

NEWS FROM RAIL CENTRAL

24 September 2018

RAIL CENTRAL PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

Ashfield Land and Gazeley apply for a Development Consent Order for Strategic Rail Freight Interchange scheme with potential for 8,000 new jobs

Ashfield Land and Gazeley have submitted proposals for Rail Central to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).

Rail Central is a proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) where the West Coast Main Line and Northampton Loop Line intersect, adjacent to the A43 and within 2 miles of Junction 15A of the M1.

The proposals are for a next-generation SRFI capable of handling both traditional container freight and the emerging demand for 'fast freight' linked to the growth of e-commerce and customer expectations for rapid and next day delivery. The proposals include a traditional container handling 'inter modal' terminal connecting into the Northampton Loop Line and an 'express terminal' connecting directly into the West Coast Main Line.

In addition to the key rail infrastructure, the plans include up to 7.4 million sq ft of rail-connected and rail-served logistics and commercial buildings plus a new 'grade separated' roundabout junction with the A43 and key improvements to J15A of the M1.

The project is defined as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) – the proposals have therefore been submitted to PINs in line with the statutory planning process.

Submission of the application follows approximately three years of consultation and development of the proposals in line with technical studies and assessments, plus feedback from a wide range of stakeholders.

PINS will now review the proposals and make a decision on whether they will be accepted for Examination. If approved, the earliest potential start of construction would be in late 2019. The scheme would be built out in phases in line with market demand, with the key rail infrastructure going in early within the overall build out plans.

Andrew Fisher, Managing Director at Ashfield Land, said: "Rail Central occupies the best strategic location in the UK for this type of development – where two railway lines and two major roads come together right in the heart of England. To meet the Government's policy for shifting more freight from road to rail – and to meet customer demands for fast, reliable and sustainable logistics – Rail Central can be a major factor. We are pleased to have submitted the proposals and look forward to the next stage in this important planning process."

Alex Verbeek, Managing Director UK at Gazeley, said: "Submitting the application marks nearly three years of scheme design and development, shaped by consultation and through detailed engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Rail Central offers a best in class SRFI scheme, substantial private sector inward investment, approximately 8,000 jobs and a significant boost to UK business and supply chains. As the UK looks to be competitive in international markets, Rail Central can play a major part in providing business-supporting infrastructure."

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Notes to editors

The application was submitted to PINS on Friday 21 September. The application has been formally 'received' by PINS and now moves forward to the 'Acceptance' stage – more at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/rail-central-strategic-rail-freight-interchange/>

Rail Central is a proposal for a SRFI at a key strategic location where the West Coast Main Line meets the Northampton Loop Line adjacent to the A43 and within 2 miles of the M1.

It is in line with Government policy for investment and expansion in rail freight capability and would see approximately 8,000 jobs created.

Subject to permission being granted to build Rail Central, the earliest potential start of construction would be in late 2019.

Rail Central is a joint venture between Ashfield Land and Gazeley.

For media enquiries, please contact Ben Copithorne / Richard Pia / Will Scawn at Camargue on 020 7636 7366 / railcentral@camargue.uk

Further information can be found on the project website, www.railcentral.com.

For information on the planning process and PINs, see: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/rail-central-strategic-rail-freight-interchange/>