Rail Connectivity at Central Park

WESTERN APPROACH | BRISTOL

BACK ON TRACK A new era for rail freight in the supply chain

With major retailers, manufacturers, shipping lines and logistics companies recognising the growing benefits of using rail for long distance trunk haulage, intermodal (containerised) rail freight volumes have, despite the economic downturn, grown by 29% in recent years. Further growth is forecast to be delivered through increased rail network capacity and the development of more rail freight interchanges.

In reaction, Central Park is joining this new network of freight interchanges, and will offer a strategic location and a range of rail freight opportunities for occupiers of the park.

On Site Rail Facilities

Central Park could offer opportunities for both rail-linked warehousing, together with a dedicated intermodal terminal for container handling, ultimately capable of accommodating maximum length (775m) trains.

The internal estate road network will enable movement of containers on slave trailers, hauled by unlicensed “tugmaster” units operating on red diesel in proximity to the intermodal terminal.

In addition, units adjacent to the intermodal terminal may be capable of direct private road access, enabling movement of containers by road up to their maximum payload (typically 34 tonnes gross) to and from the intermodal terminal. For weight-constrained cargo this could enable carriage of up to 5 tonnes additional payload per container, further reducing transport and handling costs.

For onward movements by road, the terminal will also offer easy access to the M49, M4 and M5 motorways.

Track Accessibility

Central Park is located alongside one of the core routes identified by Government for the Strategic Freight Network linking Bristol with London, deepsea ports, the Channel Tunnel and other major centres in the UK.

Work is already in hand by Network Rail to electrify the adjacent Great Western Main Line between London, Bristol and Cardiff, which will allow more powerful and sustainable electric freight trains to be operated to and from the area from 2016. Network Rail is also developing proposals to upgrade the route by 2019 to enable high-cube containers to be carried on standard rail wagons. In advance of these works, rail freight distribution using existing infrastructure should be a reality at Central Park by around 2014.

The site benefits from an existing track connection to the neighbouring Severn Beach line, which in turn provides two rail access routes, via Filton or Bristol, enabling alternative routing of trains in the event of local disruption or engineering works:

- The primary route via Filton provides direct onward routes to Wales (via Newport), the Midlands (routes via Cheltenham, Oxford and Hereford) South East (via London) and the South West;
- The secondary route via Bristol provides a direct route to the South West, and via Bath and Didcot to onward routes to the Midlands (via Oxford) and South East (via London).

Connecting routes further inland then provide direct links to the rest of the UK and the Channel Tunnel.

Loading Gauge

Rail access from Avonmouth to the main line at Filton is currently cleared to the W8 loading gauge standard, which covers around one-third of the national rail network and enables 8'6" high containers to be carried on all standard wagons, and 9'6" high containers on low-platform wagons.

The secondary rail access route via Bristol is cleared to the W6 standard, which covers virtually the entire rail network and enables 8' high deepsea containers to be carried on some standard wagons, 8'6" high containers on low-platform wagons and 9'6" high containers in pocket wagons. Network Rail is currently looking at scope to allow this route to accept 8'6" high containers on some standard wagons in the short term.

Both routes are cleared for all conventional enclosed rail wagon designs operating in the UK, which may be more suitable for operations between directly rail-linked warehouses.

The Government has identified the rail route between London and Avonmouth via Filton as being one of the core components of its Strategic Freight Network. In response, Network Rail is proposing to upgrade this route to the taller W10 loading gauge by 2019. This will enable carriage of all deepsea container heights on standard rail wagons, maximising the number of containers which can be carried on each train. We are working with Network Rail and other local stakeholders to determine scope for clearing the route via Bristol to W10 gauge as well.

UK Proposed Routes

- Core trunk routes: gauge cleared to at least W10
- Core trunk and diversionary routes, less than W10
- Freight-only rail routes
- Diversionary routes: gauge cleared to at least W10
- Reopened routes

Grants

Grants may be available from the Department for Transport and the European Commission to assist with developing intermodal freight services to and from Central Park. Further information is available from:

- Department for Transport: www.dft.gov.uk/topics/freight/grants/
- European Commission: ec.europa.eu/transport/marcopolo/index_en.htm

Rail times from Central Park

Birmingham	3 hrs
Southampton	4 hrs
Tilbury	5 hrs
Merseyside	6 hrs
Felixstowe	9 hrs
Glasgow	12 hrs
Teesport	15 hrs
Milan	40 hrs
Valencia	60 hrs
Warsaw	60 hrs

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