

For immediate use**10th July 2006****Page 1 of 2****TELFORD RAILFREIGHT TERMINAL**

Good news for the economy of The Borough of Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire as the construction of the new Railfreight Terminal at Donnington, situated next to one of Telford's largest industrial development areas, gets the go-ahead.

The project has been under development for several years and approval has been given by the Department for Transport last year. It is being promoted by the three principal owners of the land needed for the project, namely The Borough of Telford & Wrekin, national regeneration agency English Partnerships and Ministry of Defence and is part financed by the European Union.

The Railfreight Terminal is an important part of the Borough's Economic Development Strategy, protecting existing jobs and helping create the opportunities for ongoing inward investment and employment.

Cllr. Charles Smith, Deputy Leader of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin said, "This is an important project for the Borough and will bring wider benefits for Shropshire and the West Midlands Region. Telford has a strong economic base in manufacturing and logistics activities. This vital transport link will assist local companies to be competitive in national and global markets. Telford has a young population and we need to be able to create the best possible conditions for future employment.

More follows...

“I am pleased that we are now able to start the construction process. It has required a great deal of work to get to this point and this underlines the commitment and determination that has been established between the Council and its partners”.

The terminal will consist of two main parts:

- A core terminal with hardstandings for the transfer of freight between rail and road. This will be capable of handling a wide range of traffic, including containers. This will be run by a private sector railfreight operator.
- A major rail-served development site of 22 acres capable of taking a warehouse in excess of 400,000 square feet floor space. This will be marketed to developers and logistics companies in the near future.

It is initially expected to handle around 200 – 250,000 tonnes of freight per year and will have the ability to grow easily to handle around 750,000 tonnes per year. The project is in line with the Government’s strategy of increasing the quantity of freight travelling by rail. The transport industry acknowledges that this can only be achieved by the construction of new terminals and by capturing more of the freight requirements linked to manufacturing and logistics activities.

The first contract, for the connection to the national rail system has been awarded to Carillion. Work will be starting this month with commissioning scheduled for the end of October. Graham Fairhurst, Special Projects Manager at the Borough of Telford & Wrekin said: “This is a major project of huge importance to the future economic success of the borough. An effective partnership has had to be created with our contractor Carillion and Network Rail. Work will be starting on schedule on the connection showing how well this partnership is working and the efforts of the teams in both these organisations”.

The Terminal itself should be open within twelve months and the rail-served warehouse later in 2007.

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Further information for the media is available from: David Morgan, Public Relations Officer on 01952 203052, or email david.morgan@telford.gov.uk