation and Authorisation Process**

1.23 Construction of the Proposed Development requires a DCO from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) under the PA2008 (**Ref. 1.7**).

1.24 The Proposed Development is an intermodal transshipment facility that falls within Schedule 2 10(c) and (d) of the EIA Regulations relating to the “construction of intermodal transshipment facilities and of intermodal terminals” and “construction of railways”.

### **Other Consents, Licences and Authorisations**

1.25 In addition to development consent, a number of other consents are required for the construction and operation of the SRFI, J15a and Associated Development. A full list of the consents required, and the legislation under which they are prescribed, will be provided as part of the Application documentation to be submitted to PINS.

1.26 Each technical chapter within this PEIR summarises applicable regulatory frameworks including, for example, regimes for water pollution prevention, wildlife protection, noise control, and construction.

### **Application Details**

1.27 The Application is as described in the Planning Statement which accompanies this Section 42 consultation documentation. An application checklist based on the criteria of Section 55 of the PA2008 is being prepared (as per National Infrastructure Planning Advice note six: Preparation and submission of application documents) (**Ref. 1.9**). The documents that will accompany the DCO Application are set out in the Preface of this PEIR.

### **Applicant**

1.28 This PEIR has been prepared by, and the Application will be submitted by Ashfield Land Management Limited (Ashfield Land) and Gazeley GLP Northampton s.à.r.l. (Gazeley).

1.29 Ashfield Land is a property company working across the commercial and residential sectors, specialising in the delivery of property across retail, housing, storage and distribution and specialist projects. It was established in 1990, and is working across the UK to drive forward quality developments.

1.30 Gazeley is a Luxembourg société à responsabilité Limitée (private Limited Liability Company) whose registered office is at (Arendt Services) 19 Rue de Bitbourg, L-1273, Luxembourg

registered with the Luxembourg Register of Commerce. It is an entity created for the specific purpose of delivering the Proposed Development and is wholly owned by Gazeley Limited, a leading investor developer and manager of European logistics real estate. Much of their business is focused on France, Germany, Netherlands and the UK, the four strongest logistics markets in Europe. Gazeley Limited have industry leading capabilities across the whole value chain including investment, development, asset management and leasing.

- 1.31 In December 2017, Gazeley Limited became part of GLP, a leading global provider of logistics solutions. GLP has dominant market positions across eight countries and is one of the world’s largest real estate fund managers, managing over US\$44 billion of assets under management and a global portfolio of 620 million square feet.
- 1.32 The two companies are working together to bring forward the Proposed Development combining expertise and experience in delivering commercial and logistics projects across the UK and Europe.

**Project Team**

- 1.33 The Applicant has appointed a specialist project team to assist in preparing the PEIR, and eventually the Application. The members of the project team and their respective disciplines are presented in **Table 1.1**.
- 1.34 In accordance with Regulation 14(4) of the EIA Regulations 2017 the Applicant has ensured that this PEIR (and eventually the ES) is prepared by ‘competent experts’, the relevant expertise and qualifications of which are set out below (this list includes those directly involved in the preparation of the PEIR and not other aspects of the Proposed Development).

**Table 1.1: Contributors by Topic**

Topic	Consultant	Expertise/Qualification
EIA coordination, production of non-technical ES chapters and Non-Technical Summary	Turley	<p>Turley is Registered Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) EIA Q-Mark.</p> <p>The team includes:</p> <p>Helen Tilton BA (Hons), MSc, MRTPI, PIEMA – Helen is an Associate Director in Turley’s Bristol office with responsibility for coordinating the preparation of EIAs to support applications for Development Consent across the energy, infrastructure and property sectors (UK-wide).</p> <p>Donna Palmer BSc(Hons) Human Geography, MA Urban and Regional Planning, MRTPI – Donna is an Associate Director for Turley in Reading, with extensive EIA experience working primarily on</p>

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projects in the residential sector including large strategic promotions.

Katharine Blythe BSc, MSc, PhD, MIEMA, CEnv – Katharine is an EIA specialist with 12 years’ experience in coordinating EIAs and provision of environmental advice for planning applications in the energy, mining, residential and commercial sectors.

George Wilyman, BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI – George is a Planner for Turley in Bristol, with experience in supporting a wide range of projects across the energy, infrastructure and property sectors.

Claire Hawkes MPlan, MRTPI – Claire is a Planner at Turley’s Bristol office with experience in EIA coordination for a wide range of developments, including DCO applications.

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Landscape and Visual

RSK

Chris Frain CMLI – Chris is a Chartered Landscape Architect with over 19 years’ experience, and leads RSK’s UK team of landscape planners, landscape architects, landscape managers and landscape graphics and visualisation experts. He has extensive experience in NSIPs, DCOs, Major Planning Applications (Scotland), County and Local planning applications. Sector experience includes transport (rail and road); property and construction (residential housing; commercial, industrial, mixed use, business parks); waste; education and health and energy infrastructure,

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Archaeology

CFA Archaeology

CFA has been a Registered Organisation (RO) with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) since 2005.

The team includes:

Tim Neighbour MSc FSA Scot MIFA - Tim is a director at CFA Archaeology in Musselburgh, East Lothian, with diverse experience in EIA and expert witness, desk-based assessment, site investigation, post-excavation, reporting, graphics

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		and design, research and interpretation.  Tim is supported by George Mudie MA (Hons), FSA scot, MCIfA,
Built Heritage	Turley	Jack Haw BSc (Hons) MCD IHBC MRTPI – Jack is a qualified town planner and heritage planner and has provided heritage assessments for a wide range of planning applications and EIAs for diverse developments including DCOs.  Jack is part of a team led by Katy Lightbody MA (Hons) PG Dip CHE MRTPI
Biodiversity	RSK	Roberta Epps BSc, MSc ACIEEM - Roberta is a principal consultant with over 12 years' experience in EIA and ecology, with a specific interest and experience in transport infrastructure projects and the construction and property industry.
Highways and Transportation	Transport Planning Associates	Michelle Berrington BA(Hons) CMILT MCIHT – Michelle is has over 20 years' of transport planning experience working with private and public sector clients including the Highways Agency with particular emphasis on development planning, traffic modelling and managing key infrastructure projects.  Michelle is supported by Andrew Snowden, Simon Moody and Katie Stock, all with extensive experience in transport planning and EIA support.
Noise and Vibration	Spectrum Acoustics	Andrew Corkhill MSc, MIOA – Andrew is a specialist acoustic, noise and vibration consultant, providing advice on a wide range of projects across the construction and engineering sectors, but recently focusing on complex and large engineering projects.  Andrew is supported by Alex Priestley MSc, a Senior Consultant at Spectrum.
Ground Conditions and Contamination	Hydrock	Allan Bell BSc MSc CGeol FGS RoGEP – Allan has 25 years' industry experience working on geotechnical and land quality projects around the

		world and manages Hydrock's Northampton-based geotechnical and geo-environmental teams.
Flood Risk and Drainage	Hydrock	Simon Mirams BSc, MCIWEM, C.WEM, CSci – Simon is an experienced hydrologist and flood risk specialist, having supported EIAs for a variety of infrastructure and residential proposals.
Utility Infrastructure	Hydrock	Ian Griffiths IEng MIET CIBSE Affiliate - Ian has over 33 years' experience in the design of mechanical and electrical engineering services. Ian leads Hydrock's Plymouth's M&E team and takes a key role in the coordinating multidisciplinary projects encompassing structural, civil and geotechnical engineering.  Ian is supported by Tom Fox, a Building Services Engineer at Hydrock in Plymouth.
Air Quality	RPS	RPS is a Registered Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) EIA Q-Mark. Dan Smyth BSc (Jt Hons), MSc, DIC – Dan is a highly experienced senior director providing health and social impact assessment, climate and sustainability and environmental permitting services, specialising in air quality assessment. Dan is assisted by Kathryn Barker MSc, BSc (Hons) who is an Air Quality Consultant
Socio Economics	Turley	Richard Laming BA (Hons) DipTP, MRTPI – Richard is a senior director and head of economics at Turley in Manchester. He is experienced in providing economic and social assessment for NSIP projects, new settlements, urban extensions and mixed-use town centre regeneration schemes.  Richard is supported by Andrew Lowe MPlan, MRTPI, a senior planner in economics.
Agricultural Land	Reading Agricultural	Alastair Field BA (Hons), MSc, PIEMA, Member of BIAC and BSSS – Alastair  Alastair is a Director of Reading Agricultural and has over 30 years' experience of managing and

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		<p>carrying out assessments of the impact of all types of developments on agriculture and soils, including major infrastructure projects (highways, high speed railways, strategic rail freight interchanges, airports and pipelines).</p> <p>Alastair is supported by Sophie Webb BSc (Hons) MSc; Member of BSSS – who is a soil surveyor and scientist with experience of assessing soil and land quality across England and Wales, including tailored EIA assessments.</p>
Lighting	Hoare Lea Lighting	<p>Dominic Meyrick MSc (light and lighting), BA(Hons) (design for industry) – Dominic leads the lighting group at Hoare Lea and has over 25 years as a lighting designer with extensive experience in lighting assessment for major developments.</p>
Waste	RSK	<p>Dave Allen BSc (Hons), MSc, MIEMA CEnv – Dave is the EHS team leader at RSK and and project manages environmental audits and provision of corporate EHS advice, due diligence auditing, the development and implementation of environmental management systems (EMS) and the delivery of training packages, in various industrial and commercial sectors. He is an experienced environmental project manager across a number of sectors including oil and gas and renewables, with skills in contamination assessment and pollution prevention, in depth due diligence experience and industrial environmental management skills. He also have significant EIA experience both in the UK and overseas. Dave considerable experience of Industrial Environmental Permitting, through work on a number of Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) and Environmental Permitting (EP) applications under UK legislation.</p> <p>Dave is a Chartered Environmentalist, a full member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (MIEMA), and a qualified and registered Environmental Auditor.</p>

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Climate Change	Turley	<p>Colin Morrison - Colin is Turley's Head of Sustainability with over 16 years' experience in providing environmental and sustainability advice during the masterplanning, development and operational stages of projects, including several DCO applications.</p> <p>Colin is supported by Rebecca Beeson (BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering) Associate Director Sustainability and Paul White Senior Sustainability Consultant</p>
Human Health	RPS	<p>Andrew Buroni PhD (Health Impact Assessment), MSc, BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences, Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health – Andrew is RPS' Technical Director of Health responsible for Health and Social Impact Assessment services. He provides specialist advice to the public and private sector clarifying potential health and social outcomes, separating perceived impacts from actual risk, assessing the distribution, significance and likelihood of potential health outcomes, and providing bespoke Health Action Plans geared to addressing existing burdens of poor health and inequality and improving community health. Andrew is a leading, internationally recognised expert with over 18 years of HIA experience.</p> <p>He is supported by Tara Barratt, MSc BSc (Hons), AIEEMA, Assistant HIA Consultant. Tara has experience in assisting the delivery of Health Impact Assessments for a variety of infrastructure projects, ranging from local to DCO level.</p>
Vulnerability to risks of major accidents and disasters	ERM	<p>Roderick Ellison MSc BSc (hons) MIEMA CEnv – Rod is a chartered environmental professional with significant experience in securing consents for large infrastructure projects. He has led EIAs for DCO applications and undertaken risk assessments and major accident assessments for several DCO applications.</p>

## Structure of the PEIR

- 1.35 The PEIR presents an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development. The PEIR comprises the following volumes and chapters:

**Table 1.2: Structure of the PEIR**

Chapter Number	Chapter Title
Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary	
	Non-Technical Summary
Volume 2: Environmental Statement Chapters	
	Preface
1	Introduction
2	The Site and Surroundings
3	Reasonable Alternatives
4	Overview of Consultation & Scoping
5	The Proposed Development
6	Legislative and Policy Context
7	EIA Assessment Methodology
8	Rail
9	Air Quality
10	Agricultural Land
11	Archaeology
12	Built Heritage
13	Ground Conditions
14	Hydrology, Drainage and Flood Risk
15	Utilities

16	Biodiversity
17	Landscape and Visual
18	Noise and Vibration
19	Highways and Transportation
20	Socio Economics
21	Lighting
22	Waste
23	Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation
24	Human Health
25	Major Accidents and Disasters
26	Cumulative Effects Summary
27	Conclusions
Volume 3: Technical Appendices and Figures	

## References

- Ref.1.1 Statutory Instrument 2017 No. 572 *'The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017'*
- Ref.1.2 Department for Transport, 2014, *'National Policy Statement for National Networks'*
- Ref.1.3 West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee, 2014, *'West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1)'*
- Ref.1.4 South Northamptonshire Council, 1997, *'South Northamptonshire Local Plan'*
- Ref.1.5 Northamptonshire County Council, *'Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan'* (adopted July 2017)
- Ref.1.6 *Northampton Local Plan Saved Policies* (adopted 1997);
- Ref.1.7 *Northampton Central Area Action Plan* (adopted April 2013);
- Ref.1.8 Infrastructure Planning Commission, 2008, *'Planning Act 2008'* - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/contents>
- Ref.1.9 The Planning Inspectorate, 2017, *'National Infrastructure Planning Advice Note Six: Preparation and submission of application documents'*