

**Intermodal Logistics Park North Ltd**

**INTERMODAL LOGISTICS PARK NORTH (ILPN)**

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**Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILPN) Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI)**

**Project reference TR510001**

**Programme Document V4**

**October 2025**

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Document title: ILP North Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Programme Document  
Applicant: Tritax Big Box Developments Ltd  
Project Reference: TR510001  
Version Control: V1 – July 2024  
V2 – December 2024  
V3 – April 2025  
V4 – October 2025

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

1. This document is the pre-application Programme Document for the Proposed Development of Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILPN) Rail Freight Interchange (RFI). The aim of the Programme Document is to set out the main steps that the Intermodal Logistics Park North Ltd ('the Applicant') anticipates to take during the preparation of the application.
2. The Programme Document is a live document, for the duration of the pre-application phase of the Proposed Development and is updated and re-published when changes to the programme are made and/or the Proposed Development reaches key milestones in the pre-application phase. The Programme Document has been prepared in accordance with the guidance set out within the Planning Inspectorate's Pre-application Prospectus<sup>1</sup>.
3. The subsequent sections of this Programme Document are structured as follows:
  - **Chapter 2:** Background to the Proposed Development
  - **Chapter 3:** A description of the pre-application service that the Applicant has subscribed to
  - **Chapter 4:** The pre-application programme
  - **Chapter 5:** The main issues for resolution
  - **Chapter 6:** Engagement with statutory bodies, local planning authorities and landowners
  - **Chapter 7:** Pre-application risks

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-2024-pre-application-prospectus>

## Chapter 2: Background to the Proposed Development

### THE APPLICANT

4. Tritax Big Box Developments Ltd (“Tritax”) is a subsidiary of the logistics development arm of Tritax Big Box REIT plc, a FTSE 250 company. The business is dedicated to providing best-in-class greener logistics buildings, a collaborative and entrepreneurial approach, and providing an unrivalled choice of building locations and scale.

### THE SITE

5. The ILP North Site is partly located within the Liverpool City Region Freeport zone. The St Helens Local Plan, adopted in 2022, identifies a large part of the Site (referred to as the Parkside East allocation) as being suitable for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI). It is described as a ‘transformational’ employment opportunity which will make a major contribution to the economic development of the North-West region and beyond, given its strategic interface between the Liverpool and Greater Manchester City Regions (as well as Warrington). Tritax has acquired 230 acres of the allocated site.
6. The adopted Local Plan allocation was underpinned by a number of strategic studies into the local/regional/national need for an SRFI and the locational benefits of the site. The Local Plan policy (LPA09) specifies that the site has a gross area of approximately 124.55ha, of which at least 60ha is reserved for development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI). Further land is also included (to the west of the M6), which is intended to facilitate the provision of rail access to the Site from the north.
7. In strategic terms, the ILP North Site is located between the Transpennine (East-West Liverpool – Manchester (Chat Moss Line)) and West Coast Mainline rail lines. The Site is also directly adjacent to the M6 motorway (Junction 22) whilst also being in close proximity to the M62 motorway. Consequently, the Site is well located to support North-South and East-West movements, particularly import and exports between Liverpool, Hull, Scotland, and Felixstowe.

### THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

8. The Proposed Development comprises an SRFI and associated development, comprising:
  - provision of a logistics park comprising up to c.767,000 square metres (m<sup>2</sup>) (gross internal area or GIA) of warehousing and ancillary buildings with a total footprint of up to 590,000m<sup>2</sup> at ground floor level and up to 177,050m<sup>2</sup> of mezzanine floorspace, subject to ongoing design and market assessment, comprising a mixture of units with the potential to be rail-connected, rail served and rail accessible units;
  - provision of a rail terminal capable of accommodating up to 16 trains (up to 775m in length) per day, including connections to the mainline and ancillary development such as container storage, cranes for the loading and unloading of shipping containers, Heavy

- Goods Vehicle (HGV) parking, rail control building, fuelling facilities and staff facilities;
- a rail turn-back facility within the Western Rail Chord capable of accommodating trains up to 775m in length;
  - potential for new road and pedestrian/cycle bridges across the Chat Moss Line to enhance connectivity and replace level crossings to improve safety;
  - closure and diversion of two rail level crossings (Parkside No. 1 and Lowton Moss);
  - provision of overnight lorry parking with welfare facilities and HGV fuelling facilities for users of the SRFI;
  - new internal roads and works to existing road infrastructure on the Main Site;
  - closure of existing access and provision of new access to Newton Park Farm and neighbouring properties;
  - new electricity substations;
  - new energy centre(s) and potential for battery storage;
  - provision of roof-mounted photovoltaic arrays and/or canopy photovoltaic arrays over parking areas capable of providing direct energy supply to buildings on which they are mounted and/or distributing and exporting power via the energy centre(s);
  - strategic landscaping and open space, including: terrain remodelling to create development plateaus; bunds up to 3m above the reprofiled ground level, hard and soft landscape works, amenity features and planting;
  - earthworks to regrade the Main Site to provide appropriate access, connections to the railway, development plots and landscape zones;
  - habitat creation, enhancements, compensation and provision of publicly accessible space;
  - an amenity area north of the railway line bounded by rail lines and Parkside Road, providing amenity open space, landscaping and screening as well as heritage interpretation;
  - farmland to the north of the Liverpool to Manchester railway and south of the A572 Newton Road for the provision of BNG requirements, new and realigned PRow and landscaping including tree belts to screen views from the north;
  - farmland to the east of Winwick Lane for the reuse of topsoil and landscaping including stopping up gaps in hedgerow and tree belts to screen views from the east;
  - noise attenuation measures;

- new pedestrian and cycle access routes and connections and infrastructure including provision of new, diversion and stopping up of existing PRoW where required (see Table 3.3);
- provision of public transport hub;
- demolition of existing on-site structures (including existing residential dwellings / farmsteads and commercial premises);
- utility compounds, plant and service infrastructure;
- security and safety provisions inside the ILPN RFI including fencing and lighting; and
- drainage works including creation of attenuation ponds and sustainable drainage features.

## Chapter 3: The Planning Inspectorate’s pre-application service

### LEVEL OF SERVICE

9. The Applicant has subscribed to the Planning Inspectorate’s tier 2 level of pre-application service, this is the standard service.
10. Contained within this service level, the Applicant has up to six annual project update meetings with the Inspectorate at key project milestones in the pre-application phase. The Applicant will also be seeking a standard draft document review service and an embedded risk review process.
11. The Programme set out within this Programme Document reflects this approach that has been subscribed to.

## Chapter 4: The pre-application programme

### PROGRAMME

12. The following section summarises the timetable and activities necessary for an effective pre-application process, including the level of pre-application services requested.

#### Intended Submission

13. The submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application is targeted for Q2 2026.

#### Pre-Application Timetable

14. The below sets out a timetable of the Applicant’s pre-application process running from July 2024 to submission with key dates and milestones noted, where milestones have been reached and completed these are ‘greyed out’ within the table.

**Table 1 Pre-application timetable**

<b>Pre-application stage</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Project launch</i>	<i>July 2024</i>
<i>Submission of EIA Scoping Request</i>	<i>5 November 2024</i>
<i>Scoping Opinion issued by PINS</i>	<i>16 December 2024</i>
<i>Informal (Non-Statutory) Consultation</i>	<i>27 January 2025 – 21 March 2025</i>
<i>Consultation on draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)</i>	<i>8 August – 8 September 2025</i>
<i>Adoption of SoCC</i>	<i>21 October 2025</i>
Statutory Consultation in accordance with SoCC	28 October – 23 December 2025



Pre-application stage	Date
Additional targeted statutory consultation in accordance with the SoCC on highways, noise and air quality	Q1 2026
Submission of draft documentation to PINS for review	Q1 2026
Adequacy of consultation milestone (AoCM)	Q1 2026
DCO Submission	Q2 2026

## Chapter 5: The main issues for resolution

### ISSUES

15. Having regard to the Generic Impacts section of the National Policy Statement for National Networks (“NPSNN”) designated on 24 May 2024, the Applicant’s consideration of the current main issues relating to the Site and the current pre-application process is outlined below. The list of issues will be kept under review and updated as the Proposed Development progresses.

#### Landscape and Visual

16. The Applicant is aware that due to the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, there is potential for landscape and visual effects. Recognising that ILP North needs to be designed carefully, the Applicant has consulted with relevant statutory consultees at Wigan, St Helens and Warrington Councils and is seeking to continue this engagement throughout the pre-application process, this includes undertaking meetings with the respective local authorities (including Public Rights of Way officers) and relevant statutory consultation bodies. The consultation that has been undertaken to date has been led by the Applicant’s Landscape and Visual consultant. This has sought to establish baseline information and agree the proposed methodology, preliminary zones of theoretical visibility (ZTVs) and appropriate viewpoints for assessment (to be undertaken in accordance with the 3rd edition GLVIA guidance).
17. The landscape and visual assessment for the Proposed Development (construction and operational phases) will include consideration of:
- the effect of the Proposed Development on the landscape;
  - the effect on visual receptors of the Proposed Development;
  - the impact of the Proposed Development on the surrounding settlements; and
  - proposed mitigation.

#### Agricultural Land and Minerals

18. The Applicant has commissioned the appropriate field surveys to accurately establish the Agricultural Land Classification Grades of the Site (and constituent development parcels) to inform soil management at the construction and operation phases of the Proposed Development (as per the Defra Construction Code).
19. The Applicant has also undertaken the relevant surveys to identify any mineral resources on the Site due to the location of the DCO Site within Mineral Safeguarding Areas as defined in the Wigan and Warrington Local Plans. The survey results have indicated that there are limited extents of viable resource and the resources present are considered to be of limited value.

### Archaeology and Built Heritage

20. The Applicant has undertaken a preliminary assessment of any significant effects anticipated as a result of the heritage impacts of the Proposed Development, this will be further assessed and the ES will describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The Applicant will assess both the effects upon built heritage and the effects upon archaeology. Preliminary baseline information to identify key receptors within the DCO Site and in the surrounding area has been collated and is presented in the PEIR.
21. An introductory meeting was held with Historic England and St Helens Council at the start of the process to prepare an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation to inform potential mitigation strategies.
22. Further consultation with relevant heritage consultees including Historic England, Wigan, St Helens and Warrington Councils is ongoing, to refine the scope of assessment and discuss potential effects and mitigation. The latest engagement is covered in more detail in the PEIR.

### Climate Change and Carbon Emissions

23. The NPSNN is clear that national network infrastructure plays an important role in supporting decarbonisation to reduce and mitigate climate change impacts and to facilitate the economy-wide transition to Net Zero (and potentially beyond). Steps to minimise, prevent and offset emissions in design and construction, will be assessed.

### Ecology (including Habitats Regulations Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain)

24. Site surveys have been undertaken to establish the baseline position and the potential impacts on ecosystems, habitats and protected species. Surveys to date include: a site walkover; UK Habitats Classification; hedgerows; breeding birds; wintering birds; migratory birds; eDNA for Great Crested Newts; reptiles; invertebrates; water voles; otters; bat activity and bat static detector deployments; and badger surveys. Survey work is ongoing to cover all of the land contained within the draft Order Limits.
25. The Applicant has held meetings with Natural England (NE), the Lancashire Wildlife Trust (LWT) and representatives of the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS – advising St Helens Council) to start to identify key issues and how the project will take advantage of opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geological conservation interests as well as consider how their proposal will deliver biodiversity net gain in line with the requirements in a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement. Further meetings with Natural England have taken place as part of their Discretionary Advice Service (DAS) to discuss matters raised as part of their response to the Scoping request and on topics such as the study area, receptors and mitigation in relation to ecology and biodiversity and air quality; mitigation in relation to Highfield Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); and the hydrological regime of the Site and Highfield Moss SSSI.
26. The Applicant also confirms that the DCO submission will include an appropriate Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

### Arboriculture/Woodland

27. As per national guidance, the design development of the Proposed Development will identify/appraise existing trees and woodlands with the aim of retention as best as practically possible. On-site field surveys have been commissioned in order to commence the necessary assessments and to enable the development of an appropriate mitigation strategy (including maximising opportunities for enhancement).

### Water Resources and Flood Risk

28. The DCO Site is located within Flood Zone 1 and the Applicant is aware of the NPSNN requirements in relation to the scope of the Flood Risk Assessment required in support of the DCO application. Initial meetings have taken place with the Environment Agency, and the relevant local planning authorities (including Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs)/Internal Drainage Boards) to establish the key receptors (aquifers, existing surface water features, sewer networks), the baseline principles for assessment (including hydraulic modelling) and future off/on-site mitigation strategies (Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) - allowing for climate change adaptation) which will be embedded into the design of the Proposed Development. Engagement with these parties and other relevant consultees is proposed to be ongoing throughout the pre-application process.

### Ground Conditions

29. The Site is predominantly agricultural land but it is necessary to consider land contamination and instability matters as part of the design development for the Proposed Development. The Applicant has held meetings with the Environment Agency and the relevant local authorities to identify appropriate data-sources and on-site survey requirements to inform the construction and operational phase assessments.

### Waste and Materials

30. In accordance with the NPSNN, the Applicant will seek to demonstrate that the Proposed Development will adhere to the waste hierarchy, preventing and reducing waste produced where possible and maximising preparation for reuse and recycling for waste that cannot be prevented. The Proposed Development will appraise the use Modern Methods of Construction and other sustainable design practices.

### Air Quality/Dust Emissions

31. The NPSNN details that increases in emissions of pollutants during the construction or operation phases of projects on the national networks can result in the worsening of local air quality and could contribute to adverse impacts on human health, on protected species and habitats. The Applicant consequently acknowledges the requirement to assess the impacts of the Proposed Development (both on and off-site) and distinguishing between construction and operational phases, in relation to meeting environmental assessment requirements or affecting the UK's ability to comply with the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 or impact the relevant local authority's ability to comply with the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000.
32. Initial discussions have taken place with the relevant local authorities and statutory

consultation bodies to identify appropriate data-sources, additional survey requirements, agreement on assessment methodology and receptor positions and to discuss potential mitigation measures. These discussions will continue throughout the pre-application stage of the DCO application.

### **Noise and Vibration**

33. The Applicant notes the NPSNN cross-refers to the Noise Policy Statement for England which promotes good health and good quality of life through effective noise and vibration management. It is also acknowledged that noise effects of the proposed development on ecological receptors should be assessed in accordance with the NPSNN.
34. The Applicant has undertaken meetings with the relevant local planning authorities (St Helens, Wigan and Warrington) to discuss the scope and methodology of the noise and vibration assessment. It is proposed that engagement continues throughout the pre-application process and to consider whether mitigation measures are needed both for operational and construction noise.

### **Traffic, Transport and Highways**

35. The Applicant has undertaken consultation with the highway authorities focusing on proposed approach and modelling through a Transport Working Group attended by Wigan, Warrington, St Helens, National Highways and Transport for Greater Manchester. This has led to reaching agreement on a number of the elements relating to the appropriate scope/methodology which will underpin the transport assessment. Separate discussions have also been held with local planning/highways authorities to discuss local matters since it is recognised that traffic and transport matters for the construction/operational phase impacts of the proposed SRFI scheme will extend beyond the immediate vicinity of the Site.
36. In order to ensure full overview and co-ordination of the modelling (and ultimately the Applicant's highway proposals and mitigation) requirements of the respective statutory local/national highways authorities, the Applicant will continue detailed engagement through the initial pre-application stage with the Transport Working Group.

### **Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Non-Motorised Users**

37. The Applicant is aware of the need to avoid, or minimise, the effects of the Proposed Development on the existing users of the DCO Site and beyond. An initial mapping exercise has therefore commenced to identify formal and informal pedestrian routes crossing the DCO Site with the aim of developing an appropriate scheme layout, whilst ensuring the functionality and connectivity of the green infrastructure network is maintained and any necessary works are undertaken, where possible, to avoid or mitigate any adverse impact.
38. The Applicant is currently in the process of convening introductory meetings with relevant local planning authority officers (PRoW officers etc.) to establish the baseline position.
39. Active travel and non-vehicular access requirements to the DCO Site will also be established through proactive engagement with relevant statutory consultation bodies.

## Rail Engineering

40. The Applicant has commenced formal engagement with Network Rail. This engagement has been positive and Network Rail has appointed a project sponsor and workshops have been held with further scheme design workshops and surveys planned.
41. These workshops are helping to inform the delivery and layout of the scheme with technical input from Network Rail so that connection to the network can be agreed.

## Chapter 6: Engagement

### ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES AND RELEVANT CONSULTATION BODIES

42. Introductory briefing meetings were held with three local planning authorities (LPAs) of St Helens Borough Council (10 July 2024), Wigan Council (3 July 2024) and Warrington Borough Council (14 June and 25 June 2024), which are the host authorities. The meetings introduced members to the proposals and included a presentation from the Applicant about the developer, the proposal site, the vision for ILP North and the DCO process. Key discussion points in the meeting with St Helens Borough Council included the potential economic benefits of the project, job creation, and social value, as well as the consultation strategy and the importance of the site from the council's point of view. Key discussion points in the meeting with Wigan Council included the expected delivery and construction timeline of the project, with members asking to be kept informed. Finally, key discussion points in the meeting with Warrington Borough Council included transport, impact on the Green Belt, capacity of the railway, movement of vehicles and the impact of the development on local roads, as well as clarification on the vision for the Proposed Development while learning more about resident views. Subsequent follow-on political briefings were also undertaken in advance of the Applicant's project launch and for the informal consultation.
43. Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) have been agreed with the LPAs. The PPAs will extend these through each milestone.
44. A tripartite Working Group has also been set up with St Helens Borough Council, Wigan Council and Warrington Borough Council and a number of meetings have already occurred. The Applicant has already established a separate working group for transport (discussed below) and will seek to set up further topic specific working groups as required.
45. The Applicant has also arranged further meetings or briefings as appropriate with the following prescribed bodies, in addition to the Applicant's non-statutory and statutory consultation. Where relevant, enhanced/ discretionary advisory services will be agreed/proposed:
- Network Rail;
  - Natural England;
  - The Environment Agency (EA);
  - The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (Historic England);
  - The relevant Parish Councils; and
  - Relevant statutory undertakers with whom the Applicant proposes to agree protective provisions as part of the DCO.

46. The Applicant has also already had significant engagement with Network Rail, and will continue to progress those meetings in respect of rail connections and delivery.
47. The Applicant has entered into discretionary advice service agreements with the respective statutory consultation bodies to ensure appropriate cost recovery.

#### ENGAGEMENT WITH LANDOWNERS

48. The Applicant owns 364.25 acres of land contained within the draft Order Limits.
49. Proactive relationships have been established with adjacent landowners to facilitate appropriate ongoing access for the Applicant's appointed consultant team to undertake baseline surveys and the Applicant will continue to negotiate with relevant owners as the draft Order Limits is refined throughout the pre-application process.



## Chapter 7: Pre-application risks

### POTENTIAL RISKS

50. The below sets out the Applicant's initial identification of risks to achievement of the pre-application programme.

#### Public Consultation Awareness

51. The Applicant has planned a comprehensive public relations/consultation exercise. This included as part of the Project Launch an open dialogue and ongoing engagement with key stakeholders.

#### Informal Consultation – 27 January 2025 to 21 March 2025

52. The Applicant undertook a non-statutory 'informal' consultation which ran from 27 January 2025 to 21 March 2025. The consultation included four in person events, two webinars (one for members of the public and one for parish councils), preparation of topic papers and an updated project website. Members of the public could provide their feedback via a variety of channels, including online and paper feedback forms, via the dedicated project email or telephone line, and traditional letter submissions.
53. In total, 239 consultation responses were received during the non-statutory consultation. The comments received have been taken into account in the ongoing design development process.

#### First Statutory Consultation – 28 October 2025 to 23 December 2025

54. The formal statutory consultation commenced in October 2025 and runs until 23 December 2025.
55. As part of this consultation, a comprehensive suite of material has been made available, including a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and draft versions of application plans and documents. The consultation material has been made available through the project website (<https://www.tritaxbigbox.co.uk/our-spaces/intermodal-logistics-park-north/>), at a number of deposit locations and will be presented through a series of in-person consultation events, an online webinar and a series of targeted briefings.

#### Second Statutory Consultation – Q1 2026

56. A second targeted statutory consultation will be held in Q1 of 2026. This will focus on the transport mitigation package and associated updates to environmental assessments.

#### LPA and statutory body resourcing and capacity

57. The Applicant is aware that resources of statutory bodies and local authorities can be

constrained which might impact the extent and quality of engagement or consultation responses. The Applicant has therefore proactively sought to enter into Planning Performance Agreements with respective LPAs and statutory consultation bodies enhanced/ discretionary advisory services, with the aim of maximising the availability and engagement of the parties during pre-application consultation stages. In addition, the Applicant team are committed to ongoing engagement and briefings throughout the pre-application stage to support the bodies in accessing and engaging with the Proposed Development.

**Transport and Highways**

58. The Applicant notes that the protracted nature of traffic/highway modelling can impact programme. The Applicant has therefore established a Transport Working Group (TWG) with the relevant statutory authorities (LPAs plus National Highways) to discuss and co-ordinate all transport matters including modelling. The members of the Transport Working Group are as follows:

**Table 2 TWG membership**

Name	Organisation
Sinead Turnbull, Lewis Evans	Tritax
Ashley Russell, Vassil Pavlov, Philip Lines, Joe Payne, Zoltan Toskai	Stantec
Simon Hilditch, Alessandro Pagiani	BWB
Stephen Riley	Wigan Council
Stephen Gill, Ryan Dyson, Michelle Zenner, Sean Traynor	St Helens Borough Council
Alistair Johnson, Mike Taylor	Warrington Council
Nevill McKenzie, Emma Trevett, Peter Wilson	WSP
Jonathan Marsh, Emma Anforth	Transport for Greater Manchester
Laura Appleton	AECOM
Paul Gray, Ben Bell	Systra
Richard Skitt	Mott Macdonald
Adam Johnson	National Highways

59. The Transport Working Group have held twelve meetings to date at the time of writing. The discussions have centred on the method of assessment which includes the opportunities for

sustainable transport to generate the vision and validate approach; trip generation methodology; the appropriateness of comparable Rail Freight sites for surveying; the modelling approach at both the strategic and local junction level; and general operational concerns of the highway network.