Application No: 13/02079/PPP

Proposed Development:

Expansion of Mossend Railhead with Additional Rail Sidings, the Development of the Mossend International Railfreight Park including: Class 5 (General Industry) Use; Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) Use and Ancillary Support Uses Including Access to the A8 and Associated Site Preparation, Earthworks, Infrastructure and Landscaping

Site Address:

Mossend Rail Head
Reema Road
Reema Ind Est
Bellshill
ML4 1RR

Date Registered: 8th November 2013

Applicant: Peter D Stirling Ltd/I D Meiklam Trust Mossend Railhead Reema Road Bellshill ML4 1RR

Agent: Ironside Farrar Ltd 111 McDonald Road Edinburgh EH7 4NW

Application Level: Major Application

Contrary to Development Plan: Yes


Representations: 1050 letters of representation received including three petitions with 780, 37 and 74 signatures each.

Recommendation: Approve Subject to Conditions

Reasoned Justification:

Whilst contrary to Policy NBE3 of the North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012 by virtue of development in the Green Belt, the proposed development takes support from the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2012 in regard to the promotion of ancillary land allocations which support the economic growth of safeguarded strategic freight facilities, of which Eurocentral/Mossend is specifically identified. The development can also be justified as having a market and specific locational need, will contribute towards substantial economic, social and environmental benefits, and can be accommodated with an acceptable level of impact on the local environment. In this instance there are material considerations that carry sufficient weight to support the application.
PLANNING APPLICATION: 13/02079/PPP

Expansion of Mossend Railhead with Additional Rail Sidings, the Development of the Mossend International Railfreight Park including: Class 5 (General Industry) Use; Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) Use and Ancillary Support Uses, Including Access to the A8 and Associated Site Preparation, Earthworks, Infrastructure and Landscaping.

Mossend Rail Head, Reema Road Ind. Est., Reema Road, Bellshill, ML4 1RR
Proposed Conditions:

1. Prior to the commencement of works within each phase of the site, further planning applications shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority in respect of the following matters:

   a) the siting, design and external appearance of all buildings and other structures;
   b) the means of rail, vehicular and pedestrian access to the site;
   c) the layout of the site, including all rail infrastructure, roads including underpasses, footways, parking and yard areas;
   d) the details of, that timetable for, the hard and soft landscaping of the site as well as all elements of habitat management;
   e) details for management and maintenance of the areas identified in (c) and (d) above;
   f) the design and location of all boundary walls, gates and security fences;
   g) the provisions for loading and uploading of all goods vehicles;
   h) the provision of drainage works;
   i) the disposal of sewage;
   j) details of existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows to be retained;
   k) details of existing and proposed site levels including all proposed earthworks.
   l) the phasing of the development;

   For the avoidance of doubt, all further applications shall be submitted in accordance with the phasing scheme approved under the terms of Condition 2 below.

   Reason: To accord with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006.

2. That before any development starts, a phasing scheme that specifies the order that all elements of the site (including rail infrastructure and road access) will be implemented shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. This shall have regard to the Environmental Statement and subsequent reports submitted to the Planning Authority and shall demonstrate that all combined Class 5/6 and Class 6 buildings within the site shall be directly dependent on rail transport related to the Mossend Railhead. For the avoidance of doubt, the phasing scheme shall make provisions for the early implementation of the Green Network in parallel with the completion of the first development platform within the site. Development shall thereafter take place only in accordance with the approved phasing scheme unless agreed otherwise in writing with the Planning Authority.

   Applications for matters specified in condition 1 above may be made in relation to any individual building or phase of development at the site subject to the limitations of the agreed phasing scheme and other conditions of this consent.

   Reason: To ensure a minimum possible impact on the environment at any given time to ensure development of the site for rail freight purposes.

3. That before any development starts, details of an appointed Planning Monitoring Officer shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The remit of the Planning Monitoring Officer shall be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority before any development starts but shall include overseeing compliance with all conditions and timely submission of appropriate information. The appointed Officer shall thereafter remain in place until satisfactorily completion of the development, unless a change of Officer is first agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

   Reason: To ensure that the Planning Authority has the opportunity to monitor the development and ensure compliance with planning conditions.
4. That for the avoidance of doubt, no permission is hereby approved for the specific layout detailed on the indicative masterplan drawing no 7991/PA/005a. The site layout shall be developed using the masterplan as a guide and taking account of the requirements of all conditions of this consent.

5. Reason: In order to confirm the terms of this consent and protect the amenity of the neighbouring residential properties.

Rail Infrastructure

6. Notwithstanding the terms of condition 1 above, before any development starts the applicant shall demonstrate agreement with Network Rail which confirms that capacity exists on the rail network for the level of rail freight activity proposed for the development, evidence of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development provides safeguards for rail freight supported development and to allow the Planning Authority to consider these aspects in detail.

7. Notwithstanding the terms of conditions 1 and 2 above, before any rail freight dependent building comes into use, the proposed rail sidings and associated infrastructure to fully serve that building shall be completed unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Planning Authority, details of which shall be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Network Rail.

Reason: To ensure the development provides for rail freight supported development and to allow the Planning Authority to consider these aspects in detail.

8. That all rail lines and other rail related infrastructure shall be constructed in accordance with the details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Network Rail, and shall thereafter be retained for this purpose. The rail infrastructure shall not be removed from the site other than for repair and maintenance, without the prior written approval of the Planning Authority.

Reason: To enable the Planning Authority to consider these aspects and to ensure all rail infrastructure remains in place.

9. That when all phases of the development have been completed, and at all times thereafter:

   i. The total floorspace of the built development shall not exceed 200,000 square metres; providing for Use Class 5 (Industrial) and Class 6 of the Town and Country Planning (use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997 including with ancillary and supporting uses;
   
   ii. The development shall contain buildings which are a maximum of 40% of combined Class 5/6 uses and solely 60% Class 6 use;

Reason: In order to control the terms of this consent.

Transportation & Access

10. That unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority in conjunction with Transport Scotland, construction of the new roundabout connection onto the A8, generally in accordance with Dougall Baillie Associates Drawing Number 11097/100/200, shall only be permitted to commence following the M8 M73 M74 Motorway Improvement Scheme becoming fully operational.

Reason: To ensure that the nature of the design of the proposed junction meets current design standards and implementation will not adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road network.
11. That no more than 93,000 square metres gross total floorspace of Class 5/6 buildings shall be occupied until a scheme to signalise the M73 southbound off slip and M8 westbound off slip approaches to the Baillieston Roundabout has been implemented to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in consultation with Transport Scotland.

Reason: To ensure that the development will not adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road network.

12. That before any buildings within the site are occupied, the internal access road and road/rail underpass connecting the railhead operations from the A8 local distributor road, the details of which shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, shall be completed to the satisfaction of the said Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactorily vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access to the site.

13. That before the development of any phase is brought into use, all of the associated vehicular manoeuvring areas, parking, access and egress arrangements, signage and provision for safe pedestrian movement shall be completed and surfaced in accordance with the details submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Parking, including HGV spaces shall be provided in accordance with the Council’s parking standards, unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Planning Authority, and car parking shall be segregated from any HGV servicing, manoeuvring and turning areas.

Reason: In the interests of traffic and pedestrian safety.

14. Notwithstanding the generalities of Condition 4 above, that before any development starts, details of the proposed access arrangements for construction traffic shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of neighbouring residential properties.

15. That the applicant shall ensure, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, continued vehicular and pedestrian access to Carnbroe Mains Cottage shall be provided at all times during the construction period.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory access arrangements to nearby properties.

16. That before any development starts, a comprehensive Travel Plan that sets out proposals for reducing dependency on the private car has been submitted and approved in writing by the planning authority, after consultation with Transport Scotland as the Trunk Roads Authority. In particular this Travel Plan shall identify measures to be implemented, the system of management, monitoring, review, reporting and the duration of the plan.

Reason: To be consistent with the requirements of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and PAN 75: Planning for Transport.

Built Environment

17. That no building shall exceed 20 metres in height unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area.

18. That all applications for buildings shall include a Design and Access Statement addressing detailed design and layout, environmental performance and external detailing.
Ground Conditions

19. That before any works of any description start on the application site, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority, a comprehensive site investigation report shall be submitted to and for the approval of the said Authority. The investigation must be carried out in accordance with current best practice advice, such as BS 10175: 'The Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites' or CLR 11. The report must include a site specific risk assessment of all relevant pollution linkages and a conceptual site model. Depending on the results of the investigation, a detailed Remediation Strategy may be required.

Reason: To establish whether or not site decontamination is required in the interests of the amenity and wellbeing of future residents.

20. That any remediation works identified by the site investigation required in terms of Condition 19, shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority. Before the development is brought into use, a certificate (signed by a chartered Environmental Engineer) shall be submitted to the Planning Authority confirming that any remediation works have been carried out in accordance with the terms of the Remediation Strategy.

Reason: To ensure that the site is free of contamination in the interests of the amenity.

Noise, Vibration, Air Quality and Light

21. Notwithstanding the requirements of conditions 1 above, updated detailed Noise Impact Assessments shall be submitted for verification and the written approval of the Planning Authority with all detailed applications which takes account of the recommendations contained in Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement, Addendum Industrial Noise Impact Assessment dated April 2014 and Ironside Farrar document 'Response to Issues Raised by Protective Services'. Thereafter, all mitigation measures shall be implemented before that phase of the development comes into use, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the adjacent properties and the local area.

22. That before development starts on any phase, full technical details demonstrating the methods of lighting and associated lighting infrastructure for all external lighting to be used in that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in conjunction with Transport Scotland as appropriate. For the avoidance of doubt, all external lighting shall be designed so as not to give rise to unacceptable impacts on the amenity of the surrounding area or local ecology.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area and in the interests of protecting nature conservation interests.

Flooding & Drainage

23. Notwithstanding the generalities of condition 1 above, all detailed applications, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority, shall be accompanied by full details of the proposed surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to the said Authority. For the avoidance of doubt the drainage scheme must comply with the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in terms of the relevant CIRIA Manual and other advice published by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). For avoidance of doubt the drainage scheme shall also be designed in line with the recommendations contained in Chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement and the Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy by Dougall Bailie Associates dated September 2013.
24. That the SUDS compliant surface water drainage scheme approved in terms of Condition 23 above shall be implemented contemporaneously with the development in so far as is reasonably practical. Within three months of the construction of the SUDS, a certificate (signed by a Chartered Civil Engineer) shall be submitted to the Planning Authority confirming that the SUDS have been constructed in accordance with the relevant CIRIA Manual and the approved plans.

Reason: To safeguard any adjacent watercourses and groundwater from pollution and in the interests of the amenity and wellbeing of existing and future users.

25. Notwithstanding the terms of conditions 1 and 2 above, an updated Flood Risk Assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, with all detailed applications. For the avoidance of doubt, the amended Flood Risk Assessment must take account of Chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement and the Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy by Dougall Baillie Associates dated September 2013. Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and Planning Advice Note 69 (PAN 69): Planning and Building Standards Advice on Flooding.

Reason: In order that the Planning Authority might be satisfied that the proposed development will not give rise to flooding within the application site and will not increase the flood risk elsewhere.

26. Notwithstanding the terms of condition 1 above, all detailed applications shall demonstrate that the recommendations in the Environmental Statement with respect to the protection of watercourse and existing culverts at the site, including the establishment of 'no building' buffer zones around watercourse, are complied with and integrated in the detailed design of the development.

Reason: To ensure the protection of watercourses within the site.

27. Notwithstanding the terms of condition 1 above, all detailed applications shall include full design details, reasoned justifications, construction method statements and suitable mitigation measures (as required) in relation to any proposed works within and in the vicinity of any watercourse for the written approval of the Planning Authority. Any such works shall be carried out in accordance with approved method statements in consultation with SEPA. For the avoidance of doubt, method statements should demonstrate compliance with CAR requirements and SEPA's Pollution and Prevention Guide notes. Furthermore, proposals for culverting of watercourses shall not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that such works are reasonably justified and would not have any unacceptable adverse impacts on watercourse and their banks, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and SEPA.

Reason: To enable the Planning Authority to consider these aspects in detail, to safeguard the amenity of the area and to ensure that the proposed mitigation measures comply with SEPA guidance.

Environmental Protection & Nature Conservation

28. That no development will take place within the site boundary until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the developer and approved by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the developer shall ensure that the programme of archaeological works is fully implemented and that all recording and recovery of archaeological resources within the development site is undertaken to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.
29. Notwithstanding the terms of condition 1 and 2 above, full details of the design of the Community Green Network shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt, the scheme shall include the following details:

(a) details of any earth moulding and hard landscaping, boundary treatment, grass seeding and turfing;
(b) a scheme of tree and shrub planting;
(c) an indication of all existing trees and hedgerows, plus details of those to be retained, and measures for their protection in the course of development;
(d) Pedestrian and cycle routes including specification for the material finish of all surfaces; and
(e) a detailed schedule for all landscaping works which shall provide for these works being carried out contemporaneously with the development of the site and completed before the rail freight park is brought into use.

Reason: To enable the Planning Authority to consider these aspects in detail.

30. That before the development hereby permitted starts, a management and maintenance scheme for the Community Green Network shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, and it shall include proposals for the continuing care, maintenance and protection of the Green Network.

Reason: To enable the Planning Authority to consider these aspects in detail.

31. Notwithstanding the terms of condition 1 above, the development shall be designed in accordance with the principles and commitments contained in Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement and ECOS Countryside Services Updated Ecology Reports dated July and August 2014, and any details required under the terms of condition 32 below unless agreed otherwise agreed with the Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the area, in the interests of protecting nature conservation interests and to ensure the final development design makes adequate provision for all habitat proposals and commitments.

32. That before development starts on any specific phase, further updated surveys by a suitably qualified person shall be submitted with all detailed applications for the approval of the Planning Authority to determine the presence of any statutorily protected species. As a result of the findings of the report, should any mitigation measures be required for the relocation of any protected species, this shall be implemented in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing with the Planning Authority in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage before works commence on the site.

Reason: To minimise risk to protected species.

33. Notwithstanding the terms of condition 1 above, all future applications shall include a detailed site wide Landscape Strategy, incorporating the details and commitments set out in Chapter 8.6 of the Environmental Statement.

Reason: In order to ensure that the new facility has a clearly defined landscape structure, hierarchy of external spaces and promotes wherever possible biodiversity through planting and environmental management.
Construction

34. Construction Method Statements (CMSs) shall be submitted with all detailed applications and the approved CMSs shall thereafter be adhered to for the duration of the works. The CMSs shall address potential impacts of all construction works on the surrounding environment and local populations, and shall include a Site Construction Environmental Management Plan and measures to control, and protect where appropriate;

- Noise Impact;
- Dust Impact;
- Light Impact;
- Air Quality;
- Odour;
- Construction Traffic;
- Ecology, Protected Species and Designated Sites;
- Watercourse and Ground Water; and
- Public Access.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the local environment and nearby communities.
Background Papers:

Consultation Responses:


Contact Information:

Any person wishing to inspect these documents should contact Miss Heather Gebbie at 01236 632494.

Report Date:

25th August 2014
APPLICATION NO. 13/02079/PPP

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Site and Proposal

I.i Planning permission in principle is sought for the expansion of the existing Mossend Railhead. The scale of the development is significant, comprising four additional 775m long rail sidings, rail freight park with up to 200,000sqm of industrial and business uses, a 2.3 km access road leading from the A8 and associated earthworks and drainage works. Also proposed is a Community Green Network for recreational use. The site is in two distinct parts, the northern part of the site lies to the south of the A8 and north of Bellshill and is characterised by open agricultural land. The southern part lies to the east of Bellshill comprising of an existing rail freight facility and undulating land subject of former industrial and landfill activities. Furthermore, the West Coast Main Line lies to the east of the application site.

II. Representations

II.i 1050 letters of representation were received in respect of the planning application, including 3 petitions with 780, 74 and 37 signatures each and representations from Bellshill Community Council, Michael McMahon MSP and John Wilson MSP.

II.ii A total of 1038 letters of objection were received which can be broadly summarised as follows:

- Loss of Green Belt land and the resultant unacceptable impacts on the landscape and wildlife leading to Bellshill being surrounded by industrial land;
- Amenity impacts for local residents including noise and vibration, privacy, overlooking, air pollution and anti-social behaviour;
- Reduced house prices and loss of view for locals;
- No justification demonstrating the economic benefits of the proposals and the demand and need for additional industrial land when there is existing land available nearby (e.g. Eurocentral);
- The local road network cannot accommodate additional vehicles.

II.iii 12 letters of support were received which broadly relate to:

- Significant economic growth and investment;
- Employment generation;
- Reduced HGV traffic on the local road network;
- Modern state of the art rail freight facility providing low cost transport options for local businesses.

III. Assessment Summary

Development Plan

Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2012 (SDP)

III.iii The SDP identifies the existing Mossend railhead facilities as a strategic rail freight transport hub. In addition, the SDP sets out that ancillary land allocation adjacent to such facilities should be designated freight parks and safeguarded solely for the purposes of rail freight activity. Despite this support, the proposed rail freight park component is located within the Green Belt and therefore this element of the proposal is in conflict with the SDP in terms of its support for freight transport facilities and modal shift from road to rail. When considering the overall implications for the spatial development strategy, the application site is considered to be a sustainable location. Notwithstanding the Green Belt zoning, the applicant has also satisfactorily demonstrated a demand/need in the Development Plan. It is therefore considered
that the proposal is supportive of the principles set out in the SDP relating to rail freight however it conflicts with the principles relating to the protection of Green Belt land.

North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012

The main relevant policies within the North Lanarkshire Local Plan are:

- DSAP4 - Local Regeneration Priority (Hattonrigg/Mossend)
- EDI 1 B5 - International Transport Facilities
- EDI 1 A1 - Existing Industrial and Business Areas
- EDI 2A - Industrial and Business Sites
- EDI 2B - Transport Development
- NBE 3A - Green Belt
- NBE 1 A4d - Tree Preservation Orders
- DSP1 - Amount of Development
- DSP2 - Location of Development
- DSP3 - Impact of Development
- DSP4 - Quality of Development

The existing railhead facilities are identified as an International Transport Facility and a priority for Local Regeneration. In addition, the proposed expansion of the railhead facilities including the four new rail sidings are within land appropriately zoned for industrial and business purposes. The proposed Green Network is considered a compliant Green Belt use, however the rail freight park element is contrary to the relevant Green Belt policy. It is accepted that the development could otherwise be delivered in technical terms and while the application is in principle only, it is considered that the application would not significantly adversely affect the amenity of the local area. Notwithstanding this position, the proposed development is not an appropriate development within the Green Belt and as such, the proposal is considered contrary to the Development Plan.

National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3)

III.iv NPF3 sets out the national spatial strategy by providing a framework for flexible framework for sustainable growth and development. While the application site has not been specifically identified in NPF3 as a sustainable place for growth in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley city region, it is considered that the application meets the spatial development priorities in terms of reducing carbon emissions, improving rail freight connectivity and creating improved green spaces.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

III.v SPP sits alongside NPF3 by providing general principles by which Scottish planning policy and other land use matters should be assessed. Throughout the SPP, there is a focus on economic development within a framework for sustainability and placemaking, with a presumption in favour of development considered as sustainable development. In terms of assessment, the primacy of the development plan remains unaltered and the presumption in favour of sustainable development is a material consideration.

III.vi In terms of the policy principles set out in the SPP, the applicant makes a case for the proposals in terms of the economic need and benefits, together with the environmental and social benefits. Taking all of these matters into account, it is considered that the application meets the policy and principles set out in the SPP in terms of a development which would support sustainable economic growth and investment. Despite the development being contrary to the Development Plan, it is considered that the applicant has demonstrated that the proposal accords with the principles of SPP in that it would be a sustainable development.
**Other Non Statutory Policy and Guidance**

III.vii The application is considered against a broad range of non-statutory policy and guidance predominantly relating to rail freight transport at national, regional and local level together. It is acknowledged that the application draws a degree of support from national, regional and local transport strategies and action plans, all of which support modal shift from road to rail freight to reduce carbon emissions and support sustainable economic growth.

III.viii A further document of relevance to the proposal is the Council's Economic Regeneration Strategy which supports the growth and investment of rail freight locations and the strategy recognises the importance of the easily accessible geographical location of North Lanarkshire in terms of competing against other economic centres in Scotland. The application is therefore considered to draw support from the Council's economic strategy given that it would support growth and investment in a rail freight facility which is easily accessible to strategic road and rail connections.

**IV. Conclusion**

IV.i It is considered that the application represents an acceptable departure from the development plan as there are material considerations which carry sufficient weight to justify a departure in this case. Notwithstanding the objections received, it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.
APPLICATION NO. 13/02079/PPP

REPORT

1. **Site Description**

1.1 The application site comprises of approximately 125.8 hectares and lies to the south of the A8 motorway, west of West Coast Mainline railway and north of Bellshill. The site can be considered as two main parts consisting of the existing railhead to the south (approximately 28.2 hectares) and the larger northern part (approximately 97.6 hectares) comprises of agricultural land covering the area south of the A8 to towards Bellshill and across to the West Coast Mainline and Eurocentral to the east. The site is largely bounded by residential properties to the west and industrial properties to the south. The larger northern part of the site generally slopes downwards in a north to south direction from the A8 towards the residential areas to the west of the site towards the Shirrel Burn. The southern part of the site consists of the railhead operational area which is relatively flat with the land to the west characterised with an undulating landscape as a result of previous landform works in relation to previous engineering operations within the site.

1.2 The Shirrel Burn traverses the site east to west. The North Calder Water lies to the north east of the site which is identified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC): North Calder Water Rosehall Bridge – Carnbroe Mains. Along the central part of the agricultural land and southern boundaries lie mature tree belts which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

1.3 All current vehicular movements to and from the existing railhead operations are via Reema Road, Bellshill to the south of the site. All rail freight movements connect from the West Coast Mainline to the east of the site. Carnbroe Road traverses the central part of the site in a north to south direction until it reaches Carnbroe Mains Cottage (occupied by the Clearwater drainage company) to the north east. Carnbroe Road continues north east beyond this property as this was a former connection to the A8 however the road is currently in a state of disrepair and there is a locked gate restricting access. It should be noted that part of the northern part of the site will be utilised for the forthcoming A8/M8 upgrade works with a new section of the M8 motorway occupying this part of the site. It should be noted that this section of the trunk road will sit at a lower level than the existing agricultural land with a new overbridge constructed over the new M8 motorway for access to the agricultural land within and outwith the application site.

2. **Proposed Development**

2.1 Planning permission in principle is sought for the expansion of the existing Mossend Railhead. The scale of the development is significant through the construction of four additional rail sidings and the development of a railfreight park. The proposed development comprises of the following components:

- Construction of 4 No. 775 metre long rail sidings and associated rail infrastructure works.
- Construction of a new gatehouse and erection of overhead cranes.
- Construction of a railfreight distribution park with approximately 200,000sqm of Class 5 (Industrial) and Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) Uses with ancillary uses which support such facilities.
- Development of a Green Network Community Woodland covering an area of 38.2 hectares with pedestrian and cycle routes.
- A 2.3km access road to and within the site which would lead from the A8 all purpose distributor road and underpass to allow the access road to pass under the rail sidings.
- Construction of a surface water drainage scheme comprising of 3 No. SUDS ponds.
2.2 Although the application is in principle only, an indicative masterplan layout within a development framework has been submitted setting out the intended development.

2.3 Included in the indicative masterplan details are the proposed railfreight park plots covering 6 development platform areas, a noise attenuation bund, SUDS ponds, the access road with underpass, expanded rail activity area and community green network. The applicant highlights that the masterplan layout has been informed through the physical constraints of the site, ability to integrate the development into the surrounding landscape and necessary mitigation impacts. The development is also noted to recognise the constraints identified in a number of reports which have been undertaken (e.g flooding areas and landscape framework).

2.4 With regard to the layout and design of the railhead, the proposed 775m long rail sidings would be constructed to the north west of the existing railhead with direct access to the West Coast Main Line. The applicant highlights that the layout of the buildings associated with the freight movements would be parallel to the railhead for the ease of freight handling.

2.5 In terms of the railfreight park, it is proposed that each unit would served by appropriate vehicular access, turning and parking facilities and lighting. While no details have been provided regarding to the design of the units, the applicant details that typical logistics warehousing exceeds 18,000sqm in size and would be built to the future occupiers' requirements. While none of the proposed buildings within the railfreight park would have direct rail access, they would be served by an internal road network and serviced by internal road vehicles for the movement of freight.

2.6 In respect to uses within the railfreight park, the development is envisaged to be predominantly processing, storage and distribution, with associated office space and servicing buildings. Such office space (Class 4 – Offices) and servicing buildings are intended as ancillary to the main uses of each unit. Overall the use of the floorspace within the site would comprise of the following:

- 40% of the total development floor area would be combined Class 5 (Industrial) and Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) Uses. Any buildings with both Class 5/6 uses consist of manufacturing and processing activities as well as the storage and distribution of the goods. An example of such operations would include a business receiving goods by rail which would be stored within the building prior to the processing activities being carried out.
- 60% would be solely Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) Use.

It should be noted that the applicant originally included Class 4 (Offices) as part of the total development floor area however this was element was subsequently removed from the proposals.

2.7 The applicant states that all proposed uses would be linked to rail freight operations. The applicant has highlighted that the proposed Class 6 uses would be linked to freight goods arriving by rail which are then moved to the distribution centre, which then subsequently leave the freight park by road, or alternatively arrive by road and depart by rail.

2.8 The proposed masterplan layout includes an area of community greenspace ‘Green Network’ at the western part of the site which would comprise of 38.2 hectares and extend to an informal recreational area with woodland, SUDS pond and pedestrian and cycle routes allowing connections to the access road to the north. The applicant has revised the proposals in relation to the size and scale of the Green Network and has increased the size from the original proposal of 20.3 hectares to 38.2 hectares. The applicant proposes to involve the local community in the future design of the Green Network which would be planted in advance in a phased programme leading
up to the completed development.

3. **Applicant's Supporting Information**

3.1 The application was subject to Environmental Impact Assessment regulations and was therefore supported by an Environmental Statement. The Environmental Statement (ES) draws together the findings of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process and includes detailed assessment covering the following topics: geology and soils, land use and agriculture, landscape and visual impacts, noise and vibration, air quality, water quality and drainage, ecology, nature conservation and biodiversity, pedestrians, cyclists and community amenity, cultural heritage, traffic and transport and disruption due to construction. Various associated technical reports and additional information were also lodged in respect to these subject areas which included:

- Economic Need and Evaluation
- Transport Assessment
- Foul & Surface Water Drainage Strategy & Flood Risk
- Mining Stability Investigation Report
- Ground Investigation Report
- Health Impact Assessment

3.2 As a major application, the application also submitted a Planning, Design and Access Statement and Pre-Application Consultation Report. The Pre-Application Consultation report summarised two public events which were held on 1st June 2013 and 29th June 2013 and publicised both events in the Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser and Bellshill Speaker prior to the events taking place. The applicant advised that they also held an earlier consultation event in March 2013 which was held prior to the submission of the Proposal of Application Notice on 7th May 2013.

3.3 In summary, the main elements of the case made by the applicant are as follows:

3.4 The applicant states that the Mossend Rail Freight Interchange development would represent the only strategic freight location in Scotland, where there are few rail freight interchanges (other locations include Gartsherrie, Coatbridge and Grangemouth). They consider that the Mossend railhead has the potential to become the key Scottish West Coast Main Line freight hub by virtue of becoming an integrated modern freight facility in a central location with excellent connections to the rail network and strategic road network. Mossend has been identified in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2012 (SDP) as a strategic rail freight transport hub and the SDP supports such strategic facilities including the allocation of adjacent land for freight parks to support investment and focus on modal shift from road to rail for the movement of goods.

3.5 Through the creation of facilities for up to 775m long trains which would comply with international freight standards (longer trains are more likely to transport goods over longer distances i.e to Europe and to the South of England), the applicant considers that the development would provide an international modern state of the art rail freight facility, of which they note that there is currently no such facility in Scotland. The applicant considers that the proposed development complies with Scottish economic policies by providing a safer, faster and more sustainable alternative to long haul road transport. The applicant considers that there is capacity within the rail network to accommodate additional freight movements and that the proposed development would reduce road congestion within the local road network through a reduced number of HGV movements as a result of the direct road connection to the A8. Furthermore, the applicant notes that the proposed development would support Scotland's ambitions to cut carbon emissions and maximise the use of the existing rail network.

3.6 The applicant highlights that while the rail freight park element of the proposal is not
consistent with Green Belt policy, the proposed Green Network would mitigate the environmental impacts associated with the loss of the open greenspace and protected mature treebelts to the east by creating an improved area of recreation with community value. In respect to the proposed future design of the greenspace, the applicant advises that they would involve the local community and it would be locally managed to ensure that it is not only functional but also usable for local residents, with pedestrian and cycle ways connecting the greenspace to the A8 to the north and Bellshill to the south.

3.7 The applicant goes on to set out how it is considered that other technical issues in respect to noise and vibration, air quality, landscape and visual impacts, transport, flooding and drainage and historic environment can be satisfied.

3.8 With regard to economic investment, the applicant highlights that the proposals would result in a total investment of £260 million over 15 years from 2015-2030 and within that time there would be 2200 construction jobs and 2700 transport and storage jobs generated. They consider that the proposals would create sustainable economic investment and growth in North Lanarkshire and beyond.

3.9 Taking all of the above into account, the applicant considers that the proposed development can be justified as a departure from the development plan on the basis that weight can be attributed to material considerations, including national planning policy and guidance, which are considered significant enough to outweigh the Green Belt element which is contrary to the relevant policies in the development plan.

4. Site History

4.1 The relevant site history is as follows:

- 02/00170/FUL Erection of Cement Silo, Compressor House granted 5th June 2002.
- 11/01207/PPP Construction of New Access Road from A8 to Mossend Rail Head Including Overbridge for New M8, Gate House and Car Parking withdrawn 10th February 2012

5. Development Plan

Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2012

5.1 Due to the scale of the proposed development, it is considered that the application requires to be assessed against Diagrams 3 and 4 of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2012.

North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012

5.2 The south western part of the site covering the existing railhead is identified under Development Strategy Area Priorities DSAP4 as a Local Regeneration Priority covering the Hattonrigg/Mossend Area and Policy EDI 1 B5 (International Transport Facilities) in the North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012. The existing railhead area is also covered by Policy EDI 1 A1 (Existing Industrial and Business Areas).
5.3 The land to the north west of the existing railhead and south east of the dwellings at Centenary Crescent is covered by Policy EDI 2A (Industrial and Business Sites).

5.4 The majority of the application site (77.6% of the total site - covering the north western part consisting of the railfreight park and green network) is covered by Policy NBE3 (Green Belt). Throughout this part of the site there are mature tree belts zoned under Policy NBE1 A4d (Tree Preservation Orders).

5.5 An area of land covering the north of the site has been zoned under Policy EDI 2B (Transport Development) related to the A8/M8 strategic road network upgrade works.

6. Consultations

Scottish Natural Heritage

6.1 Following the submission of further survey work, Scottish Natural Heritage has no objection to the application. Detailed comments have been given in respect to the time of year for work commencing on site, they recommend further survey work to be covered by appropriate planning conditions.

Scottish Water

6.2 Scottish Water raises no objection to the proposed development and note that there is capacity to accommodate the proposals at Daer and Daldowie Treatment Works.

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

6.3 SEPA raises no objection in respect to flood risk. The submitted flood risk assessment would need to be taken forward and updated through any subsequent detailed planning application, with particular regard to the new road crossing of the culverted section of the Shirrel Burn and using water resistant materials in construction. SEPA note that water quantity aspects of surface water drainage are for the Planning Authority, and appropriate conditions would therefore be required should planning permission be granted.

6.4 Comments are given in respect of necessary mitigation measures during the construction phase, waste management and other technical requirements. In the event of planning permission being granted, conditions would be required where appropriate to ensure these aspects of the applicant's proposals can be taken forward.

Health and Safety Executive

6.5 Health and Safety Executive have been consulted as the site lies within the vicinity of a high pressure gas pipeline. They raise no objections to the application.

Historic Scotland

6.6 Historic Scotland raise no objection to the application as they have no assets within the locus of the development site.

JMP (on behalf of Transport Scotland) and Transport Scotland

6.7 JMP on behalf of Transport Scotland makes comments on the Environmental Statement in respect to Access Strategy, Traffic Impact, Noise and Vibration and Air Quality. No objections are raised with comments agreeing with the recommendations in the Environmental Statement. As part of the assessment of the Transportation Assessment, Transport Scotland raise no objections subject to planning conditions relating to the installation of off-site road improvement works, lighting, drainage and travel plan and landscaping.
The Coal Authority

6.8 The Coal Authority highlights that further investigations would be required (with potential for mitigation) however, this would not prejudice planning approval subject to conditions.

Scottish Gas Networks

6.9 Scottish Gas Networks advise that there is a low/medium/intermediate gas main located near to the application site but offer no objection.

Network Rail

6.10 Network Rail raise no objections to the proposed development subject to suitable conditions relating to protecting their assets which include secure barriers to be in place, appropriate drainage systems and landscaping and the installation of a 1.8m high trespass proof fence. Network Rail advise that they have undertaken a Freight Market Study for the capability and capacity study of the rail network to accommodate domestic intermodal traffic. This study has forecast that 80% of the future growth of the rail network will take place on the Mossend to Gartsherrie Corridor. They advise that they would work with the applicant in order to establish what further infrastructure would be required in order to accommodate their proposals in the short, medium and long term. Network Rail comment that they are undertaking further improvement within the Mossend area relating to the on-going improvements for the Motherwell North Signalling Renewal which would allow capacity to accommodate 775m long trains on the local rail network. They advise the implementation date for these works would be 2017.

SP Energy Networks

6.11 SP Energy Networks advise that they have no transmission infrastructure within the vicinity of the application site and therefore raise no objections to the application.

NLC Archaeology Service (Rathmell Archaeology Ltd)

6.12 Following review of the information contained with the Environmental Statement, the Council’s archaeology advisors note that they would prefer that an archaeological evaluation is submitted prior to determination of the application to clarify the nature, extent and significance of any archaeological remains within the site. If this was not possible, they recommended that a planning condition is proposed requiring further consideration and investigation, guiding development accordingly (or appropriate mitigation at a detailed stage in the process).

NLC Greenspace

6.13 NLC Greenspace set out responses on a number of issues including designated sites, protected species and access.

6.14 In respect to designated sites, it is noted that although not with the site itself, the north west boundary of the application site bounds a Site for Importance of Nature Conservation (SINC): 76/31 North Calder Water: Rosehall Bridge- Carnbroe Mains and the riparian woodland associated with this SINC is classed as Ancient Woodland. It is also noted that there are mature treebelts throughout the site covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

6.15 Investigations into protected species (Bats, Badgers, Great Crested Newts, Water Voles and Otters), as well as Ornithology, have been carried out. Following various surveys including detailed follow up surveys, it has been concluded that subject to conditions requiring appropriate protection/mitigation plans and further surveys at appropriate times should permission be granted, would suitably address the matters
6.16 In respect to access, it is noted that there are no Core Paths or recorded Public Rights of Way within the application site however there are several well used paths and tracks including Carnbroe Road. It is recommended that the Council's Access Officers are involved in any future designs of the footpath network in the proposed Green Network in order to link to nearby Core Paths and other path networks. These matters could all be addressed through planning conditions and a detailed planning application.

NLC Landscape

6.17 NLC Landscape advise that the proposed development would change the existing landscape character of the northern part of the site comprising of the agricultural land (railfreight park area) to a more urban character similar to that of the nearby Eurocentral site. They note that the proposals would remove trees protected under Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and would result in this area becoming more visually prominent to the Hattonrigg residential areas to the south and west of this part of the site.

6.18 With respect to the railhead area, NLC Landscape consider that the proposals would create a defined urban and industrial character for this part of the site and it would fit well within the surrounding landscape, however the adjacent properties at Love Drive and Centenary Crescent would be adversely affected in terms of visual impacts. They recommend that the visual impacts of the development could be mitigated through careful design of the development platforms and re-profiling of the land as well as appropriate design and materials of any future buildings. They also note that there is an ability to connect the proposed community greenspace with the North Calder Valley, with replacement planting of native species to mitigate the loss of the trees covered by the TPOs. All of the above matters may be suitably addressed through the use of appropriate planning conditions and a detailed planning application should planning permission be granted.

NLC Protective Services

6.19 Comments are given in respect to the noise and vibration, air quality and ground investigation sections contained within the Environmental Statement and additional assessment submitted as part of this application. NLC Protective Services advise that they are content with the noise and vibration and air quality impacts. They recommend that planning conditions are attached to any planning permission covering the requirement for the ground investigation report and in relation to controls covering the noise levels generated within the site. However given that this application is in principle only, any future detailed application would require to be accompanied by an updated noise impact assessment to ensure that appropriate mitigation is in place.

NLC Traffic & Transportation

6.20 Following detailed discussions, and the submission of further details, Traffic and Transportation raise no objection subject to conditions. They advise that no construction traffic should access the site from Reema Road (existing railhead access), the proposed roundabout on the A8 (incorporating an access to the former Shanks McEwan site to the north) should be constructed prior to the site becoming operational and preparatory traffic signal work to be undertaken during the M8/M73/M74 Strategic Road Improvement Works.
7. **Representations**

7.1 Following the press advertisement and neighbour notification procedure, there have been 1050 letters of representation received which include 3 petitions with 780, 74 and 37 signatures respectively. 1039 letters were received in objection to the proposed development mainly from local residents. This also includes Bellshill Community Council, Michael McMahon MSP, John Wilson MSP and Freightliner, Coatbridge. Although many of the letters of objection are pro-forma based, they have been lodged individually. 12 letters received in support of the application are from members of the public, local businesses and Scottish Council for Development and Industry.

7.2 Broadly the letters of representation can be summarised as relating to the following matters

**Objection**

- Contrary to the development plan and national planning policy in respect of the loss of green belt land, with no requirement for additional industrial land in North Lanarkshire as detailed by the Reporter in the findings of the North Lanarkshire Local Plan.
- The development would result in a loss of view of the open agricultural land experienced from the adjacent residential area.
- Loss of mature woodland and wildlife which is not protected under legislation.
- The proposed development would be prominent on the landscape from its scale and size with visual effects on the character of the landscape from significant earthworks. The development will result in Bellshill being surrounded by industrial estates including Righead and Bellshill Industrial Estates, Mossend and Eurocentral.
- There would be a loss of an area of land for play, recreation and development.
- Impact on amenity of local residential properties through noise and vibration impacts, air and light pollution, increased litter, risk of pluvial flooding, length of time to complete the construction of the development (10-15 years), loss of privacy and overbearing impacts.
- The proposed SUDS development would be dangerous and the proposals would increase drainage problems experienced at Hattonrigg Road and Love Drive, Bellshill.
- The proposal will reduce local house prices.
- There would be adverse impacts on the health and wellbeing of local residents.
- Proposed changes by the applicant to increase the area of Green Network by 8% is not acceptable and will lead to areas subject to anti-social behaviour.
- There would be a risk of subsidence to local properties at Owendale Avenue and Parkville Road arising from vibration works during construction and operations.
- The coal seams within the land may result in sink holes.
- The Scottish Water culvert within the site was installed an appropriate distance from the houses on Parkville Road and this should be maintained.
- Recent history at Eurocentral has shown that there no demand for large scale industrial developments in the area as land remains undeveloped or built and unoccupied (e.g. Maxim and Chungwa Tube Factory).
- No evidence of the economic benefits of the proposal and the potential of the distribution park may not be realised in the current economic climate.
- The local road network is not suitable for construction works and there would be an increase in traffic generated from the proposals from construction, HGVs and it is unlikely that local employees would arrive by public transport.
- Eurocentral had a railway line to accommodate the longer trains which was removed previously due to no demand.
• The applicant should construct a bridge over the West Coast Mainline to connect their operations to Eurocentral.
• There would be an adverse impact on existing commercial freight businesses within Lanarkshire, limiting their ability to spend on their facilities. There should be a planning condition restricting the railhead expansion and to new warehousing once constructed to reduce competition with other freight companies.

Support
• Significant employment benefits and economic growth within North Lanarkshire.
• Lower cost and effective option of transport for businesses, with an open access to rail freight.
• New access road would create a cleaner, safer environment for residents by removing vehicles from the local transport network, with heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) able to access the site directly from the A8.
• The proposed development would be a modern, state of the art facility which promote modal shift from road to rail and promote sustainable economic growth therefore according with national planning policy.
• The site is suitably located next to the strategic road network and the West Coast Main Line, with access to a skilled labour market.

8. Planning Assessment

8.1 In accordance with Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

8.2 The assessment is ordered as follows:

Development Plan
• Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2012
• North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012.

The application is of particular significance due to the zoning of the site in the adopted Local Plan and the scale of the development proposed.

Material Considerations
• National Planning Policy and Guidance
• Non-Statutory Policy and Guidance
• Consultations
• Representations

Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2012 (SDP)

8.3 The SDP sets out a long term spatial vision and development strategy to determine the geography of development in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley region to 2035. This looks at a strategic level to support economic competitiveness and social cohesion, within a sustainable environmental approach.

8.4 In respect to decision making, Diagrams 3 and 4 of the SDP set out a strategic framework for planning authorities. Diagram 3 of the SDP comprises the Spatial Development Strategy and sets out indicative compatible development. Diagram 4 requires planning authorities to undertake a 'Sustainable Location Assessment' to establish whether the development proposal is in line with the Spatial Development Strategy and whether it supports its spatial role and function.
8.5 The Spatial Development Strategy set out in Diagram 3 identifies Freight Hubs as an indicative form of development which is in line with the strategy. The networks of Strategic Freight Transport Hubs are specified in Schedule 3. Strategic Support Measure 6 (SSM6) states that these Hubs are a strategic response to long term sustainable freight movements into and within the city-region. The SDP sets out that where appropriate, ancillary land allocation adjacent to such facilities should be designated freight parks and safeguarded solely for the purposes of freight activity.

8.6 Schedule 3 of the SDP identifies the established Mossend Railhead facilities, alongside the adjacent operational Eurocentral railhead, as a strategic rail freight transport hub. It should be noted that this is the only strategic rail freight hub identified in North Lanarkshire in the SDP. Schedule 3 identifies Gartsherrie as a strategic road freight transport hub. The Spatial Development Strategy supports the movement of goods as sustainable as possible and the SDP goes on to state that it is imperative to invest in freight hubs in key locations to enable modal shift to occur and reduce carbon emissions.

8.7 Strategic Support Measure 6 (SSM6) requires measure to be put in place to safeguard relevant investment in strategic freight transport hub locations. The SDP states that distributions and logistics are identified as a key growth sector within the city-region economy and SSM6 seeks to support such growth through the investment of Strategic Freight Transport Hubs set out in Schedule 3. In this case, the location of the application site is a key factor in achieving modal shift as the site bounds the West Coast Main Line and the Strategic Road Network including the M8/M73/M74. The proposed expansion of the Mossend rail freight operations would create a facility capable of accommodating longer trains with rail freight from across the UK and Europe. The applicant contends that this would be the first Scottish rail freight hub to do so and would therefore safeguard investment in this location. It is also considered that the proposed development accords with the aspirations of the Spatial Development Strategy by increasing modal shift between road and rail, thereby reducing carbon emissions. SSM6 also states that ancillary land adjacent to freight hubs should be allocated as designated freight parks, where appropriate, in order to support and safeguard freight activity. The proposed rail freight distribution park is located within land immediately adjacent to the existing railhead, is considered to conform to SSM6 in that the increased warehousing facilities would support and expand investments at the rail freight operations at this strategically identified location.

8.8 Part of the site (rail freight park and Green Network) forms part of the Green Belt under the Spatial Development Strategy in the SDP. This notes that the Green Belt is central to the sustainable planning of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley city region and provides support to the positive action-orientated Green Network programme. In terms of the Spatial Vision of the SDP, it highlights that the Green Belt is an important strategic tool with a significant role to play in achieving key environmental objectives by directing planned growth to the most appropriate locations, and creating and safeguarding identity through place-setting and protecting the separation distance between communities. The SDP goes on to consider that the review of Green Belt boundaries should be priorities of Local Development Plans so as to ensure those key environmental objectives are achieved. The Green Belt within the application site can be seen to serve a separation function between the settlement of Bellshill and the A8 corridor to the north and the Mossend/Eurocentral industrial and business location to the east. Within the area of Green Belt land proposed to be developed as part of this application, the applicant proposes to retain 39% of such land at the western part of the site for the purposes of creating a community greenspace consisting of woodland and pedestrian/cycle routes. The expansion of the rail freight park within the remaining 61% of Green Belt land would be to the north east of the housing at Bellshill and immediately adjacent to the existing railhead operations.
8.9 On balance, although considered compliant in terms of SSM6, the proposed development is considered to conflict with the principles of Green Belt protection in the SDP and as such, the proposal is therefore not line with the Spatial Development Strategy.

8.10 In respect to the 'Sustainable Location Assessment' under Diagram 4 of the SDP, the development is considered to accord with SSM6 to develop and invest in a strategic freight transport hub, as detailed in paragraph 8.7 above, however it is not supportive of developing the Freight Hub to the detriment of the loss of Green Belt land therefore not meeting Green Belt objectives. When considering the overall implications of the development in terms of the Spatial Development Strategy, there is policy support for the expansion of the railhead operations, with particular regard to the allocation of land adjacent to the railhead for expansion. As a result of the geographical location, the only land available for expansion of this facility would be within the Green Belt. The retention of Green Belt land (39%) for a community greenspace seeks to maintain a form of Green Belt function to separate the residential properties in Bellshill from the rail freight park. Under other aspects of the sustainable location assessment criteria set out in the SDP, the proposed development achieves positive outcomes in terms of climate change, low carbon economy, sustainable transport, water environment. Meanwhile neutral outcomes are considered under network of centres and low carbon energy. A neutral outcome is also considered under ‘Green Network’ as while part of the site is proposed within designated Green Belt land, the creation of the community greenspace offsets such losses. On the basis of the outcome of the assessment, it is considered that the site is a ‘Sustainable Location’ in terms of the Spatial Vision of the SDP and supports its spatial role and function. With regard to demand and need, this aspect is assessed in terms of the local development plan later in the report.

North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012 (NLLP)

8.11 The site is zoned under the following policies in the adopted North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012:

- DSAP4- Local Regeneration Priority (Hattonrigg/Mossend)
- EDI 1 B5- International Transport Facilities
- EDI 1 A1- Existing Industrial and Business Areas
- EDI 2A- Industrial and Business Sites
- EDI 2B- Transport Development
- NBE 3A- Green Belt
- NBE 1 A4d- Tree Preservation Orders

Other relevant policies in the assessment of this application include:

- DSP1- Amount of Development
- DSP2- Location of Development
- DSP3- Impact of Development
- DSP4- Quality of Development

8.12 DSAP4 Local Regeneration Priorities- Hattonrigg/Mossend: The south eastern part of the site consisting of the existing Mossend railhead operations is zoned under this policy. This policy seeks to co-ordinate feasibility studies, masterplans, statutory approvals and project implementation to deliver local regeneration priorities. As the application would comprise of the development of the existing railhead, it is considered that this element of the proposal is compliant with this local plan policy.

8.13 EDI 1 B5 International Transport Facilities: This policy identifies a list of strategic locations for business and industry within the Plan area. The adjacent Eurocentral Terminal (outwith the application site) and Mossend rail freight operations are both identified as International Transport Facilities and any development proposals at this location would require to support the capacity and effectiveness of the international
transport network and docks, rail freight facilities and road links. Implications for national freight transport will be discussed later in the report. The applicant has submitted detailed information to demonstrate that the proposed expanded operations of the existing railhead, together with the additional 4 rail sidings would be supported through available capacity on the rail network and would provide facilities with the ability to accommodate trains, with an international specification, from throughout the UK and Europe. The available capacity on the rail network to accommodate additional rail freight has been confirmed by Network Rail. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development would support the capacity and effectiveness of the Mossend Railhead and as such, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy EDI 1 B5.

8.14 EDI 1 A1 Protecting Economic Development Areas and Infrastructure- (Industrial and Business Areas): This policy seeks to support the continuing industrial and business character of existing industrial and business areas. Supplementary Planning Guidance SPG14 (Industrial and Business Development) is also relevant. The south east part of the site consisting of the existing Mossend Railhead operations is zoned under Policy EDI 1 A1. It is considered that the application is consistent with the aims of this local plan policy by supporting this industrial and business location.

8.15 EDI 2A Industrial and Business Sites: This policy seeks to maintain a 10 year supply of quality marketable industrial land and promote development of such identified sites in the Plan area. The south western part of the site is zoned under this local plan policy and this area is shown on the indicative masterplan as the proposed location of the 4 additional rail sidings and associated buildings relating to the movement of goods from rail to road. Given that the proposed rail sidings are in relation to the adjacent existing railhead operations, it is considered that this element of the proposal is compliant with Policy EDI 2A.

8.16 EDI 2B Transport Development: This policy supports identified transport infrastructure improvements and in this case, the improvement works relate to the A8/M8 upgrade works. The applicant does not propose any works, as shown on the submitted indicative masterplan, within the extent of the land covered by transport improvement works however the proposed access road would connect to the overbridge and allow vehicular and pedestrian connections to the A8 local distributor road. As such, it is therefore considered that the proposed development accords with this local plan policy.

8.17 NBE 3A Green Belt: This policy defines acceptable forms of development in the Green Belt, including proposals necessary for agriculture, forestry, horticulture, telecommunications, renewable or appropriate outdoor recreation. In assessing the proposed development against Policy NBE 3A and with regard to the rail freight park element of the proposal which is zoned under this policy, it is considered that this is not consistent with the acceptable forms of development set out above. In terms of the justification given by the applicant, this relates primarily to national planning policy and guidance and the SDP. With regard to the local development plan, the applicant acknowledges that the rail freight park is contrary to this local plan policy in their supporting information. In light of the above, the rail freight element of the proposal is therefore contrary to Policy NBE 3A. The proposed Green Network however, is an acceptable form of development and therefore complies with the terms of this policy.

8.18 NBE 1 A4d Tree Preservation Orders: This local plan policy seeks to safeguard sites of importance for natural heritage and biodiversity from development with particular regard to tree preservation orders. There are several tree shelter belts throughout the northern part of the site and along the southern boundaries which are afforded protection by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). As all shelter belts are within the rail freight park element of the proposal, a majority of the trees covered by the TPO's would require to be removed. The applicant highlights that the loss of these tree belts would be mitigated by planting of new trees within the proposed Green Network to the west of the site. NLC Landscape Services are content with the applicant's proposals
and recommend the planting of native species with the Green Network.

8.19 **DSP1 Amount of Development**: Under this policy, Criterion B—Potential Additions to Planned Land Supplies is relevant with particular relevance to the northern part of the site which proposes the rail freight park in land zoned under Green Belt policy. As the proposed development exceeds the land use threshold set out for industrial Class 5/6 use (2000sqm), the applicant requires this additional land supply through a demand assessment. The associated Demand Assessment Criteria set out that there is a 10 year marketable industrial/business land supply. In the Reporter’s findings of the Examination of the North Lanarkshire Local Plan, it was highlighted that across the Plan area there is sufficient land allocated to meet 150 years of projected need for industrial and business land, based on recent, current and annual take-up rates. The applicant has provided a demand assessment in this regard, and they highlight a wider demand argument demonstrating that the additional land relates to the SDP policy position (ancillary land allocations for freight parks) in set out in paragraphs 8.6 and 8.7. On this basis, the proposed addition of land for industrial and business purposes has been justified in regard to the link to rail freight activities and therefore accords with Policy DSP1.

8.20 **DSP2 Location of Development** - This policy assesses the proposed development in terms of relevant locational criteria including: green belt, environmental assets, accessibility, community and health and safety. In respect to green belt, as noted in paragraph 8.17 above, the rail freight park component of the proposal is not consistent with the criteria contained in Policy NBE 3A. With regard to environmental assets, as discussed at paragraph 8.18 above, the proposals require the loss of tree belts covered by Tree Preservation Orders albeit there would be replacement planting within a Community Green Network. Following submission of detailed surveys and reviews by NLC Greenspace and Scottish Natural Heritage, they are satisfied with the ecology survey findings. The proposed Green Network addresses accessibility and community criteria by incorporating pedestrian and cycle routes which would allow the community to safely access this area of land and provide a recreational facility. Turning to health and safety, the applicant has provided flood and drainage information to demonstrate that the proposed development would not raise any flood risk concerns and SEPA are content with the submitted information. In terms of the nearby gas pipeline, HSE and Scottish Gas Networks raised no objection to the application. Drawing all of the above matters together, it is considered that the application is contrary to Policy DSP2 in terms of the Green Belt locational criteria, albeit derives support for the expansion of the rail terminal.

8.21 **DSP3 Impact of Development**: This policy requires developers to meet or contribute to the cost of providing or improving community facilities or infrastructure as a result of the additional demands arising from the proposals on their own or in conjunction with existing developments. Following detailed assessment of the technical aspects of the development, it is accepted that the proposals could be developed with acceptable impacts, subject to consideration of a detailed planning application. In order to secure the long term occupation of the buildings within the rail freight park, planning conditions are considered appropriate to link any future buildings to rail freight activities and to ensure that the buildings are not occupied until the M8/M73/M74 strategic road improvement works until the proposed roundabout has been constructed at the A8 at the northern part of the site.

8.22 **DSP4 Quality of Development**: this policy requires development proposals to only be permitted where high standards of site planning and sustainable design are achieved. Developments are also required to integrate successfully into the local area avoiding adverse impacts on adjacent properties. In terms of the local plan policy, proposals require to be assessed against a set of criteria and the paragraphs below assess the proposal against such criteria.
a. **Design Principles Including Provision for the Development and Links to Nearby Green Networks**

In general terms, the design principles of the development cannot be fully assessed at this stage as this application is in principle only. While the applicant has submitted an indicative masterplan showing the proposed location of the different components of the application, subsequent matters specified in conditions applications will assess the design of the development, particularly through the submission of Design and Access Statements. In respect to links to nearby green networks, the applicant proposes pedestrian and cycle connections to the community greenspace, the detail of which would be assessed through a subsequent detailed application.

b. **Safe, Inclusive, Convenient and Welcoming Development**

In considering these criteria, the proposed access, implications relating to the A8/M8 upgrade works and the impact of the proposal on the local road network must be assessed. These matters have been discussed in detail earlier in the report in paragraphs 6.7 and 6.20. In terms of the use of construction traffic using Reema Road, it is considered reasonable to allow the applicant limited access to undertake some construction works within the site. Should planning permission be granted, such matters raised could be dealt with through suitable planning conditions.

c. **Energy Resources and Sustainable Development**

The proposal will result in sustainable development through the reduction of carbon emissions by increasing modal shift from road to rail for freight transport. This criteria supports proposals which seek to reduce CO2 emissions and encourage low and zero-carbon approaches.

d. **Air Quality, Noise and Pollution Impacts**

The applicant has submitted an assessment on air quality and noise and vibration impacts as part of the Environmental Statement. NLC Protective Services advised that they are content with their findings of the air quality impact assessment and noise and vibration impact assessment subject to appropriate planning conditions.

e. **Water Body Status**

A foul and surface water drainage strategy and flood risk assessment was submitted by the applicant in support of the application which is considered acceptable following consultation with SEPA. It is acknowledged that there are no adverse impacts on the nearby North Calder Water. The Shirrel Burn traverses the site and planning conditions are recommended to ensure that the detailed design of the development does not comprise the Shirrel Burn given its close proximity to the proposed rail freight park.

f. **Impact on Local Amenity**

The application is located in proximity to a large residential area of Bellshill to the south and west. The proposed development platforms within the site are located (at their closest point) 100m from the houses at Rosebank Road to the south. In terms of the housing to the west at Hillview Crescent, the applicant has amended the proposed masterplan to increase the separation distance between the housing and the development platform from the original proposal of 118m to 236m. In terms of the privacy and overlooking impacts on adjacent properties, such impacts cannot be fully assessed at this stage as this application is in principle only and this would be assessed in detail in any subsequent matters specified in conditions application. Following an assessment of air quality, noise and vibration and landscape impacts, NLC Protective Services and NLC Landscape have raised no concerns subject to
planning conditions relating to controls relating to noise mitigation measures and a
detailed landscaping scheme for the proposed Green Network.

In light of all of the above, it is considered that the proposal is broadly in accordance
with Policy DSP4.

8.23 Drawing all of the above matters together in terms of the assessment of the SDP and
NLLP, it is considered that the proposal is a significant departure from the
Development Plan. In view of this, the application should therefore be recommended
for refusal unless there other material considerations say otherwise.

9. Material Considerations

National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3)

9.1 The National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) sets out the Scottish Government’s
spatial development priorities for the next 20 to 30 years, including plans for
development and investment in infrastructure. The national spatial strategy set out in
the NPF3 shows where there are opportunities for growth and regeneration,
investment in low carbon economy environmental enhancement and improved
connections across the country. The spatial strategy provides a flexible framework for
sustainable growth and development which reflects the varied assets of our many
distinct places, including the cities networks, towns and villages, rural area and coast
and islands. It is highlighted that the cities network would continue to be a focus for
investment, becoming models of low carbon living, supporting growth, addressing
regeneration and improving connection. It is noted that many of Scotland’s largest
and vibrant towns are located close to cities. In respect to the application, the site is
located in proximity to the towns of Bellshill and Coatbridge and Glasgow, which
would support growth and investment in these regions. In addition the site lies
adjacent to the strategic road network (connections to A8 with M8/M74/M73 beyond)
and the West Coast Main Line. As set out earlier in the report, the proposed
increased rail freight activity would contribute towards lower carbon emissions.

9.2 NPF3 goes on to set out a vision for Scotland which is based upon the planning
outcomes detailed in the Scottish Government Economic Strategy which consist of: a
successful, sustainable place, a low carbon place, a natural, resilient place and a
connected place. The application is considered in terms of each outcome below.

9.3 A Successful Sustainable Place: The national spatial strategy sets out opportunities
for Scotland’s city regions to develop as successful, sustainable places. While the
application site has not been specifically identified in NPF3 as a sustainable place for
growth in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley city region, the proposals contribute
towards the key focus of achieving connectivity to the region by rail by increasing rail
freight connectivity to across the UK and Europe through the capability of
accommodating international standard length freight trains.

9.4 Low Carbon Place: NPF3 considers that planning has a key role in delivering national
targets of low carbon emissions. While the Scottish Government has set out the
energy sector as the primary focus to achieve low carbon targets, it is also
recognised that the low carbon sector is fast moving and will continue to be shaped
by technological innovation and a changing environment. The applicant highlights that
the proposal would contribute to lower carbon emissions through modal shift from
road to rail freight, thus reducing the number of HGV’s movements. It is considered
that the application is in line with this aspect of the spatial strategy.

9.5 A Natural Resilient Place: This aspect of the vision states and encourages respect to
enhance and make responsible use of our natural and cultural assets. The spatial
strategy highlights that natural and cultural assets in around urban areas have a key
role to play in supporting sustainable growth, marinating distinctiveness and
promoting quality of life. As discussed in paragraph 5.4 above, a significant portion of
land (77.6%) within the application site is designated as Green Belt. Within the land designated as Green Belt, 61% of the total area would be developed to form the proposed rail freight park however the remaining land (39%) would become a community greenspace. The proposed community greenspace would support the aim of the spatial strategy to create a walkable place which links open space and wider travel networks (through connections to Bellshill and the A8) and can deliver better environments for pedestrians and cyclists.

9.6 A Connected Place: NPF3 sets out that Scotland will maintain and develop good internal and global connections, with particular regard to road and rail infrastructure improvements. In order to facilitate improved connections, spatial priorities for change highlight road improvement works at M8/M73/M74 motorway network and a focus on the critical importance of rail freight networks to Scotland’s economy. The spatial strategy goes on to state that rail freight networks are likely to become increasingly important as Scotland’s export potential grows alongside the transition to a low carbon economy. Mossend has been identified in NPF3 as an important freight interchange alongside Gartsherrie, Coatbridge and Grangemouth. The spatial strategy seeks to establish a more strategic view of future development priorities for rail freight within the broader operational context of the network as a whole. In light of this position, it is considered that the expanded rail freight operations would support this national spatial priority.

9.7 Delivery: There have been 14 national developments identified to deliver the spatial strategy. While the Mossend rail freight facility or rail freight activity overall has not been identified as a national development, the application would however support the Central Scotland Green Network national development by providing enhanced greenspace for community use.

9.8 Taking all of the above into account, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the national spatial strategy set out in NPF3.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

9.9 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) sits alongside NPF3 and sets out national planning policies which reflect priorities for the operation of the planning system and for the development and use of land. The SPP focuses on plan-making, planning decisions and development design on the Scottish Government’s purpose of creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. Throughout the SPP there is an overarching focus on sustainability and place-making which should be applied to all development and there should be a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

9.10 The SPP notes that this presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan. For proposals that do not accord with the development plan, the primacy of the plan is maintained and the SPP and the presumption in favour of the development that contributes to sustainable development will be material considerations.

9.11 Turning to policy principles within the SPP, it is stated that the planning system should support economically, environmentally and socially sustainable places by enabling development that balances the costs and benefits of a proposal over the longer term. The SPP sets out principles to guide policies and decisions and in this case the relevant principles are:

- Giving due weight to net economic benefit;
- Responding to economic issues, challenges and opportunities, as outlined in local economic strategies;
- Making efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure;
- Supporting delivery of infrastructure, for example transport, education, energy, digital and water;
- Supporting climate change mitigation and adaption including taking account of flood risk;
- Improve health and well-being by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, including sport and recreation; and
- Have regard to the principles of sustainable land use;

9.12 The applicant has submitted supporting information in relation to the economic benefits in the Economic Need and Evaluation report. It is acknowledged that the proposed development would bring significant economic benefit to North Lanarkshire in view of the investment and employment opportunities detailed in paragraph 3.8 earlier in the report. With regard to utilising existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure and delivery of infrastructure, it is considered that the proposed development would be increasing the capacity of the existing railhead operations (including the existing rail sidings and new longer rail sidings) to maximise the capacity and movement of rail freight goods to and from Scotland. Through increased rail freight movements and less road based freight movements, the proposal would support climate change through lower carbon emissions. As discussed at paragraph 8.17 above, the applicant proposes a green network with pedestrian and cycle routes in order to allow community access. This element of the proposal would support improved health and well-being opportunities to local residents. In respect to sustainable land use, the proposed development would support modal shift from road to rail thus reducing carbon emissions meanwhile also create long term employment opportunities and economic growth.

9.13 Within the SPP, there are subject policies set out under each of the planning outcomes detailed in paragraph 8.24 above. With regard to the application, the relevant subject policies are: A Sustainable Place - Supporting Business and Employment, A Natural, Resilient Place - Maximising the Benefits of Green Infrastructure and A Connected Place - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Active Travel. Under supporting Business and Employment, it is highlighted that proposals for business, industrial and service uses should take into account surrounding sensitive uses, areas of particular natural sensitivity or interest and local amenity, and make a positive contribution towards place making. In respect to this position, detailed assessment on the quality of the development including impacts on local amenity are discussed in paragraph 8.22 above. In terms of the position set out in paragraphs 9.3 and 9.6 in relation to the other above noted subject policies it is considered that the application supports the principles set out in each of these policy subjects in the spatial strategy.

9.14 It is considered that the proposed rail freight expansion and freight park would contribute to sustainable economic growth without significant adverse environmental or social impacts on the locality, as discussed earlier in this report. In light of the above, the proposed development is considered to accord with the policy principles set out in the SPP, with particular regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

**Reporter's Findings on the Examination of the North Lanarkshire Local Plan**

9.15 As noted in paragraph 8.19 above, industrial and business land supply has recently been considered in the examination of the North Lanarkshire Local Plan. The Reporter concluded that there is a significant amount of available industrial and business land to meet current demand for 150 years.

9.16 In respect to industrial and business land supply, it is acknowledged that there is a significant amount of available land within North Lanarkshire. In broad terms, industrial and business development is directed towards such land zoned for such purposes in the local development plan as opposed to land within the Green Belt. The
supply of industrial and business land varies in size and scale from single occupier sites, small/medium industrial estates to larger purpose-built industrial and business locations such as Eurocentral. In order to address the Reporter’s findings, the Council is undertaking a series of Industrial and Business Land Supply Charrettes involving local businesses and landowners to review the current land supply and future needs. This process has not yet been concluded. In terms of this application, it is noted that there is significant industrial land available with North Lanarkshire, however in this case the applicant seeks additional land in relation to supporting the expansion of the existing railhead operations, therefore demonstrating a need at this location.

**Other Non Statutory Policy and Guidance**

9.17 In addition to the above, support for rail freight can be found in other non-statutory documents. The Scottish Government’s ‘National Transport Strategy’ sets out the Governments long term vision for transport, together with their objectives, priorities and plans. Under the Government Economic Strategy, the overall purpose is to increase sustainable economic growth. Our transport system contributes to this aim by: connecting people to jobs, education, services and recreation connecting businesses with customers and suppliers. This improves the health and wellbeing of individuals and helps businesses to operate successfully in local, national and international markets. The National Transport Strategy provides a clear focus on the main transport challenges that Scotland faces, as well as high-level direction for the wide range of work needed to meet these challenges. In broad terms a modal shift in freight to the rail network is clearly supported.

9.18 Feeding into the National Transport Strategy are the ‘Freight Action Plan for Scotland’ and ‘Scotland Railways’. The ‘Freight Action Plan’ for Scotland supports the national strategy by contributing to its aims. It also supports the Framework for Economic Development in Scotland which recognises that transport infrastructure is one of the major enabling factors supporting modern economies. In broad terms this document encourages a modal shift to rail freight. ‘Scotland’s Railways’ sets out Scottish Ministers’ vision for the rail network to 2026. It aims to support the Government’s high level objectives of promoting economic growth whilst supporting the protection/improvement of environment and health. Support for the benefits of the rail network in achieving future economic growth is given, including the promotion of rail freight. Both of these documents offer broad support to the application. They also highlight that Regional Transport Partnerships and local authorities are in an ideal position to focus on how rail integrates at a local level to support enhancements. The relevance of the current SDP and local development plan is again re-iterated in this regard.

9.19 In a regional context, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport published its “Regional Transport Strategy-A Catalyst for Change” (RTS) in 2008. In order to implement the strategic priorities identified within the strategy, further documents have been published and in this case the relevant documents are: ‘Freight Action Plan’ and ‘Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan 2014-2017’. The Regional Transport Strategy has six strategic priorities, one of which is to improve sustainable connectivity for business and freight and the strategy seeks to encourage the transferral of freight from road to more sustainable modes. A key priority to help deliver this is identified as connections for the sustainable transfer of freight. The RTS previously identified that in relation to rail freight, there is a lack of capacity and also reliability, particularly during engineering maintenance works and on the network. It acknowledges that investment is required to upgrade infrastructure. ‘RTS Delivery Plan 2014-2017’ highlights that the improvement of the efficiency, reliability and sustainability of freight movements is vital to both economic growth and reducing the negative environmental and social impact of freight movements including local air quality and noise pollution. Strategic solutions include reducing congestion to improve efficiency; improving access to key hubs including freight distribution centres, ports and rail heads; and improving strategic freight routes with better signage, lorry parking and other infrastructure enhancements. The Delivery Plan sets out that SPT
will undertake a multi-modal freight study to gather appropriate regional and local data to improve transport planning for freight, identify local and regional barriers to more efficient freight movements and establish realistic opportunities to reduce these barriers. The outcomes of the study will feed into a planned update to the Freight Action Plan. It is therefore considered that the application can take support from the Regional Transport Strategy.

9.20 At local level, the Council published its Local Transport Strategy in 2012 which supports the transfer of road freight onto the rail, making specific reference to the existing terminal at Mossend and recognises the role that freight plays to decrease road traffic levels. However it also notes the need to consider its impact on the environment and on the population of North Lanarkshire. Detailed assessment on the impacts of the proposal has been discussed earlier in the report. In general terms it is considered that the proposal is supported by the Local Transport Strategy.

9.21 Also of relevance is the Council’s Economic and Regeneration Strategy 2014-2017 ‘Our Plan for Growth’ which sets out the Council’s economic priorities for growing the local economy over the next three years and how these priorities can be achieved. The economic strategy identifies the Eurocentral/Mossend freight locations as strategic freight transport links. The strategy goes on to state that North Lanarkshire has a competitive advantage over other areas given the proximity to the economic centres of Glasgow and Edinburgh and also the access to markets and trading opportunities that the road and rail infrastructure in the area brings. In broad terms, the application takes support from the Council’s economic strategy with particular regard to the location of the site in relation to the strategic road network and rail network as re-iterated earlier in the report.

9.22 In 2013 the Scottish Government published ‘Low Carbon Scotland : Meeting our Emissions Reductions Targets 2013−2027’ which sets out proposals and policies specific measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to meets Scotland’s statutory targets. This document acknowledges of role of freight modal shift from road to rail contributes towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and states that a rail freight policy framework is being developed to encourage modal shift. In broad terms it is therefore considered that support for the application can be taken from this document.

9.23 Overall it can be concluded that the development can take support from the above noted non-statutory documents if properly controlled via planning conditions to ensure its rail freight operation is suitably connected to the freight park.

Consultations

9.24 In terms of the consultation responses received, it is considered that the outstanding matters which have not been covered earlier in this report could be suitably addressed by way of planning conditions attached to any permission.

Representations

9.25 In response to the grounds of representation, the respective responses should be noted:

Objection Comments

- Contrary to the development plan and national planning policy in respect of the loss of green belt land, with no requirement for additional industrial land in North Lanarkshire as detailed by the Reporter in the findings of the North Lanarkshire Local Plan.
- Loss of mature woodland and wildlife which is not protected under legislation.
- The proposed development would be prominent on the landscape from its scale and size with visual effects on the character of the landscape from significant
The development will result in Bellshill being surrounded by industrial estates including Righead and Bellshill Industrial Estates, Mossend and Eurocentral.

- There would be a loss of an area of land for play, recreation and development.
- Impact on amenity of local residential properties through noise and vibration impacts, air and light pollution, increased litter, risk of pluvial flooding, length of time to complete the construction of the development (10–15 years), loss of privacy and overbearing impacts.
- There would be adverse impacts on the health and wellbeing of local residents.
- Proposed changes by the applicant to increase the area of Green Network by 8% is not acceptable and will lead to areas subject to anti-social behaviour.

Response: In respect to the policy position, it is considered that there is sufficient justification to depart from Green Belt policy in the development plan in this case in order to support the strategically identified rail freight transport facility. Support for ancillary land adjacent to rail freight parks is identified in the SDP and it is considered that the loss of the Green Belt land would be offset by the locally designed and managed community greenspace. It has been concluded that in technical terms the development could be accommodated and taken forward through detailed applications to ensure appropriate standards are met and impacts are kept within reasonable parameters without significant adverse impacts on amenity and wellbeing. In respect to any anti-social behaviour, this should be reported to the Police and is not a material consideration to justify refusal of permission in this instance.

- The proposed SUDS development would be dangerous and the proposals would increase drainage problems experienced at Hattonrigg Road and Love Drive, Bellshill.

Response: As this application is in principle only, there is no detailed drainage submitted as part of the proposals however the indicative masterplan shows 3 SUDS areas within the development site. Furthermore the applicant has submitted a flood risk and drainage strategy report which confirms that the proposals would not increase flood risks within or outwith the site, particularly at neighbouring residential areas in Bellshill. Following consultations with SEPA, they advise that they are content with the submitted drainage strategy. The detailed design of the SUDS scheme would be assessed as part of any subsequent matters specified in conditions application and as such, it is considered that this is not a reason to warrant refusal of the application.

- The development would result in a loss of view of the open agricultural land from the adjacent residential area
- The proposal will reduce local house prices.

Response: With regard to loss of view, reduced house prices and matters relating to the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention of Human Rights Article 8, these matters are not considered material considerations in the determination of this application.

- There would be a risk of subsidence to local properties at Owendale Avenue and Parkville Road arising from vibration works during construction and operations.
- The coal seams within the land may result in sink holes.
- The Scottish Water culvert within the site was installed an appropriate distance from the houses on Parkville Road and this should be maintained.

Response: Following consultations received from the Coal Authority (in relation to ground conditions/former mine activity) and Scottish Water (in relation to water infrastructure and capacity), they have no objections to the proposed development subject to appropriate planning conditions. Matters relating to damage during
construction are legal matters are therefore not considered a material consideration in
the determination of this application.

- Recent history at Eurocentral has shown that there no demand for large scale
  industrial developments in the area as land remains undeveloped or built and
  unoccupied (e.g. Maxim and Chungwa Tube Factory).
- No evidence of the economic benefits of the proposal and the potential of the
distribution park may not be realised in the current economic climate.
- Eurocentral had a railway line to accommodate the longer trains which was
  removed previously due to no demand.
- The applicant should construct a bridge over the West Coast Mainline to connect
  their operations to Eurocentral.
- There would be an adverse impact on existing commercial freight businesses
  within North Lanarkshire, limiting their ability to spend on their facilities. There
  should be a planning condition restricting the railhead expansion and to new
  warehousing once constructed to reduce competition with other freight companies.

Response: In respect to the economic benefits of the proposal, the applicant has
provided justification which has been discussed earlier in the report. The application
seeks permission for 775m long rail sidings, of which are longer than any of the
previous sidings constructed at either Mossend or Eurocentral freight terminals. No
sidings have been previously removed from the Eurocentral rail facility. It is
acknowledged that there is vacant land at Eurocentral however the applicant
proposes to link the freight park directly to the rail facility therefore land in Eurocentral
would not enable such connections and as such, there are no proposals for a bridge
crossing the railway to connect to land to the east. In terms of other freight
businesses in North Lanarkshire, the commercial impacts are not material
considerations however it is acknowledged that there would be sufficient additional
freight capacity on the rail network as noted by Network Rail, particularly following
proposed signalling improvement works. Turning to the freight park operations, a
planning condition is recommended to restrict the future occupation of the buildings to
be related to the railhead operations.

- The local road network is not suitable for construction works and there would be
  an increase in traffic generated from the proposals from construction, HGVs and it
  is unlikely that local employees would arrive by public transport.

Response: As discussed at paragraph 6.7 and 6.20 above, it is accepted that the
development can be accommodated within the local road network, subject to various
works which also include improvements relating to the M8/M73/M74 upgrade works.
These works can be addressed by way of suitable planning conditions. It is
considered that the proposed development would result in less HGV and car
movements on the local network once the access road from the A8 becomes
operational, however it is accepted that there would be some construction traffic
entering the southern access to the site at Reema Road, Bellshill in order to
undertake some works at the existing railhead. The construction traffic would be
controlled through a suitable planning condition. In this respect, construction traffic
movements would be of a temporary nature and controlled through appropriate
planning conditions and this is not a sufficient reason to warrant refusal of permission.

Support Comments

- Significant employment benefits and economic growth within North Lanarkshire.
- Lower cost and effective option of transport for businesses, with an open access
to rail freight.
- New access road would create a cleaner, safer environment for residents by
  removing vehicles from the local transport network, with heavy goods vehicles
  (HGVs) able to access the site directly from the A8.
- The proposed development would be a modern, state of the art facility which
  promote modal shift from road to rail and promote sustainable economic growth
therefore according with national planning policy.

- The site is suitably located next to the strategic road network and the West Coast Main Line, with access to a skilled labour market.

Response: Following detailed consideration of the submitted economic need and evaluation report, it is accepted that the application would bring significant economic benefits to North Lanarkshire through the creation a strategic rail freight hub in an accessible location from the strategic road network. As discussed earlier in the report, national planning policy and guidance contained within NPF3 and SPP supports the economic aspects of the proposal, with particular relevance to the support of increased modal shift from road to rail.

9.26 In respect to procedural matters generally, it is highlighted that the application has been accompanied by all relevant information and the appropriate advertisement and notification has been carried out.

10. Conclusions

10.1 Having assessed the application against the Development Plan and all relevant material considerations, it can be concluded that there are various factors in favour of granting planning permission, despite the proposal not being wholly allocated or supported in the Development Plan.

10.2 The SDP sets out support for the continued growth and expansion of the Mossend rail freight operations through its identification as a strategic rail freight transport hub, with support for ancillary land allocations for freight parks alongside the rail freight facilities. Support for ancillary land allocations in the SDP is however at conflict with the Green Belt policy protection afforded to the land consisting of the proposed rail freight park. Despite the proposed loss of Green Belt, the applicant seeks to retain a level of such land consisting of the proposed Community Green Network. In respect to the local development plan, the policy position in terms of Green Belt protection is re-iterated. However there is policy support for the expansion of the existing railhead operations alone given that the adjacent land is zoned for industrial and business purposes at the south western part of the site. The existing railhead also draws policy support as it is identified as an International Transport Facility. While the Development Plan overall gives broad support for a strategic rail freight facility at Mossend, it is acknowledged that the Green Belt zoning of the proposed rail freight park conflicts with the strategic policy objectives in terms of rail freight.

10.3 In terms of assessing the development against more technical aspects of the Development Plan, such as impacts on the residential amenity, noise, air quality, ecology, transportation, landscape character and flooding and drainage amongst other matters, it has been established that these matters can be suitably addressed through appropriate planning conditions.

10.4 In respect to material considerations, a significant level of support can be drawn from national and regional statutory and non-statutory policy and guidance in relation to planning, sustainable economic growth and rail freight. It can be concluded that there is widespread support for a shift in freight methods from road to rail in terms of the significant environmental benefits as well as a general trend towards rail freight arising from more effective transport cost options. Furthermore, there is also broad support in terms of supporting the economic growth of existing rail freight operations to improve connectivity to the rest of the UK and Europe. The applicant has provided a broad range of supporting documentation to demonstrate the specific locational and market need which would support a host of economic, environmental and social benefits without resulting in significant adverse impacts on the local environment.

10.5 While a significant number of objections have been received, detailed consideration has been given to the content of these in arriving at this recommendation and they do not raise sufficient reasons to recommend that the application be refused.
10.6 Drawing all matters together, it is considered that while contrary to the Development Plan, there are material considerations in this instance that carry sufficient weight to support the application. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

10.7 While undertaken as part of the Planning Hearings Committee procedure, a significant number of objectors have requested a site visit be undertaken prior to the determination of the application.