

# Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange proposal granted development consent

Development consent has been given for a Rail Freight Interchange (RFI) together with landscaping, access and other supporting infrastructure works. The proposed project consists of: An intermodal freight terminal including container storage and HGV parking, new road infrastructure and works to the existing road network, including provision of a new access and associated works to the A508, a new bypass to the village of Roade, and substantial improvements to Junction 15 of the M1.

The project is located at Land west of the A508, south west of M1 Junction 15 and east of Northampton Loop Line.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Roxhill Developments Limited on the 21 May 2018 and accepted for examination on 15 June 2018. Following an examination during which the public, statutory consultees and interested parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 09 July 2019.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the local authority and other interested parties were able to participate in the six month long examination. The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to those local views."

"The Planning Inspectorate has again demonstrated its ability to examine Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) within timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008 which provides developers and investors with the confidence to build and improve the infrastructure this country needs to secure future economic growth."

The decision announced today supports the recommendation made by the Examining Authority. It is the 79th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project to be examined and decided and brings the total of transport projects to 24.

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation is publicly available on the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

ENDS

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning

Inspectorate Press Office, on: 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email:

[Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, National Infrastructure Programme of Projects details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months. It can be viewed at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

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## [Monmouthshire testbed paving the way for 5G technology](#)

During a visit to the 5G Testbed in Monmouthshire, Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns heard how UK Government funding is being used to develop the latest 5G technology across the UK.

After receiving a share of £3.5 million of UK Government funding last year, the testbed in Llanddewi Rhydderch has begun trialling innovative uses of 5G to generate stronger connections for residents, businesses, farmers and visitors.

As well as the Monmouthshire site, six other testbeds have been developed in Cumbria, Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Invernessshire and Perthshire. The funding came as part of the UK Government's Digital Strategy which aims to develop a world-leading digital economy that works for everyone.

### **The Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

It is great to see first-hand how UK Government funding is being used in Monmouthshire to transform connectivity in our rural communities.

There is potential to use 5G to increase food production in farming, improve healthcare in the home and develop apps for tourists – all of which will provide an important boost to our rural economy.

The UK Government is committed to delivering on our promise to create a UK fit for the future, with a thriving digital economy in every part of the country.

## **Barry Weaver, Operations Director Broadway Partners said:**

We believe that Gigabit connectivity by 2025 is achievable through the right mix of technology, knowhow and some positive energy! The 5G pilot in Monmouthshire proved that Gigabit services can be delivered to communities at a very quick speed. We are in the process of replicating this all over the country. Let's get Gigabit done.

Taking another step towards a fully-connected country, the UK Government has also today announced the introduction of a new law which will ensure the nine million people in the UK living in blocks of flats can access gigabit speed broadband.

It will make it easier to install faster internet connections in blocks of flats where landlords repeatedly ignore requests for access from broadband firms and it is estimated that an extra 3,000 UK residential buildings a year will be connected as a result.

This follows the UK Government announcing £5 billion of new funding to bring gigabit-capable broadband to the hardest-to-reach parts of the UK earlier this month.

**ENDS**

### **Notes to editors:**

The Monmouthshire project is funded by the 5G Testbeds & Trials Programme within the UK Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

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## **[Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group announces new chair](#)**

Mark Watson-Gandy has been named as the new chair of the Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group.

Professor Mark Watson-Gandy is a practising barrister, author and company chairman.

Mark is experienced in advising government having been a former junior counsel to the crown.

Mark has considerable experience of chairing committees. Since 2014 he has been chair of Mental Health First Aid England, a community interest company

launched under the Department of Health: National Institute of Mental Health in England (NIMHE) as part of a national approach to improving public mental health. Mark also chairs the Disciplinary Appeals Committee of the Institute of Financial Accountants and is Head of Professional Standards for the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers, a statutory supervisory body.

The author of several legal text books Mark is also a special lecturer at Cass Business School, a visiting professor at the University of Westminster and a member of court at the University of Essex.

Mark takes over from Christopher Hughes, OBE who has been the BFEG Chair since 2009.

As chair, Mark will provide leadership and support, working with the BFEG committee members and the secretariat to ensure provision of impartial, balanced, objective advice and guidance to ministers within the remit of the BFEG.

Mark Watson-Gandy said:

I am thrilled to join the Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group as its chair and to have the chance to work with such an amazing and inspirational team. This is an enormously exciting time to join the group and – particularly in the area of big data – there are some challenging issues that need to be wrestled with.

Mark Watson Gandy took up his appointment on 27 September 2019.

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## [Environmental checks around Grenfell Tower show no increased risk to health](#)

The first stage of environmental checks around Grenfell Tower show that there is no increased risk to health from the aftermath of the fire.

The levels of chemicals found in the Grenfell area are consistent with those generally found in London.

The checks were carried out by independent specialists and have been verified by experts on the independent Science Advisory Group.

The process for carrying out the checks was agreed by all members of the Science Advisory Group.

Professor Anna Stec, who originally suggested testing around the site, is a former member of the Group who provided advice to the group on fire toxicity.

Sir Patrick Vallance, Government Chief Scientific Adviser and Chairman of the Science Advisory Group said:

Following a review of the technical documents by the Science Advisory Group, they have agreed that the approach taken was scientifically rigorous and met the agreed specification.

The Group has confidence in the results from Stage 1, which will inform the Stage 2 investigation.

To provide further reassurance to the community, a second stage of testing will also be carried out. The Stage 1 results do not show levels requiring any change to the investigation strategy.

Anyone in the Grenfell community who remains concerned about their health should contact their GP, who is best placed to assess individual needs and consider the most appropriate treatment.

More information can also be found about the enhanced health checks that are available. The government has provided £50 million funding to provide additional health services to the community to support this work.

Health checks are also available at various clinics in North Kensington via community provider, Enhance, who can be reached on 020 3434 2500.

## **What we did in Stage 1**

The aim of Stage 1 was to collect background information, including thorough research, a site walkover and samples from selected public areas.

Investigators took 93 samples from 21 areas within a 1km radius of the Tower, including the Grenfell Tower site. The areas were decided with the community's help to identify where debris from the fire had been found, together with scientific data from the Met Office about the smoke plume from the fire.

## **What the tests found**

Most substances tested are at levels expected in London.

The substances found in the soil are unlikely to be present as a unique result of the fire and most would be present in the environment despite the fire.

There are no obvious patterns in the spread or levels of the substances found – if substances were present in the soil because of the fire, we would expect to see much higher levels closer to the Tower and spreading outwards, but the checks did not find this.

Where some substances are at higher levels, this does not mean they necessarily present a risk to health – the levels are consistent with those

in other urban areas. Findings at these levels do not require action, but we will continue to investigate them in a second stage of testing.

The results from Stage 1 will help us to agree where to test and what to test for in the next stage. Stage 2, which involves further sampling, will proceed as planned so we can provide further reassurance to the community.

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## [Burial of 13 WW1 soldiers brings closure to crowdfunded archaeological project](#)

A burial service on Thursday 10 October brought closure to a crowdfunded archaeological project that discovered 110 previously missing soldiers. Thirteen of those found, all from Commonwealth nations including the UK, were buried side by side at a ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's (CWGC) Wytschaete Military Cemetery, near Ypres, Belgium.

Father Patrick O'Driscoll conducting the service.

The service, conducted by Father Patrick O'Driscoll, Chaplain to the 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, was supported by present-day serving Fusiliers from the Regiment who formed the bearer parties and a firing party. The casualties were interred in three coffins, with three CWGC headstones marking their collective final resting places. Two coffins each contained one unknown soldier with a third containing the partial remains of 11 unknown individuals. In keeping with burial tradition, the casualties were interred together, ensuring that those who served and died together, are buried and commemorated together.

### **Father O'Driscoll, Chaplain to the 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, said:**

We come together today to remember and thank these men for their great sacrifice in fighting and dying together as one. Even though we do not know their names, we remember their humanity and courage and that even in the hell of battle they were there for each other even to death. So in prayer and celebration we place these men together in this consecrated and special ground, so that they rest in peace and we learn and make sure humanity endures in its fullness.

The funeral service was organised by the Ministry of Defence's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), known as the 'MOD War Detectives', who also try to make an identification when British remains are found. Due to the heavy nature of the fighting in this area during the war, it has not been possible to identify the individuals by name on this occasion. However, at least two individuals are believed to be British, one of whom was wearing dentures manufactured in the UK.

The WW1 Soldiers are placed in their final resting place.

**Rosie Barron, from the JCCC, said:**

It has been a privilege to organise this service today alongside The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. Although these men were not identifiable, their sacrifice will not be forgotten. They have now been given the burial service they deserve and will rest alongside their comrades in perpetuity.

The service formed one of the final chapters to the 'Dig Hill 80' project that discovered their remains in 2018. The project led a 1.1 hectare crowdfunded archaeological excavation, which took place at the former site of Hill 80 in Wytschaete, that had been allocated for future housing development. The project excavated 550 metres of trenches and 430 bomb craters, recovering 110 soldiers including British, French, German and South African. Dig Hill 80 was highly publicised at the time, attracting international media attention and celebrity patronage from comedian Al Murray and support from military historian, Dan Snow.

Hill 80, in the village of Wytschaete, was formerly the site of a windmill before the First World War, it became an entrenched German gun position following the village's capture in 1914. The location afforded observational advantage to the Germans as it overlooked the town of Ypres and formed part of the Messines Ridge. The site remained in German hands until the Battle of Messines in June 1917 when it was recaptured. In 1918, Hill 80 was again taken by the Germans during the Battle of the Lys, before finally returning to Allied hands in September 1918.

**Dig Hill 80 Head Archaeologist Simon Verdegem said:**

It is now about a year since the investigation into the soldiers of Hill 80 was completed. Thanks to massive international support from individuals and organisations, enough money was raised through crowdfunding to make a detailed excavation possible. The aim was not only to excavate the trenches but also to recover the soldiers. Now, the British and German soldiers will finally be given a definitive and dignified resting place along with their comrades. I dare to believe that it gives them peace, knowing that people from all over the world have joined forces to recover their mortal

remains. In my opinion, this can count as a symbol of peace and reconciliation.

The graves will now be marked by headstones provided by the CWGC, who will care for their final resting place in perpetuity.

**Victoria Wallace, Director General CWGC said**

It is always moving and a real privilege to attend reburials. And it's a credit to the team who excavated Hill 80 that they have recovered these men at last, who will now be laid to rest with former comrades, and cared for in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. It is sad that the men cannot be identified individually, but they will never be forgotten, by their nation, or by the people of Flanders who always show such respect for our war dead.

The German soldiers discovered on Hill 80 will be laid to rest on Friday 11 October at the German war cemetery in Langemark.