

Programme Document
Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal
Expansion (DIRFT 4)
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Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1 Introduction	4
1.2 Purpose and Structure	4
2. Background to the project	5
2.2 The Applicant	5
2.3 Background to the Proposed Development	5
2.4 The Proposed Development	7
2.5 Application of the Planning Act 2008	10
2.6 Other Consents	11
2.7 Policy Context	11
3. The Planning Inspectorate's pre-application service	13
3.1 Proposed Service Tier	13
4. Pre-application programme	14
4.1 Submission Timeframe	14
4.2 Indicative Pre-application Programme	14
5. Main issues for resolution	15
5.1 Main issues emerging during pre-application	15
6. Engaging with statutory bodies	16
6.1 Engagement Approach	16
6.2 Main Statutory Bodies Affected	17
7. Engaging with local authorities	19
8. Pre-application risks	20

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Prologis UK Limited ('Prologis', 'the Applicant') intends to submit a Development Consent Order ('DCO') application for a further phase of Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal known as DIRFT 4 ('the Proposed Development').

The Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus and Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects requires the production and submission of a Programme Document for DCO applications, which lays out the proposed timetable and activities during pre-application. This Programme Document has been produced on behalf of the Applicant, to fulfil that requirement in respect of the Proposed Development.

1.2 Purpose and Structure

This Programme Document will be updated at key milestones as the Project progresses through the pre-application process. A public pre-application Programme Document will be published on the Applicant's website once established.

The Proposed Development is currently at the start of the DCO pre-application process, and this is the first version of the Programme Document. An Inception Meeting is being held with the Planning Inspectorate on 8 July 2026 representing the start of the pre-application process.

This Programme Document is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** – provides background to the Proposed Development, details of the proposals, outlines the application of the Planning Act 2008 to the Project, and details other consents required to deliver the Proposed Development;
- **Section 3** – states the relevant Planning Inspectorate's level of pre-application service requested;
- **Section 4** – defines the expected programme for submission of the DCO;
- **Section 5** – provides an indication of the main issues to be addressed;
- **Section 6** – clarifies the engagement to date with statutory bodies and local authorities; and
- **Section 7** – considers potential pre-application risks and how these will be tracked and managed.

2. Background to the project

2.2 The Applicant

Prologis UK Limited (Prologis) is the world's largest real estate investment trust (REIT), with a global portfolio of over 1.3 billion sq. ft across the most important logistics markets. As a major inward investor into UK Plc, Prologis plays a critical role in supporting sustainable growth, jobs, and critical national infrastructure.

Prologis has \$10.4 billion of assets under management in the UK across 28 Prologis Parks, supporting the UK's role as a hub for global trade. The Company's UK portfolio totals 33.5 million sq. ft. of logistics facilities, enabling 2.5% of UK GDP to flow through its buildings annually. Over 100,000 people are employed by the businesses operating within its UK portfolio, helping to drive productivity and economic resilience. In September 2025, Prologis committed a further £3.9 billion investment into the UK over the next five years to strengthen its current investment at Cambridge Biomedical Campus and deliver a major upgrade to DIRFT (subject to obtaining the required planning permissions and approvals). This investment programme will support the UK's growth in life sciences, advanced manufacturing and strengthen UK sustainable logistics capacity, whilst creating a substantial number of high quality local jobs across Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire.

More information can be found at the Applicant's company website:

www.prologis.co.uk

2.3 Background to the Proposed Development

Prologis is a major economic contributor in the East Midlands region and to West Northamptonshire Council, investing over \$1.7bn over the past decade. In 2024 alone, business rates from DIRFT contributed £31.9 million to West Northamptonshire Council. At DIRFT, the Company's flagship UK logistics hub, more than 10,000 people are already employed, making it one of the largest centres of logistics employment in the country.

DIRFT is Prologis' second largest logistics project worldwide and a nationally significant Strategic Rail Freight Interchange ('SRFI'). DIRFT is one of the largest inland rail freight ports in Europe, providing critical multimodal connections that underpin national and regional supply chains. The DIRFT estate comprises three phases of development located on adjoining parcels of land between the A5, M1 and Northampton Loop of the West Coast Mainline railway. DIRFT is located at the heart of the Golden Triangle of Logistics which is the most strategically important location for logistics operations in the UK. It plays a vital economic development role in the logistics sector and its location, relative to key national road and rail networks, ensures that occupiers can respond to demand efficiently and quickly to move goods across the wider UK.

Prologis' high-quality logistics portfolio in West Northamptonshire also includes Prologis Apex Park (Daventry), Prologis Grange Park and Prologis Park Pineham (both Northampton). These developments not only strengthen regional supply

chains but also deliver long-term investment, jobs, and sustainability benefits to the host communities.

Prologis' presence in West Northamptonshire continues to expand, with GXO and Inditex recently investing at DIRFT. In August 2025, Marks & Spencer announced a £340 million investment in its food supply chain – the largest in its history – which will fund the fitout of an automated National Distribution Centre (NDC) that Prologis is building at DIRFT III and will result in a project of over £0.5 billion. XPO has also specifically selected a site at DIRFT for its new bespoke state-of-the-art automated warehouse.

Further information about the current development at DIRFT can be found at the Applicant's DIRFT webpage: [Prologis RFI DIRFT | Prologis](#)

Development and consenting background to DIRFT:

DIRFT I first opened in 1997, with the benefit of two planning permissions, issued under the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act in 1994 and 1995. The original planning permission for DIRFT I provided for approximately 390,000 sq. m of rail-linked and rail-related warehouse and distribution buildings.

The first phase of DIRFT was DIRFT South where the current Rail Port is located with both rail linked (directly) and rail served warehousing on land adjacent the West Coast Main Line Northampton Loop and accessed off the A428 road; DIRFT Central, to the north of DIRFT South similarly accessed off the A428 with one Tesco logistics building occupying the site; and DIRFT East to the east of DIRFT South, east of the A5 link road from M1 Junction 18 and west of the M1 motorway.

DIRFT II (the second phase of development at DIRFT) was granted planning permission in 2005, for circa 209,000 sq. m of additional rail-linked warehouse and distribution buildings to the west of the A5, with an extension of the rail line on a bridge over the A5.

DIRFT III (the latest phase of development at DIRFT) is the subject of a DCO ([The Daventry International Rail Freight Interchange Alteration Order 2014](#)) which came into force on 24th July 2014. DIRFT III extended the rail infrastructure from DIRFT II to the north to create a new rail terminal as a focal point for the extended estate. The DCO applicants were Prologis and Rugby Radio Station Limited Partnership (RRSLP) (BT and Aviva). Work on the extended rail infrastructure was completed in 2022; whilst work on the storage and distribution space is ongoing on-site and well advanced towards completion. Once fully operational, it could provide approximately an additional 731,000 sq. m of new rail-served storage and distribution floorspace. Such has been the success of DIRFT, as the nation's largest and busiest rail freight interchange, there is now very limited space left on the estate, with the recent transactions referenced above taking up the major plots. As a result of this continued strong demand, only four building plots remain, reflecting 1-2 years supply.

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.

Figure 2-2 below shows the current indicative 'Order Limits' which is the boundary within which the Proposed Development would be physically located, including the temporary works areas. The term 'Order Limits' represents the legal limits for the DCO application. The 'Site' is the area within the Order Limits.

Figure 2-2: DIRFT 4 Current Proposed Order Limits



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 traverse the Site. 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 Proposed Development comprises the following key components:

- Approximately 511,000 sq. m (5.5 million sq. ft) of advanced industrial logistics floorspace and ancillary office accommodation (comprising Use Classes B2 and B8), located across four development plots dissected by the proposed internal access road linked to the existing DIRFT estate and benefiting from the multiple rail terminals and other services the wider park already provides;
- The development plots will accommodate industrial logistics buildings across defined plateaus, with the buildings designed to accommodate some areas of mezzanines (included within the floorspace total);
- The Project also includes a new lorry park with associated amenity hub and the UK's first facility, acting as a catalyst for research, innovation and training. Both these elements will be located to the south of the warehousing zones, in the southern part of the Site and will be connected to the wider DIRFT estate;
- The Proposed Development is divided into four zones. A 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 new footpaths, woodland, mounding, watercourse enhancements and other habitats;
- Over 50% of the proposed Site will be occupied by landscape through an extension of Lilbourne Meadows and the creation of Yelvertoft Meadows, delivering recreational and biodiversity benefits with public access;
- The Project will provide a site-wide photovoltaic solar cell and battery system that will fully serve the energy demands of the Site;
- The DCO will address the need to maintain, divert and extend existing Public Rights of Way, to ensure public access through the Site is maintained; and
- 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 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 current masterplan showing the Proposed Development is provided at Figure 2-3 below.

Figure 2-3: DIRFT 4 Current Illustrative Masterplan



2.5 Application of the Planning Act 2008

DIRFT 4 represents strategic foreign direct investment in nationally critical industrial logistics infrastructure, supporting the UK Industrial Strategy and the Department for Business and Trade's Plan for Growth. The Project builds upon the nationally significant DIRFT III (NSIP) and will increase throughput at the existing rail freight terminal, enhancing its role as a core component of the UK's critical supply-chain network.

The Project will:

- Deliver £1 billion (\$1.3bn) of construction investment over ten years;
- Provide over 5,250 direct operational jobs and 2,300 indirect regional jobs, generating £228 million (\$303.5 m) GVA annually;
- Provide around 750 direct and 900 indirect construction jobs annually, providing £195 million in GVA per annum from direct and indirect/induced FTE jobs; and,
- Generate £32.05 million in annual business rates, with £16.05 million retained locally.

To confirm the position, on 19 November 2025, the Applicant submitted a request for a Direction from the Secretary of State ('SoS') for Housing, Communities and Local Government under Section 35 'Directions in relation to projects of national significance' of the Planning Act 2008.

The SoS issued a Direction in response to this request on 17 December 2025, which confirmed that the Project is nationally significant and is to be treated as a

development for which development consent is required, for the following reasons:

- *the proposal would be likely to have significant economic impact;*
- *be important in driving growth in the economy;*
- *have an impact on an area wider than a single local authority area;*
- *the substantial physical size and scale of the project;*
- *would support the delivery of Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges, specifically Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal;*
- *In addition, the Secretary of State also considers that the Proposed Project would benefit from the application being determined through a single, unified consenting process provided by the Planning Act and removing the need to apply and the uncertainty of applying for separate powers and consents.*

2.6 Other Consents

The Applicant 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. Notwithstanding this, the summary below of other consents includes Compulsory Acquisition Powers for land and other land interests as a fall-back position.

The Proposed Development will require the following other consents:

- Compulsory acquisition powers for land, land interests and/or rights over land to secure certain outcomes on land control and rights over land, primarily for construction purposes;
- Consents for works to the highways in respect of off-site highway works;
- Permanent and/or temporary powers to divert or close public rights of way; and
- Provisions relating to utilities.

2.7 Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (December 2024) makes it clear that storage and distribution facilities have a key role in supporting national economic growth. Paragraph 85 states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Paragraph 86 (a) requires planning policies to set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to the national industrial strategy, with Paragraph 86 (c) confirming that planning policies should *“pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics”*.

Paragraph 87 of the NPPF follows this up, requiring planning decisions to recognise the specific locational requirements of different sectors, including, making provision for: *“storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales*

and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation”.

The Proposed Development also directly aligns with the March 2024 National Networks National Policy Statement (‘NNNPS’) which recognises the important role of the rail network in moving freight, contributing towards both a resilient and effective supply chain for the country whilst significantly reducing carbon emissions and supporting economic growth. The NNNPS identifies a compelling need for an expanded network of SRFIs and highlights throughout the importance of facilitating the development of the rail freight industry where there is a high opportunity for modal shift. By bringing forward this nationally significant project, Prologis will assist in the delivery of the Government’s ambitions for rail freight growth and unlocking the wide ranging environmental, social and economic benefits of the sector.

The Site currently lies within the open countryside but is included as an allocation for employment development (Policy EC11 – Land East of M1 (extension of Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal DIRFT) in the Regulation 18 Draft West Northamptonshire Local Plan which was consulted on from 29 January to 27 March 2026.

3. The Planning Inspectorate's pre-application service

3.1 Proposed Service Tier

The Planning Inspectorate ('PINS') has developed a new three tier pre-application service within which to assess DCO applications. In line with the service options available, as set out in the Planning Inspectorate's Pre-application Prospectus the Applicant considers the Project to fall within the Standard Tier 2 Service.

The selection of Tier 2 is appropriate as the Applicant and 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 Project history and existing level of similar development in proximity to and in connection with the Project.

The intention to develop any of the supplementary components will be confirmed as the pre-application process progresses.

4. Pre-application programme

4.1 Submission Timeframe

The Proposed Development is at an early stage and a comprehensive programme for certain elements of the pre-application activities is still underway, including details of all planned interactions with the Planning Inspectorate and those between the Applicant and the relevant statutory bodies and local authorities. Greater clarity on these matters will be provided in due course. However, at this stage the application for a DCO is expected to be submitted in November 2027.

4.2 Indicative Pre-application Programme

An indicative timeline of the pre-application process is set out in Table 4-1 below. The pre-application timeframe will be refined and augmented as work progresses and engagement commences with PINS, and therefore the dates set out and meeting requirements below may be subject to change.

Table 4-1: Indicative Pre-application Programme

Pre-application Activity*	Expected Timeframe
Environmental Surveys	January 2026 – ongoing
Early informal engagement with key technical Statutory Consultees	February 2026 – ongoing
Inception Meeting with PINS	8 July 2026
Public Engagement 1	Autumn 2026
Submission of EIA Scoping Report to PINS	Autumn 2026
Receipt of EIA Scoping Opinion	Early 2027
Post-scoping milestone meeting with PINS	January – February 2027
Draft ES and DCO documents Preparation	From January 2027
Public Engagement 2	Spring 2027
Post-consultation milestone meeting with PINS	June 2027
Refinements to draft ES/DCO documents	June – August 2027
Submission of draft documents to PINS for standard draft document review service	September 2027
Draft documents feedback from PINS	October 2027
Pre-submission milestone meeting with PINS	October 2027
Intended DCO application submission	November 2027

* Proposed activities and timelines subject to Government Guidance and Legislation changes

5. Main issues for resolution

5.1 Main issues emerging during pre-application

During the pre-application stage, the Applicant will maintain an Issues Tracker, which will cumulate in a list of potential main issues for the Examination. This document will be entered into the Examination.

The Proposed Development is currently at an early pre-application stage. It is therefore not currently possible to identify a comprehensive list of issues that will require resolution at Examination.

6. Engaging with statutory bodies

6.1 Engagement Approach

Prologis has a long-established presence at RFI DIRFT and maintains ongoing engagement with local communities, local authorities, statutory bodies and other stakeholders through a range of established channels, including regular meetings, liaison forums and attendance at parish council meetings.

This ongoing engagement has informed the evolution of the DIRFT 4 proposals since the concept was first identified following the successful delivery and occupation of DIRFT III as described.

The Applicant's approach to consultation is informed by:

1. Experience gained through the promotion and delivery of the DIRFT III Development Consent Order;
2. The consultation requirements of the Planning Act 2008;
3. Relevant secondary legislation and guidance issued by the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspectorate; and
4. Feedback received through ongoing stakeholder engagement undertaken to date.

Early engagement on the emerging DIRFT 4 concept commenced in 2019 and has continued throughout the development of the project. This engagement has included discussions with local authorities, parish councils, landowners, statutory consultees, businesses, community representatives and other stakeholders regarding the emerging vision, development principles and potential opportunities and constraints associated with the site.

Feedback received through this early engagement has informed the on going development of the scheme and contributed to the refinement of the emerging masterplan, including consideration of landscape, environmental, transport, design and community-related matters. The Applicant has sought to understand both the opportunities and concerns identified by stakeholders and has used this engagement to inform the evolution of the proposals.

The Applicant will continue to engage with stakeholders as the design evolves and technical assessments are completed. This ongoing dialogue will help ensure that the project is informed by local knowledge and stakeholder perspectives throughout the pre-application stage.

As the project progresses through the Development Consent Order process, this established programme of engagement will be supplemented by a structured programme of consultation undertaken in accordance with the Planning Act 2008. The purpose of this programme will be to:

1. Ensure compliance with all statutory consultation requirements;
2. Provide consultees with clear and accessible information regarding the proposed development;

3. Enable stakeholders and local communities to understand and comment on the proposals;
4. Inform the continued evolution of the scheme where appropriate; and
5. Demonstrate how consultation feedback has been considered in the preparation of the DCO application.

The Applicant is currently preparing a detailed programme of consultation and engagement. Subject to ongoing design development and the publication of updated consultation guidance, the current intention is to undertake further non-statutory engagement during late 2026, followed by formal statutory consultation on a defined scheme and consistent evidence base in spring 2027.

Alongside consultation activities, the Applicant will maintain an ongoing programme of project communications to ensure stakeholders are kept informed of project progress, key milestones and opportunities to participate in consultation. This will support transparency throughout the pre-application process and help stakeholders engage effectively with the proposals. Consistent with the approach adopted at DIRFT III, consultation will be used to inform the development of a high-quality masterplan, landscape strategy and public realm, ensuring that DIRFT 4 delivers economic, transport and logistics benefits alongside environmental and community enhancements.

The Applicant's ambition extends beyond the delivery of logistics infrastructure alone. Through the design process and engagement with stakeholders, DIRFT 4 will seek to create a well-designed and distinctive place, incorporating high-quality architecture, landscape, public realm, green infrastructure and community-facing features where appropriate. The Applicant considers placemaking to be an important component of the project and will seek to embed design quality and a strong sense of place throughout the development. This approach will build upon the principles successfully applied at DIRFT III, including the delivery of extensive landscape, ecological and recreational enhancements such as Lilbourne Meadows, and will seek to ensure that DIRFT IV makes a positive and lasting contribution to the wider area.

A Consultation Strategy and Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) will be prepared and consulted upon in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and will set out the detailed approach to consultation during the pre-application stage.

6.2 Main Statutory Bodies Affected

The main statutory bodies likely to be consulted are provided below. The Programme Document will be shared with the Statutory Bodies. The Proposed Development is at an early stage and therefore the list may change or develop throughout the design process:

- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Lead Local Flood Authority (West Northamptonshire)
- Historic England

- Local Highways Authority (West Northamptonshire)
- National Highways
- Parish Councils within the Order Limits
- Health and Safety Executive
- UK Health Security Agency
- Utilities and statutory undertakers (incl National Grid)

Prologis has continued to engage with statutory consultees including National Highways and the local highway authority (WNC) through the Transport Review Group (TRG) which was established under the DIRFT III DCO. Discussions on the DIRFT 4 project have commenced in this context.

It is not currently possible to indicate the degree to which Prologis expects any issues raised by the statutory bodies to be resolved before the application is submitted. This position will be updated as engagement is undertaken with the identified consultees.

It is not currently possible to indicate whether Prologis expects any of the statutory bodies to produce pre-application PADSS. This position will be updated as engagement is undertaken with the identified consultees.

7. Engaging with local authorities

The main local authorities affected by the application are:

- West Northamptonshire Council
- Rugby Council
- Warwickshire County Council

The Applicant has been in consultation with West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) as the host authority regarding the proposals, mainly in promoting the Site through the Council's Local Plan process. This started in December 2020 with the first of a series of meetings. A summary of engagement with the WNC Local Plan process and associated engagement is set out below:

- Prologis submitted a response to the WNC Regulation 18 Spatial Options Consultation in December 2021. Contiguous with this process, Prologis met with the Parish Councils near to the Site; Lilbourne, Crick and Yelvertoft.
- In April 2024, WNC consulted on the Regulation 18 Draft WNLP. Prologis responded to this consultation on 31 May 2024. In conjunction with this consultation response, discussions continued between Prologis and WNC Senior Officers.
- In January 2026, WNC consulted on a further Regulation 18 Draft WNLP. In this Plan, DIRFT 4 is allocated for employment development (Policy EC11 – Land East of M1 (extension of Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal DIRFT)). Prologis responded to this Regulation 18 consultation 27 March 2026.

Prologis has regular engagement with Officers of WNC and engagement with WNC is expected to continue through the Local Plan process and also through Prologis' engagement strategy for the DIRFT 4 DCO.

It is not currently known whether the Councils' will produce pre-application PADSS. This position will be updated as engagement is undertaken with the local authorities.

It is not currently possible to indicate the degree to which Prologis expects any issues raised by the local authorities to be resolved before the application is submitted. This position will be updated as targeted engagement is undertaken with the local authorities.

8. Pre-application risks

During the pre-application stage, the Applicant will maintain a record of key pre-application risks and how they are being tracked and managed. The Proposed Development is currently at an early pre-application stage. It is therefore not currently possible to identify a comprehensive list of pre-application risks, and this will be updated in later versions of the Programme Document.