



Inception Meeting note

Project name	Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal Phase 4 (DIRFT 4)
Case reference	BC0410003
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date of meeting	08 July 2026
Meeting with	Meeting with Prologis UK Limited and consultant team
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed, and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

The proposed development

The applicant provided an overview of their proposed nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP). A Development Consent Order (DCO) will be sought by Prologis UK Limited (the applicant) for a further phase of Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal, known as DIRFT 4. The proposed development comprises the further extension of the DIRFT estate, which would represent the third major extension of the rail freight interchange.

The applicant advised that the proposed development has evolved following the issue of the Section 35 Direction by the Secretary of State on 17th December 2025 and described the refinements to the project. The applicant outlined its intention to write to the Secretary of State to advise of these refinements and seek confirmation that the proposed project is the same as that for which the Direction dated 17th December 2025 was given.

The proposed development will cover approximately 511,000 sq. m (5.5 million sq. ft) of advanced industrial logistics floorspace and ancillary office accommodation. The applicant clarified the use would fall within Class B8 (storage and distribution), Class B2 (general industrial), and ancillary Class E (g)(i) (offices), Class E (g)(ii) (research and development) and Class E (g)(iii) (light industrial). The development will be linked to the existing DIRFT estate benefiting from the multiple rail terminals and other services the wider park already provides. The applicant advised that the development will also comprise a facility for research, innovation and training (Use Class F1), energy centre and lorry park.

A semi-circular access road will connect the Site to DIRFT III via two bridges over the M1, one to the north linking to the internal estate road to the north of the rail terminal, and the other to the south, again linking to the DIRFT III internal estate road. All road access to the Site will be via DIRFT (there will be no vehicular access via the existing road network to the east of the M1 motorway).

The development zones are proposed to be located centrally within the Site, bounded by the M1 to the west and surrounded by landscaping and substantial areas of open space, including two country parks and community facilities.

The Site extends onto land currently farmed and used as two wind farms: Lilbourne Wind Farm and Yelvertoft Wind Farm. Three Public Rights of Way either traverse the Site or are influenced by the development. There is an existing pedestrian and bridleway bridge situated at the western boundary, which constitutes an access point to the Site over the M1 from the DIRFT estate.

The proposals involve the decommissioning and removal of a number of wind turbines. Notwithstanding the required removal of wind turbines, it is noted that the opportunities presented by the photovoltaic solar cell and battery system to be employed at the Site will assist in the off-setting of renewable energy generation capacity associated with the existing use of the turbines.

The Site extends to approximately 255 hectares and lies wholly within the administrative area of West Northamptonshire, c. 7km east of Rugby and c.11.5km north of Daventry. The M1 runs immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the Site, and it is located c.1km to the north of Junction 18 of the M1. DIRFT III (the latest phase of development at DIRFT) is located immediately west of the Site across the M1 motorway. The Site is c.1.3km to the north of the village of Crick and c.800m to west of the village of Yelvertoft.

Consenting programme and engagement

The applicant is working to the indicative pre-application timescale below, subject to any changes needed:

- Environmental Surveys – January 2026 (ongoing)
- Early informal engagement with key technical Statutory Consultees - February 2026 (ongoing)
- Planning Inspectorate Inception Meeting and Project Launch – July 2026
- Public Engagement 1, initial consultation (with near neighbours, landowners, politicians, parish councils, public, and stakeholders) – Commencing in Autumn 2026
- Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate – Autumn 2026 (likely October or November)

- Planning Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion – January / February 2027
- Public Engagement 2. Ongoing engagement (continued and ongoing engagement with technical stakeholders, prescribed consultees public and other relevant stakeholders) – Spring 2027
- Submission of draft documents to the Planning Inspectorate for review / feedback from Planning Inspectorate of draft documents – March to July 2027
- Submission of the DCO application – November 2027.

The applicant discussed its proposed approach to consultation. In light of ongoing legislative changes, the applicant stated that it would maintain effective principles for engagement with the local community and other stakeholders during the pre-application stage, in which to inform parties about the proposed development and seek feedback on its proposals, and would ensure compliance with the relevant legislation at all times.

Environmental constraints and issues

The applicant advised there were no nearby sites of any particular designation that would impact on the development. It also advised that environmental and physical constraints have been taken into account in designing the development. The applicant advised that there may be potential for some of the existing wind turbines within the order limit to be retained or replaced. It also advised it intended to maximise the possibility for rooftop photovoltaic development within the scheme.

In response to a question from the Inspectorate as to whether there would be any changes to the existing rail infrastructure the applicant advised that there would not be any.

EIA scoping

The applicant advised it intended to submit its scoping request to the Inspectorate in the autumn of 2026. The Inspectorate requested that for resourcing purposes that the applicant could provide a more specific timeframe for this. The applicant confirmed it would advise of a more specific date once it was able to.

Land and rights

The Applicant advised is in positive discussions with all landowners and other parties with land interests with a clear intention to reach private treaty agreements with all these parties regarding land requirements for the Project.

The pre-application service

The applicant advised that it wishes to proceed with the standard level of pre-application service offered by the Inspectorate. The applicant feels the selection of Tier 2 is appropriate as they, the local planning authority and statutory consultees, benefit from previous DCO experience at the DIRFT site. In addition, the nature of the project aligns with the definition of a scheme suited to Tier 2 in that it is neither exceptionally straight forward given the constraints to the Site and interaction with an existing DCO, nor

exceptionally complex given the type of development proposed, the applicants project history and existing level of similar development in proximity to and in connection with the project.

The applicant enquired as to whether the Inspectorate would as part of the standard level of service be open to or find the offer of a site visit beneficial. The Inspectorate informed the applicant that this would be beneficial and that the most suitable time for this to occur would be prior to scoping taking place.

The Inspectorate said that it would consider these matters and confirm the service tier shortly following the meeting.