

Scotland's biggest International Railfreight Park given go-ahead

Proposals for a new International Railfreight Terminal at Mossend in Bellshill have today been given the seal of approval by Scottish Ministers.

The decision paves the way for one of Scotland's most significant private sector infrastructure projects creating the country's biggest state-of-the-art railfreight development with the potential to deliver 4,900 new jobs during the construction and operational phases.

In addition to new freight handling capabilities Mossend International Railfreight Park (MIRP) will provide adjoining distribution facilities that will enable more businesses to shift long distance freight from road to rail.

PD Stirling the operators of the existing Mossend Railhead will expand its existing operations to provide Scotland with a 66% increased capacity rail link to UK and European markets.

MIRP will comprise warehousing and manufacturing space adjacent to the terminal as well as bespoke, low carbon distribution, service and logistics facilities allowing occupiers to load directly to and from the trains. Facilities will be built to meet market demand and to accommodate a range of operators and building types.

Building a sustainable green legacy for the Bellshill area, the creation of this new railfreight hub with direct access to the strategic road network and will remove all associated HGV traffic from the local road network, as well as bringing a more efficient and sustainable alternative to long haul road transport.

David Stirling, PD Stirling Ltd. said:

"We're delighted with today's decision as it will open up new opportunities for railfreight and sustainable low-carbon logistics in Scotland. MIRP will create a major new railfreight facility and help to secure new investment and economic activity both in Lanarkshire and across Scotland. MIRP will be able to compete favourably on cost with road transport, extend choice and support the sustainable movement of goods to and from Scotland.

"We recognise that there has been some local concern but are looking forward to working with residents to put in place locally supported management for the proposed community woodland which will include walkways, woodlands and cycle routes."

The go-ahead underpins the increasing demand for railfreight and its importance as a driver for the Scottish economy.

The grant of permission will help deliver the Scottish Government's own Economic Strategy for Scotland (March 2015) the key provisions of which are a much broader approach to boosting competitiveness, the private sector's contribution to achieving economic growth, and the four priority areas of investment, innovation, inclusive growth and internationalisation.

It also reflects the Scottish Parliament Inquiry into Freight Transport in Scotland carried out by the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee (published 29 June 2015) which highlighted the vital role of rail freight in supporting the country's economy and connecting Scotland to Europe via the Channel Tunnel.

Railfreight has been increasing in popularity with supermarkets and material handling firms looking to transfer goods to and from Europe. MIRP will support this growth with its capability to handle the new class of 775m long electric trains on a daily basis. As well as lowering distribution costs for occupiers, the development will help reduce carbon dioxide emissions by moving freight from road to rail.

Mossend has seen an unprecedented level of interest recently from firms keen to explore the potential of the site as a key hub for transferring freight from road to rail.

Already a number of high-profile businesses including Wincanton Distribution, Ibstock Bricks, Howden Joinery and Wavin (a world-leader in the production of plastic pipes) have chosen Mossend for its strategic location and future expansion plans.

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