

Maritime Transport to develop Rail Freight Interchange in UK

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Port of Felixstowe

Maritime Transport, a UK's integrated road and rail freight logistics provider, has signed an exclusive agreement to develop, lease, and operate Tritax Symmetry's planned £750 million (around US\$950 million) Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) at Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI).

Maritime Transport will develop a 160,000m² SRFI, which will be capable of handling 16 trains per day when fully operational. At full capacity, the SRFI will remove more than 83 million HGV miles from the UK road network, while the volume of goods switched from road to rail could save around 70,120 tonnes of CO₂ each year.

The new terminal, which will sit alongside 650,000m² of warehouse facilities, is expected to strengthen rail freight connections between the Midlands and

the major ports of Felixstowe, Liverpool, London Gateway, Southampton, Teesport and Mossend, serving Scotland.

It is important to note that Felixstowe, the UK's largest container terminal, is home to Maritime Transport's headquarters.

The scheme remains dependent on the Secretary of State for Transport's approval of a Development Consent Order; the outcome is due in September 2024.

Jonathan Wallis, Director at Tritax Symmetry, commented, "Maritime Transport's commitment to an SRFI at this early stage is a significant first in the sector and reflects ultimate confidence in the location's suitability for rail freight from the leading road and rail freight location provider in the UK. Alongside Maritime Transport's fully fledged support, we are excited by the potential of this prime location for rail-linked logistics, which we believe will see strong demand for large scale, flexible, modern, low carbon space."

Maritime Transport operates over 40 logistics sites across the UK and has invested significantly in its intermodal offering, with Hinckley adding to its portfolio of open-access, multi-user UK rail terminals, including locations at Birmingham, Hams Hall, Kegworth, Manchester, Mossend, Northampton, London (Tilbury) and Wakefield.

In April, Maritime Transport also announced it would be taking on West Midlands Interchange rail freight terminal.

Maggie Simpson, Director General of Rail Freight Group, said, "The development of a national network of strategic rail freight interchanges is paramount to ensuring the long-term future viability of the UK Government's target to enhance modal shift of freight from road to rail. We are encouraged by Tritax and Maritime's commitment to rail freight, and this display of support for the UK's latest SRFI before the DCO decision is determined is extremely welcome for advancement of sustainable, rail-based logistics."

Tritax Symmetry is part of Tritax Big Box REIT plc and was represented by Baker Rose Consulting.

John Williams, Executive Chairman of Maritime Transport, stated, "We are delighted to agree terms with Tritax Symmetry to become the long-term operator of the new SRFI, in planning, at HNRFI. This development will strengthen our rail-connected network and our strategy of decarbonising the full load supply chain in the UK, moving cargo closer to the end user by rail. Our strategy of decarbonising the supply chain will extend to the introduction of BEV (Battery Electric Vehicles) to perform first and final mile transport, creating the most sustainable full load networked, intermodal logistics offering for occupiers at HNRFI and beyond."