

# The Rail Central Rail Freight Interchange

## Northampton Gateway Examination

Response to ExA's Further Written  
Questions (ExQ2) on behalf of Ashfield  
Management Limited and Gazeley  
GLP Northampton s.à.r.l.

**Northampton Gateway PINS Reference Number  
TR050006**

**26 February 2019**

## The Applicant for Rail Central responses to ExQ2

2.0.3	Rail Central	<p>An alternative footpath connection point from the Rail Central site is proposed within the Northampton Gateway Main Site in the event of the Rail Central Order being made. This is shown on the plan attached as Appendix 2 to the Applicant's DCO Changes Tracker (Document 3.4B [REP4-005]). The Applicant suggests that Rail Central is unlikely to object to this.</p> <p>Can Rail Central please comment?</p>
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### RC Reply:

- 1.1 RC has reviewed the footpath connections plan [REP4-027] put forward by NG. RC has identified that NG's alternative connection point, marked Footpath Connection B, is outside of RC Order Limits. RC has requested that the original footpath connection proposed by RC, and shown as attached on the RC Public Rights of Way Strategy plan at Appendix 1, be retained.
- 1.2 On 25 February 2019 RC received a Technical Note from NG in respect of Rail Central Footpath Interface ("the Technical Note") which proposes that RC make changes to the RC footpath proposals and RC Order Limits to deliver the alternative footpath connections.
- 1.3 This proposal within the Technical Note is being considered in detail by RC's technical team and RC will provide comments in advance of ISH4.



2.3.1	The Applicant	At ISH3 (the Compulsory Acquisition Hearing) Rail Central indicated that its only objection in relation to compulsory acquisition in respect of Plots 1/7 and 1/12 on the Main Site was to safeguard the ability for Rail Central to be developed alongside the Proposed Development. The Applicant has put forward in its revised dDCO (Doc 3.1C [REP4-004]) Requirement 30 to address Rail Central's concerns. Does the addition of this requirement adequately address Rail Central's concerns to allow it to withdraw its objection to compulsory acquisition? (See also the questions attached to the ExA's commentary on the revised dDCO regarding this Requirement).
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RC Reply:

- 1.4 RC is considering the proposal by NG to amend the RC Order Limits, following the receipt of the Technical Note and will be providing comments in advance of ISH4 and CAH2.
- 1.5 RC would only be able to withdraw its objection to compulsory acquisition when the ability for RC to be developed alongside NG has been safeguarded. In principle this issue can be resolved but there is ongoing discussion on the detail (including the Rail Central footpath connections plan which is not yet agreed).
- 1.6 For clarity, safeguarding the ability for RC to be developed alongside NG includes that both schemes can be built out including connecting to the Northampton Loop Line to the satisfaction of Network Rail. As stated at paragraph 1.8 below RC will be circulating a draft requirement in respect of the rail connections and will be updating the ExA prior to ISH5. However, whilst RC seeks protection in this regard it is not related to the RC land sought to be acquired by compulsory acquisition and as such does not form part of the compulsory acquisition objection.

2.9.2	The Applicant, NR, Rail Central	<p>Within the unsigned SoCG with NR (Doc 7.13 [REP1-016]) it is stated at paragraph 22 that, until further work is done to evaluate the speed of connection into and out of the Proposed Development and this is verified, NR cannot confirm that connection speeds are viable (and the results of which will have a bearing on the assessment of network capacity to accommodate the Proposed Development). Paragraph 2.14 of Doc 8.10 (Applicant's post-hearing submissions ((ISH2 and ISH3 and CAH) [REP4-011]) notes that discussions are continuing with regards to connection speeds from the north (those from the south being considered satisfactory).</p> <p>Please provide an update and appropriate documentation as to the position regarding further study as to:</p> <p>(i) the feasibility of connection to the rail network of the Proposed Development as a) a stand-alone development and b) as a development in combination with the Rail Central proposal;</p> <p>(ii) assessment of network capacity in relation to both stand-alone and in-combination developments; and</p> <p>(iii) whether the further assessment has included review and consideration of the Network Rail West Coast Main Line Capacity Plus, the Northamptonshire Rail Capacity Study and the Network Rail Northampton Loop Capacity Report, which have been referred to in representations.</p>
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RC Reply:

- 1.7 As part of the ongoing programme of work by RC with NR to continue to progress its proposals beyond GRIP2 (confirming the overall feasibility of the proposals) and onto GRIP3 (identifying a preferred scheme option), we are assessing mutually-compatible solutions which would enable both RC and NG to be connected to the WCML Slow Lines. The solutions would also demonstrate the ability of both SRFIs to draw on a quantum of existing capacity across the WCML Fast and Slow Lines to enable each to function as a SRFI, as defined by the NPS NN. Preliminary results of this assessment with NR are expected by the end of April.
- 1.8 RC will propose a draft requirement, for inclusion within the NG DCO, which would be designed to ensure that both schemes can be built out to the satisfaction of NR. It is proposed that this will be circulated by 1 March 2019 to both NR and NG. A draft will also be submitted to the ExA in advance of ISH5.

ExQ2 2.4 refers to the Schedule of Questions on the Draft Development Consent Order. RC's responses to these questions are set out below:

12.	RC	Sch 2	Definition of Rail Central footpath connections, and Rail Central footpath connections plan	Please can RC and the Applicant confirm that this wording is agreed, or otherwise explain what is being done and why?
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RC Reply:

- 1.9 The wording of the DCO definitions has been under discussion between RC and NG and are agreed as follows:

*“Rail Central development” means the development of a rail freight interchange (as defined in section 26 of the 2008 Act) on land situated to the west of the Northampton Loop Line and to the north of the West Coast main line on the opposite side of the Northampton Loop Line to the authorised development;*

*“Rail Central footpath connections” means the connections of the footpaths leading from the Rail Central development to footpaths within the authorised development connecting at points A and B as shown on the Rail Central footpath connections plan or any alternative connections agreed between the undertaker (by which expression is meant, for the avoidance of doubt, the undertaker relating to the authorised development as defined in this Order) and the Rail Central undertaker, and approved by the relevant planning authority;*

*“Rail Central footpath connections plan” means the plan of that description referred to in Schedule 16 (certification of plans and documents) and certified by the Secretary of State as the Rail Central footpath connections plan for the purposes of this Order;*

*“Rail Central Order” means the order, the title of which is The Rail Central Rail Freight Interchange and Highway Order 20\*\*, in the form approved by the Secretary of State (if approved) pursuant to the application accepted for examination on 15 November 2018 or any amendment to that order or any subsequent development consent order for the Rail Central development;*

*“Rail Central undertaker” means the undertaker as defined in the Rail Central Order;*

- 1.10 The plan which will be submitted for certification by the Secretary of State, as the Rail Central footpath connections plan, is not yet agreed. RC is considering the Technical Note and will advise the ExA of its preferred plan in advance of ISH4.

26.	RC, Applicant	Reqt 30	Rail Central footpath connections	Does the NG undertaker have the necessary land rights? Should this be dealt with by the s.106? Can RC please confirm the locations are agreed? What will be the consequence if the connections cannot be made for (a) RC and (b) NG? Will there be any likely significant effects if they are not made and what will be the implications for each SRFI individually and cumulatively
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RC Reply:

- 1.11 Amended wording for Requirement 30 has been under discussion between NG and RC and is agreed as follows:

*"30. If the Rail Central Order is approved by the Secretary of State the undertaker must allow the Rail Central footpath connections to be made by the Rail Central undertaker in conjunction with the carrying out of the Rail Central development in accordance with a timetable agreed with the relevant planning authority in consultation with the Rail Central undertaker the objective of such timetable to be to allow the timely provision of the Rail Central footpath connections consistent with the minimisation of any disruption to the construction or operation of the authorised development or development authorised by the Rail Central Order."*

Can RC please confirm the locations are agreed?

- 1.12 RC has reviewed the footpath connections plan [REP4-027] put forward by NG. NG's proposed location of Footpath Connection B is further south to the location proposed by RC in its DCO application. This location is outside of RC DCO Order Limits. Consequently, RC cannot deliver NG's suggested location of Footpath Connection B under the RC DCO as submitted.
- 1.13 RC has requested that the location of Footpath Connection B, as shown within Inset 2 of the Interrelationship Report plan marked 'Public Rights of way Strategy – Footpath Links with Northampton Gateway' [Appendix 3, page 31 of REP1-030] and also attached as Appendix 1, is substituted instead, which is capable of delivery by RC within the powers sought under the RC DCO.
- 1.14 NG has since circulated to RC the Technical Note, which is being reviewed in detail. The Technical Note proposes a change to the RC footpath proposals and RC Order limits to deliver the footpath connections. RC's position on this proposal will be confirmed in advance of ISH4.

What will be consequence be if the connections cannot be made for (a) RC and (b) NG?

- 1.15 Attached at Appendix 2 is RC's 'Public Rights of Way Strategy' submitted with the RC application. This sets out RC's approach to enhancing the connectivity of the public rights of way network (pages 10 and 11).

- 1.16 RC's approach, should both projects be consented, is to connect footpaths over the RC site to a wider footpath network on the other side of the Northampton Loop Line.
- 1.17 NG is not seeking to connect into any wider footpath networks over the RC site if RC is also granted consent. If connections cannot be made by RC, it will not be possible to deliver connections to a wider footpath network across both sites.

Will there be any likely significant effects if they are not made and what will be the implications for each SRFI individually and cumulatively?

- 1.18 The assessments in the RC ES were made assuming a coherent network of landscaped footpaths would be embedded into the proposed development (as part of the embedded mitigation of the RC scheme, both independently and cumulatively with NG).
- 1.19 Were these not to be put in place, the RC scheme would not be as described in the Proposed Development chapter of the RC ES (or in the Interrelationship Report [REP1-030]). Therefore it would be expected that a failure to include a coherent network of footpaths as part of the green infrastructure could affect the conclusions of any assessment of the revised proposed development. In particular, the absence of a coherent footpath network could affect the revised assessments of biodiversity (loss of potential habitat corridors provided alongside the footpaths), public access/promoting sustainable and active transport (as assessed in the RC highways chapter) and landscape and recreational amenity benefit (as a benefit of the proposed "green infrastructure" as assessed in the RC LVIA chapter). However, the extent to which conclusions of the assessments would alter has not been estimated.
- 1.20 It is considered unlikely that a significant environmental impact would result if this were the only aspect of the green infrastructure to be changed. However, comparatively, the resulting development would definitely provide less benefit than the current proposed scheme with an integrated footpath network.

27.	RC, Applicant	Reqt 31	Rail Central and Jn 15A	<p>1. Do the works expected by the Rail Central Order mitigate the likely significant effects for which Works No 11 are designed? And as this is akin to a tailpiece, should not this be subject to EIA safeguards at the time?</p> <p>2. What happens if, after Rail Central DCO is made (if it is made), HE or the LHA take the view that the works to Jn 15A in the Rail Central DCO, do not satisfactorily address the combined effects with Northampton Gateway and therefore do not give the counter-notice? There could be other reasons why the counter-notice are not given. It would appear that NG will have to construct their Jn 15A works and RC will have to construct theirs.</p> <p>3. Please will the Applicant and Rail Central comment.</p> <p>4. How are the environmental effects properly mitigated in such a case?</p> <p>5. Is it necessary to have corresponding provisions in any RC DCO? If so, how will that be achieved given that the Secretary of State must not fetter his own discretion?</p>
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RC Reply:

- 1.21 Amended wording for Requirement 31 has been discussed between the parties and is agreed as follows:

*"31. The undertaker must give Highways England and the local highway authority nine months' prior notice in writing of the commencement of Works No. 11 and if within the period of three months following the service of that notice Highways England and the local highway authority both notify the undertaker that Works No.11 should not be carried out due to the works authorised by the Rail Central Order being considered sufficient by Highways England and the local highways authority to mitigate the impacts of both the Rail Central development and the authorised development then there will thereafter be no requirement to carry out the works comprising Works No.11 and the entries in respect of Works No. 11 in the table in requirement 6 shall no longer have effect."*

1. Do the works expected by the Rail Central Order mitigate the likely significant effects for which Works No 11 are designed? And as this is akin to a tailpiece, should not this be subject to EIA safeguards at the time?

1.22 NG states that the RC highways mitigation will not accommodate traffic movements associated with RC and therefore will not accommodate both developments. The RC highway mitigation works are in the process of being reviewed by RC following the receipt of Relevant Representations for the RC application and feedback from both Northamptonshire County Council and Highways England. However, this does not prevent Requirement 31 from being imposed as it gives both Highways England and the local highway authority ("the Highway Authorities") the ability to manage both schemes in the public interest.

1.23 Requirement 31 would give the Highway Authorities the ability to ensure only a single set of works is carried out to J15a. The Highway Authorities would be acting in the public interest to ensure that only a single set of works is undertaken. There would be no requirement for further EIA, as the works would be authorised under the RC DCO and would have been subject to EIA within the RC scheme and considered within the RC Examination. It would only be possible to replace parts of the NG works where the RC works to J15a are acceptable, including acceptable cumulative effects with NG and other schemes.

2. What happens if, after Rail Central DCO is made (if it is made), HE or the LHA take the view that the works to Jn 15A in the Rail Central DCO, do not satisfactorily address the combined effects with Northampton Gateway and therefore do not give the counter-notice? There could be other reasons why the counter-notice is not given. It would appear that NG will have to construct their Jn 15A works and RC will have to construct theirs.

3. Please will the Applicant and Rail Central comment.

1.24 Requirement 31 is designed to pass control to the Highway Authorities who are the best placed to judge the best outcome in the public interest for the highways network. If the Highway Authorities determine, after the RC DCO is consented, that the RC J15a works do not properly mitigate both schemes, then the regulatory regime has not operated properly. If no counter notice is served then NG will simply construct the NG scheme. It would not be a concern of the NG ExA whether or not the RC scheme is then built out thereafter.

4. How are the environmental effects properly mitigated in such a case?

1.25 The mitigation for environmental effects would be a matter for consideration within the RC scheme and RC examination.

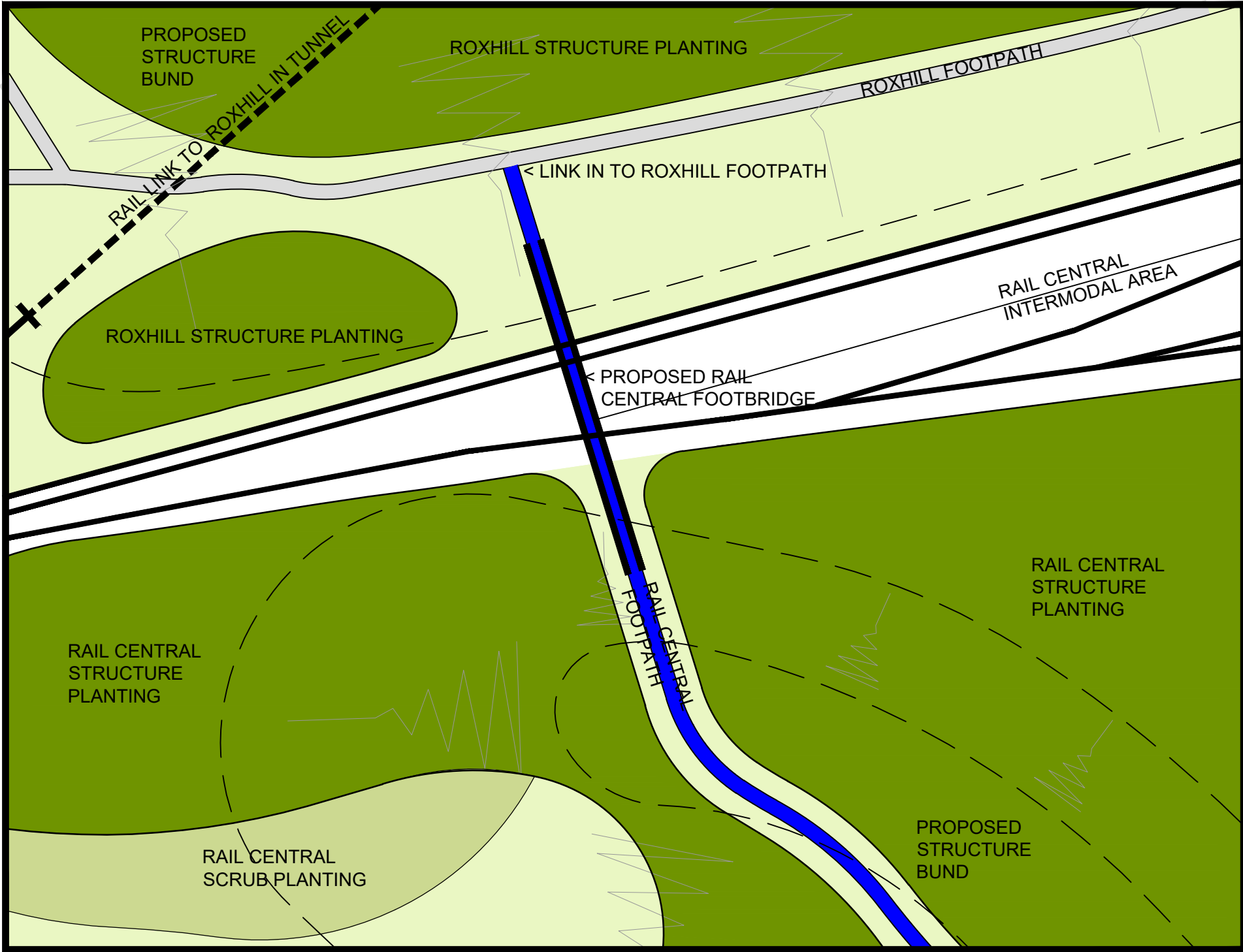
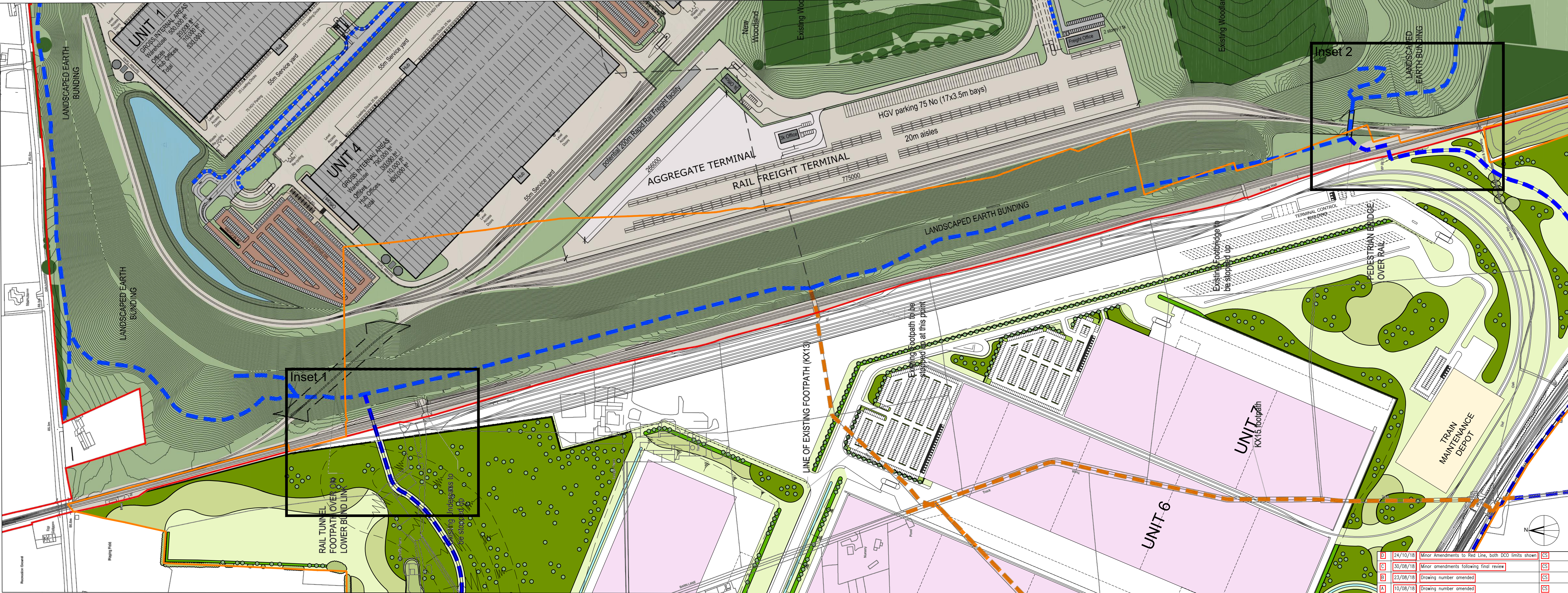
5. Is it necessary to have corresponding provisions in any RC DCO? If so, how will that be achieved given that the Secretary of State must not fetter his own discretion?

1.26 Corresponding provisions in the RC DCO would not be appropriate. The works at J15a under the authorised development would be insufficient to accommodate both the NG and RC traffic. The RC J15a works will have to be carried out if the RC scheme is constructed.

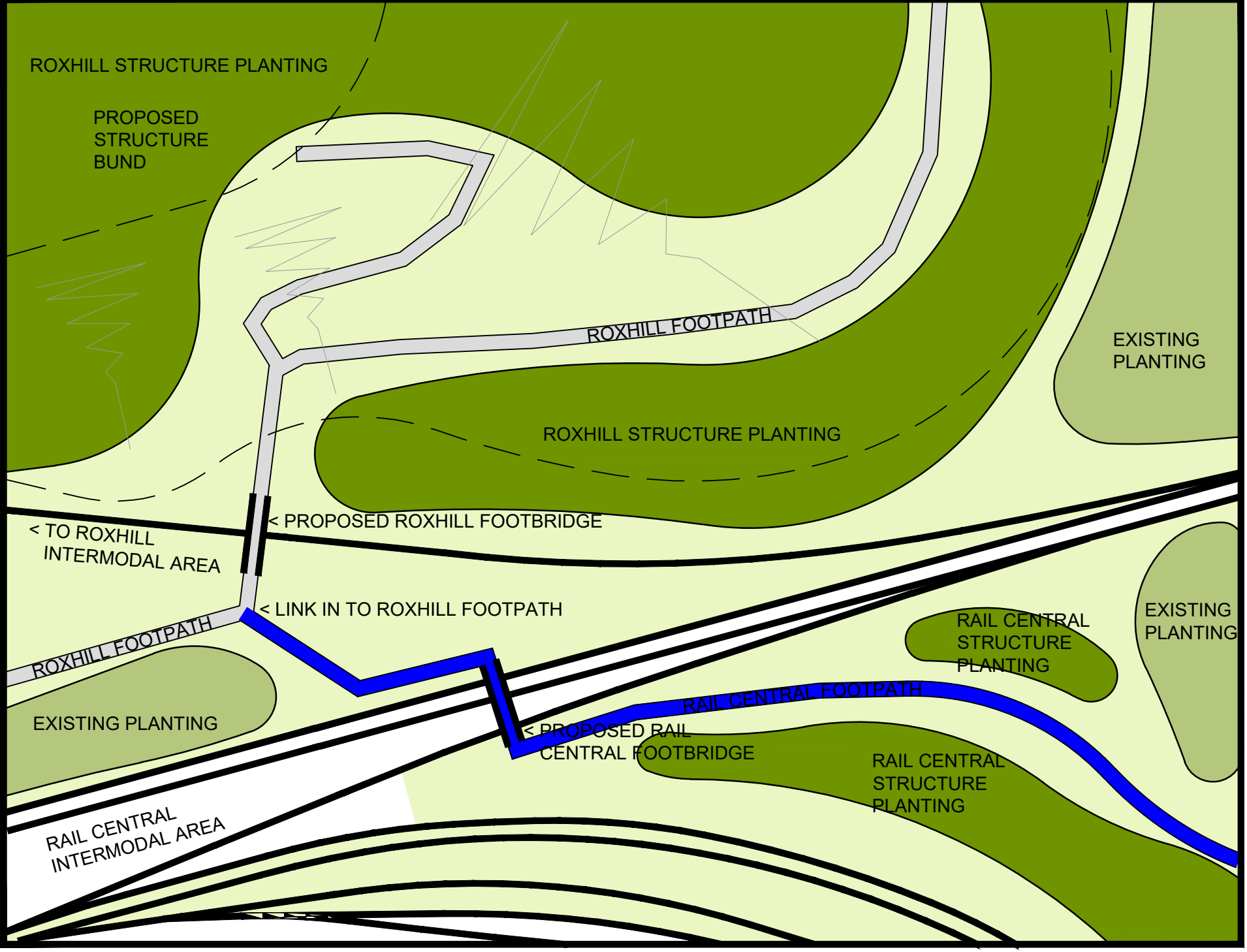
## **Appendix One**

### **RC Public Rights of Way Strategy – Links with NG Plan**





Inset 1 - SCALE 1:1000



Inset 2 - SCALE 1:1000

LEGEND TO MAIN PLAN

	Existing Vegetation Retained		Existing Footpath (Removed)
	Proposed Blocks of Native Tree and Shrub Planting		Proposed Screening Mound
	Proposed Scrub Areas		Proposed Water Body
	Proposed Formal Planting		Existing Retained Water Body
	Highway Planting to be Retained or Re-instated		Rail Central Order Limits
	Proposed Hedgerow		Northampton Gateway Order Limits
	Proposed Grass and Wildflower Areas		Proposed Acoustic Barrier
	Retained Farmland (Within Red Line)		
	Proposed Footpath Route		

REV	DATE	DETAILS OF ISSUE/REVISION	DRW
D	24/10/18	Minor Amendments to Red Line, both DCO limits shown	CS
C	30/08/18	Minor amendments following final review	CS
B	23/08/18	Drawing number amended	CS
A	10/08/18	Drawing number amended	CS

**Gazeley**  
a GLP company

**ASHFIELD LAND**

**Rail Central**  
Northamptonshire

## THE RAIL CENTRAL RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE AND HIGHWAY ORDER 201[X]

### PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY STRATEGY - FOOTPATH LINKS WITH NORTHAMPTON GATEWAY (5 OF 5)

SCALE	1:2500	DRAWN	CS
PAGE SIZE	A1	REVIEWED	BC
REGULATION	5 (2) (k)	DOCUMENT	2.44

### DRAWING STATUS

PLANNING

DRAWING NO	RC-ALG-PLN-2.44.5	REVISION	D
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## **Appendix Two**

### **Rail Central: Public Rights of Way Strategy**

# Rail Central:

## Public Rights of Way Strategy



October 2018  
Document No. 7.6 Rev E  
Reg 5 (2) q

PREPARED FOR

**ASHFIELD LAND MANAGEMENT LIMITED  
AND GAZELEY GLP NORTHAMPTON S.À.R.L**

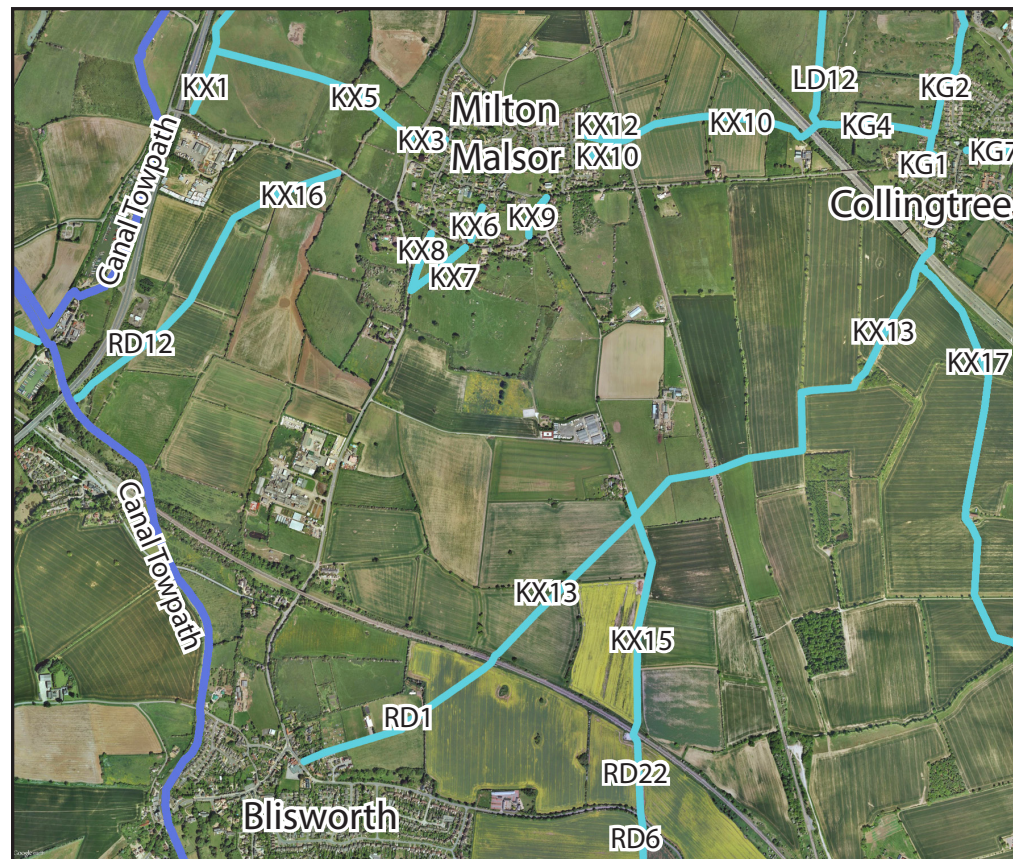
BY

**BARRY CHINN ASSOCIATES LTD.**

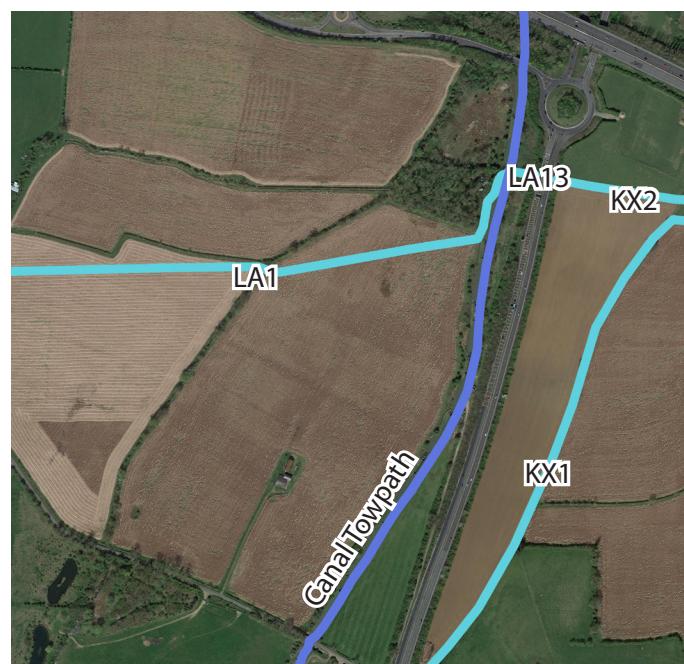
Harbury Road  
Deppers Bridge  
Southam  
Warwickshire  
CV47 2SZ







Existing Footpath Network - Main Site



Existing Footpath Network -  
J15A Ecological Mitigation Area

## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to assess the existing public right of way (PROW) network both within the site and within the wider landscape. The local PROW network is fairly extensive, in the immediate locality it provides linkages between the villages of Milton Malsor, Collingtree and Blisworth. It also links into the canal towpath on the Grand Union Canal and to the south of Blisworth to the Midshires Way long distance path. The report will also analyse the PROW within the proposed ecological mitigation area to the south J15A of the M1.

The final section of this report will look at the Rail Central PROW Strategy and how it relates to the adjacent Northampton Gateway proposals. This will outline how the Rail Central proposals will interact with the Northampton Gateway scheme to ensure that the footpath network will continue to function and existing links are maintained should Northampton Gateway be granted consent.

The key footpath routes that interact with the main application site were identified through a combination of site assessment, desktop study, feedback from public consultation and through discussions with local ramblers groups.

### ***Route 1 - Grand Union Canal to Blisworth.***

The Grand Union Canal (and the Northampton Arm) are important leisure routes for pedestrians, cyclists and narrow boats. At present, there is a public footpath link running from the canal as it crosses under the A43 running up to the edge of Milton Malsor (footpaths RD12 and KX16). These routes are currently un-surfaced and run through arable fields through the western part of the site close to the A43 before exiting out onto the Gayton Road approximately 200m to the west of Milton Malsor.

### ***Route 2 - Collingtree to Milton Malsor Loop.***

This route was mentioned by several local residents during the Phase 1 consultation. It runs east from Milton Malsor along footpath KX10 which crosses the Northampton Loop railway line. It then crosses the motorway onto footpaths KG4 and KG1 before passing through the village of Collingtree to footpath KX13. This footpath crosses back over the motorway and then the Northampton Loop line before linking into the end of Barn Lane. Barn Lane then leads north back towards Milton Malsor linking into footpath KX9. The loop runs on a mix of different surfaces through a mix of residential and rural settings crossing both road and rail links.

### ***Route 3 - Blisworth to Milton Malsor***

This appears to be a reasonably well used route and runs from the recreation ground in Blisworth along footpath RD1 over the West Coast Mainline and then along footpath KX13 to the end of Barn Lane. Walkers then follow the lane into Milton Malsor. The route is largely rural in nature. Barn Lane is also accessible for vehicles with pedestrians sharing the road surface. Footpath RD1 is surfaced alongside the recreation ground to allow access for vehicles. From the recreation ground to the end of Barn Lane is not currently surfaced.

### ***Route 4 - Blisworth to Collingtree***

This route currently runs from the recreation ground at Blisworth along footpath RD1 and over the West Coast Mainline. From here it follows footpath KX13 over the Northampton Loop to a crossing point over the M1 into Collingtree. The route is predominantly rural in nature but broken up by the crossing points over existing road and rail infrastructure. The majority of the route is not currently surfaced.

In addition to the main application site, this report also analyses the PROW network in the proposed ecological mitigation area to the south of Junction 15A of the M1. The canal towpath runs along the eastern boundary on the opposite side of the canal to the ecological mitigation area that is proposed as part of the Rail Central development. Footpath LA1 runs from the canal westwards towards the village of Rothersthorpe. It runs through a mainly rural setting through arable fields. To the east of the canal footpath LA13 runs to the edge of the A43. The connection between LA13 and KX2 is severed by the existing A43(T). While there is an existing crossing point, there are no crossing facilities at present.

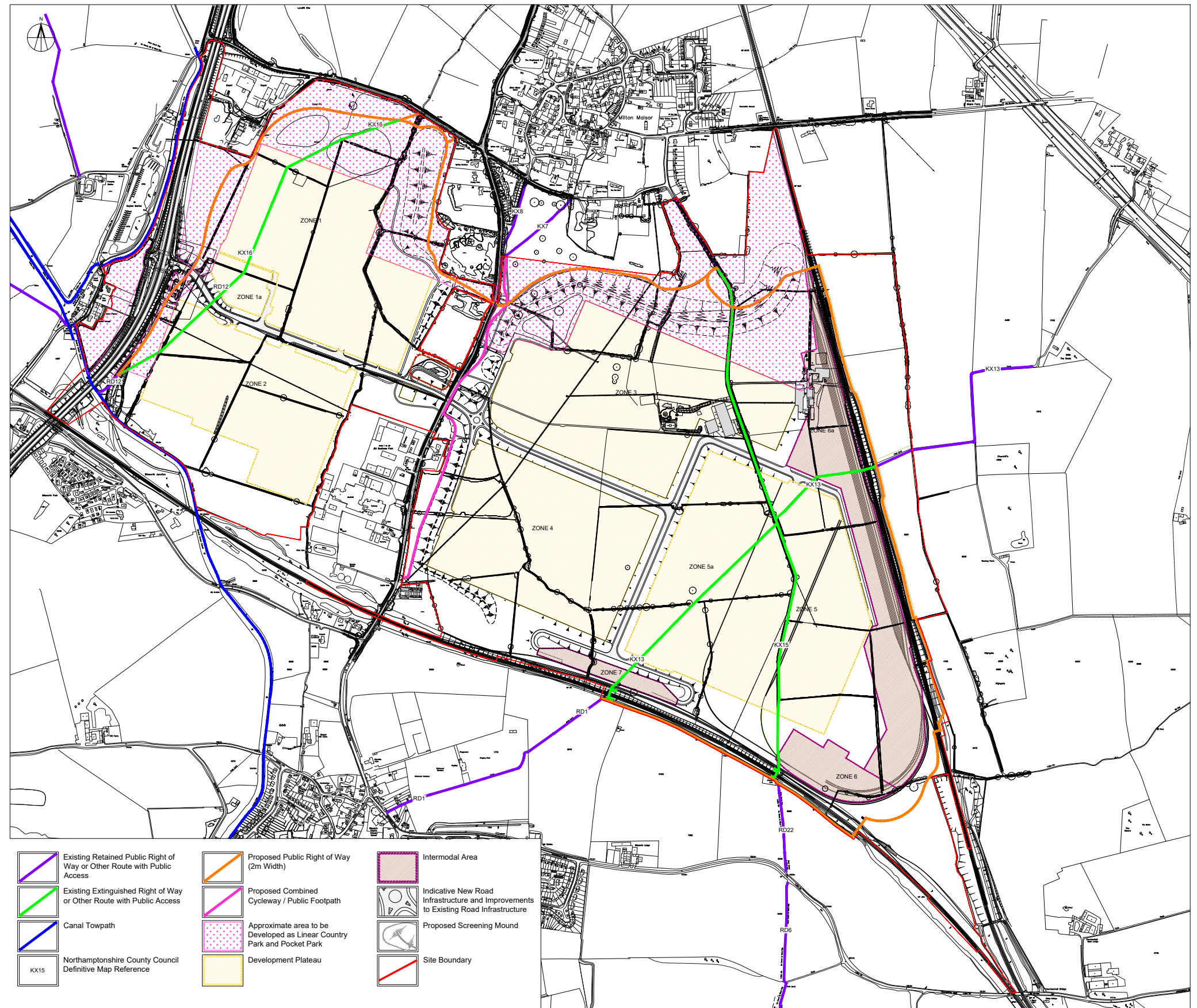
The following section first considers the Rail Central Proposals and sets out the key objectives that the scheme aims to achieve. It will then go on to consider each of the 4 routes identified above and how they relate to the Rail Central Proposals. A photographic record of the existing route is provided along with a comparison of the existing and proposed routes.



## Key Objectives

The plan to the left shows the parameters plan for the Rail Central overlaid with the proposed PROW network and extinguished PROW. The scheme as a whole has sought to achieve the following key objectives:

1. Retain existing connectivity of 4 key routes:
  - Grand Union Canal to Milton Malsor
  - Collingtree Milton Malsor Loop
  - Blisworth to Milton Malsor
  - Blisworth To Collingtree
2. Provide new formal footpath links and better connectivity around the edge of Milton Malsor in a new linear country park. The park will also provide further informal routes through the infrastructure landscape.
3. Provide informal public access to a new pocket park to the west of the A43. This park is intended as a informal local amenity resource.
4. Provide a robust setting for proposed footpath routes by providing screening mounding and extensive planting.
5. Create a new combined cycle way / footpath between Blisworth and Milton Malsor.
6. Maintain existing PROW access within the Junction 15A ecological mitigation area and also provide an additional PROW link running through it.
7. Ensure compatibility with Northampton Gateway scheme and ensure that the Rail Central footpath strategy can coexist with the Northampton Gateway footpath strategy.



Proposed Footpath Network

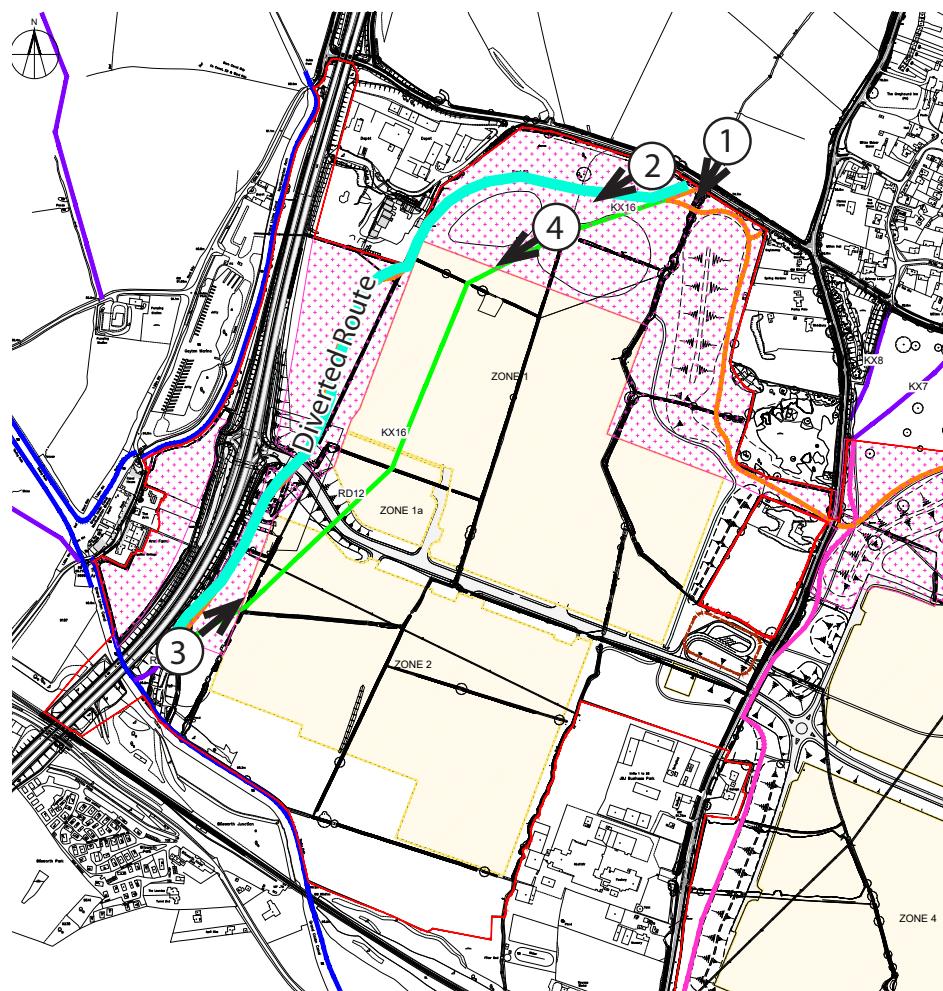
## Rail Central Overview





Existing Route 1

Proposed Route 1



## Route 1 - Grand Union Canal to Milton Malsor

Route 1 shows the PROW link between the Grand Union Canal and Milton Malsor. Photographs 1 to 4 show the existing route as it passes through a largely rural setting (albeit in close proximity to the A43). Photograph 1 shows the existing access from Gayton Road. This is not well placed and the proposed route would provide an improved link onto Gayton Road closer to the village of Milton Malsor. The existing route is approximately 1.27km in length while the proposed route is approximately 90m longer at 1.36km. While the existing route is un-surfaced, the proposals would provide a 2m width bound gravel surface. The proposed route would run through a landscaped setting with a buffer of woodland planting between the route and any proposed development. To the north of the main site, it would pass through a wetland area where the attenuation features would be located.



Canal Towpath to Gayton Road  
 - Existing Route = 1.27km  
 - Diverted Route = 1.36km

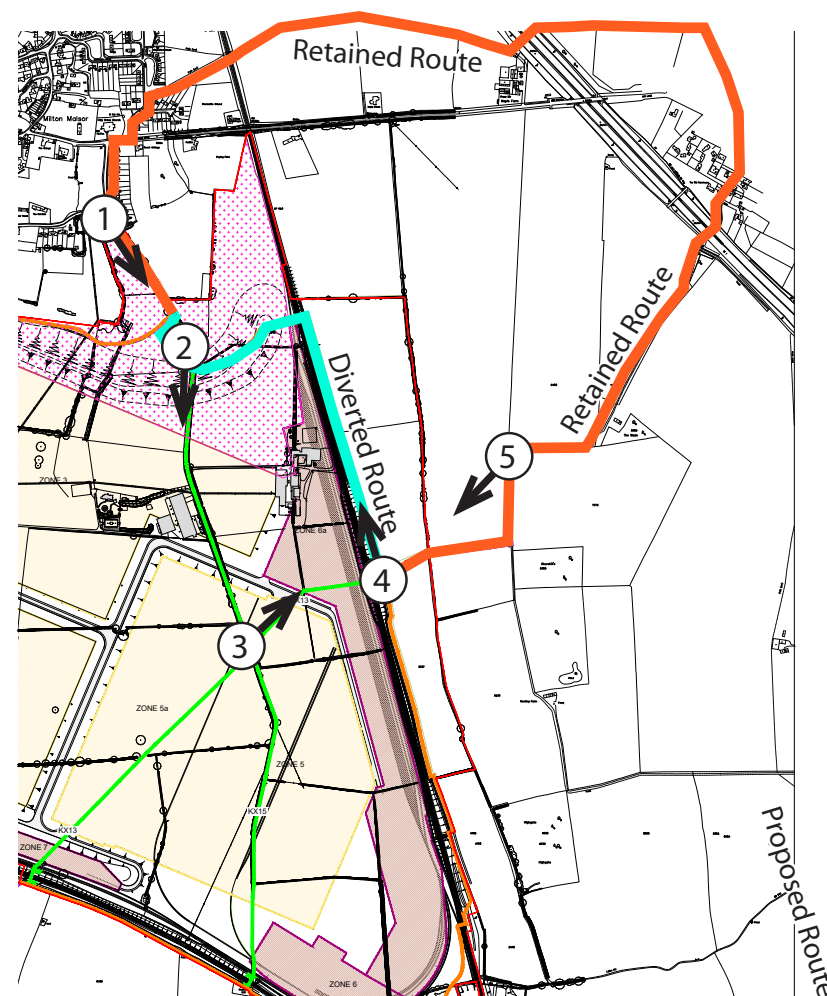






Existing Route 2

Proposed Route 2



Route 2 - Collingtree / Milton Malsor Loop

Route 2 shows the Collingtree / Milton Malsor Loop. The existing circular route is 4.75km and is used by both residents of Collingtree and Milton Malsor. The majority of the route lies outside of the site and as such will not require diversion to accommodate the proposals. The south western part of the route currently runs along Barn Lane (photographs 1 & 2) before heading east along KX13 (photo 3) over the Northampton Loop line. It is proposed to divert this route around the northern part of the proposed Rail Central site. The diverted route will gradually ascend the proposed screening bund, running through new woodland structure planting, before bridging over the Northampton Loop Line. It will then follow the edge of the railway keeping close to the bottom of the rail embankment (see existing view in photo 4). A new native hedgerow will be planted between the diverted footpath and railway line to screen views back towards the site with the link to the rural setting maintained to the east. The diverted route will be a total of 4.69km a reduction of 60m.



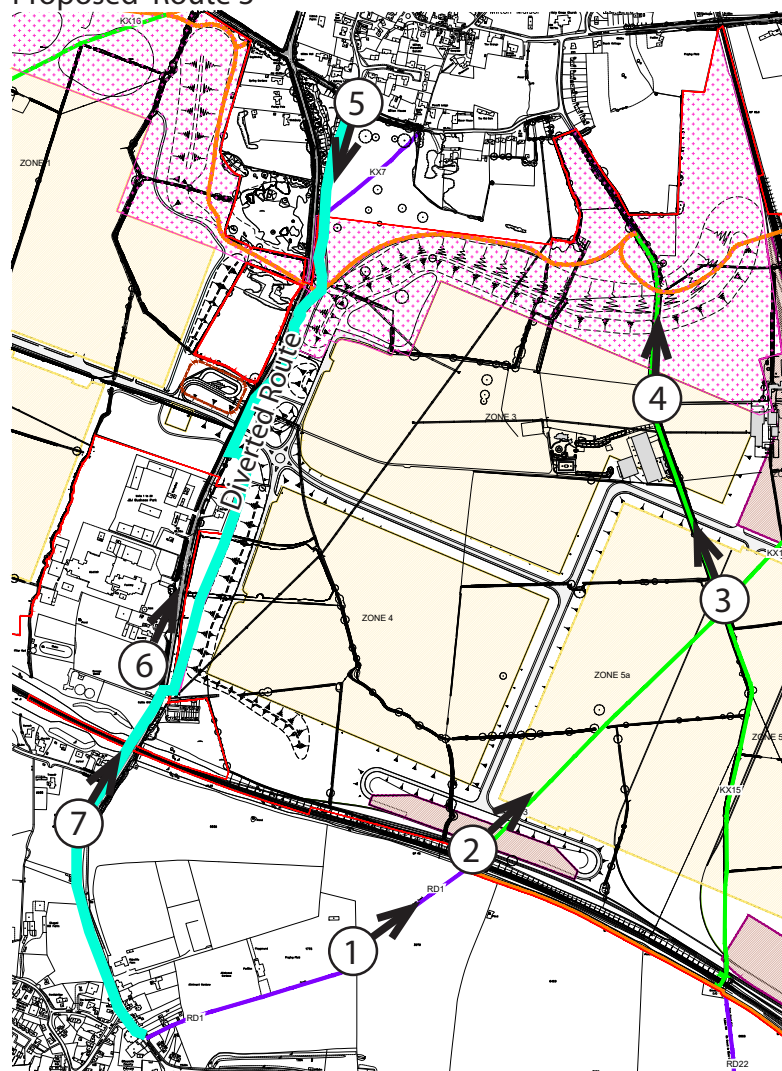
Length of Collingtree / Milton Malsor Loop  
 - Existing Route - 4.75km  
 - Diverted Route - 4.69km





Existing Route 3

Proposed Route 3



Route 3 shows the route between Milton Malsor and Blisworth. The current route runs past the allotments and recreation ground to the north of Blisworth along a track also used for vehicular access. From the edge of the recreation ground it continues un-surfaced sloping down across an arable field towards the West Coast Mainline (photo 1). There is a footbridge over the railway (photo 2) beyond which the footpath route continues through arable fields until it ties into the end of Barn Lane (photos 3 and 4). Barn Lane is also used for vehicular access to businesses and properties and is asphalt along a large part of its length. Due to the nature of the proposed development, the most appropriate route for the diversion was to follow the route of the existing Northampton Road. Between Blisworth and the site boundary (photo 6), the existing narrow footpath along Northampton Road (photo 7) will be upgraded to a 3m width combined cycle way footway. This combined cycle way footway will link the two villages however, once within the site, it will follow an off road route set within the structural landscape that runs around the perimeter of the eastern part of the site. It will then link into the existing PROW (KX8) to the south of Milton Malsor. The existing route is approximately 2.5km with the proposed route giving a more direct link between the two villages and reducing the distance to approximately 2km.



Milton Malsor to Blisworth  
 - Existing Route = 2.5km  
 - Diverted Route = 2km  
 (+ 0.42km to start point of existing route)

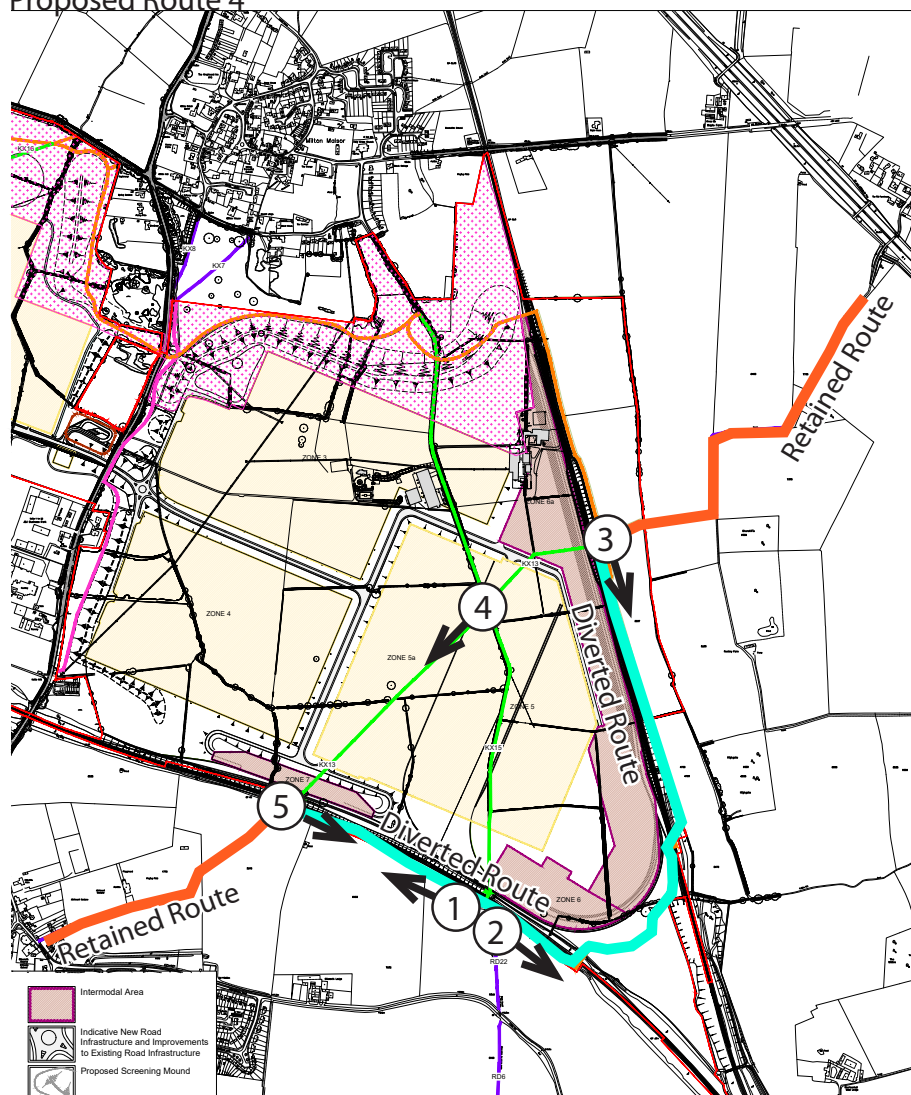
## Route 3 - Blisworth to Milton Malsor





Existing Route 4

Proposed Route 4



## Route 4 - Blisworth to Collingtree



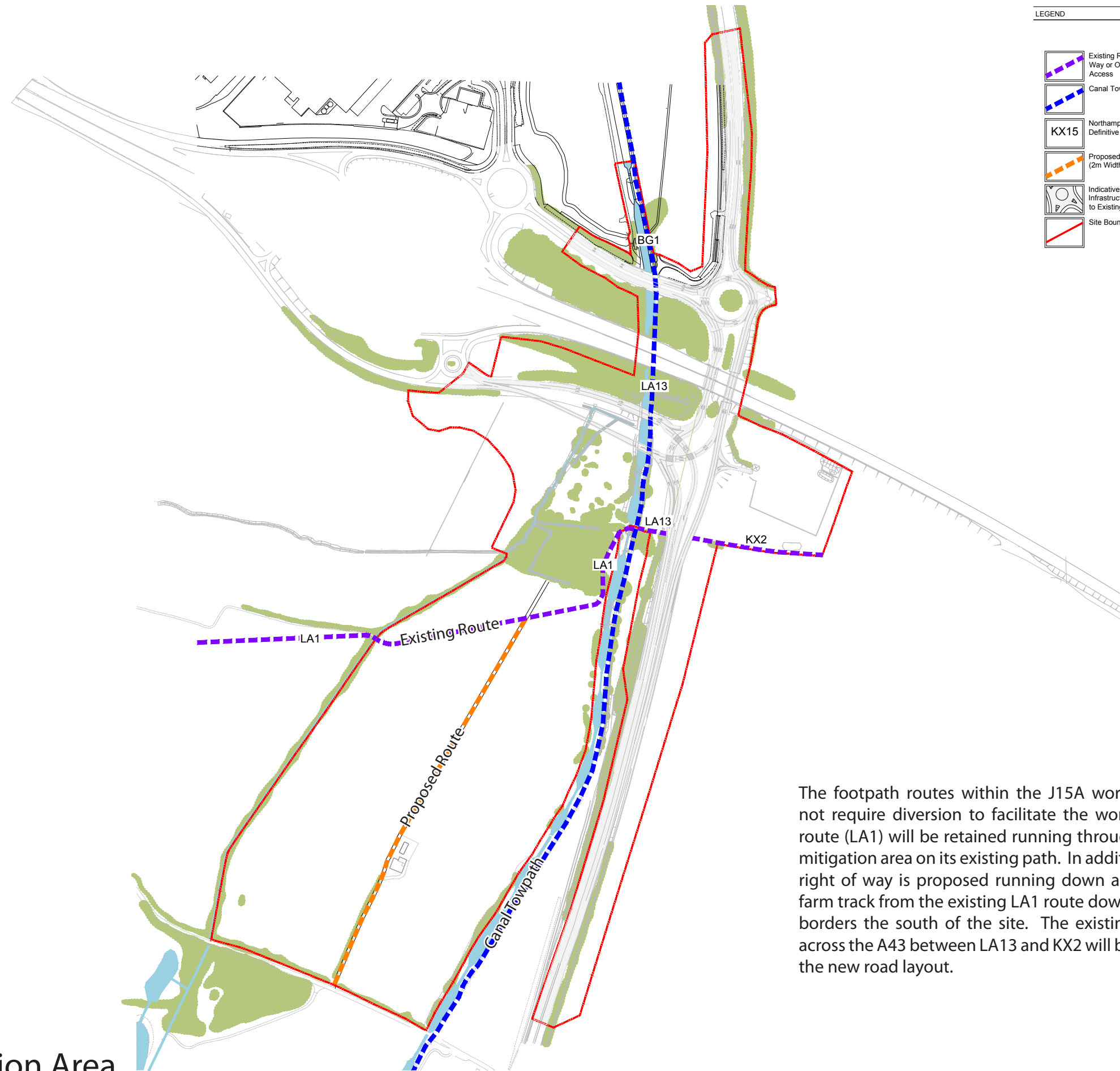
Route 4 runs between Blisworth and Collingtree. The existing route runs along the vehicular access to the allotments and recreation ground to the north of Blisworth. From here it runs down through arable fields (photo 4) crossing first the West Coast Mainline (photo 5), then the Northampton Loop Line and finally the M1 Motorway. The proposed route will be diverted around the south eastern corner of the Rail Central Site. The route will run along the opposite side of the railway to the site following the field edge (see existing in photos 1 & 2). New native hedgerow planting along the rail-side edge of the diverted footpath will screen views back towards the site. It will cross into the site at the south-eastern corner where it will run through a landscaped setting before crossing eastwards over the Northampton Loop Line. It will then follow the railway (see existing in photo 3) before meeting up with the existing footpath route. The existing route between the two villages is approximately 3km, this will increase to around 4km as a result of the diversion.



Length from Courteenhall Road to M1 footbridge

- Existing Route - 3km
- Diverted Route - 4km





LEGEND	
	Existing Retained Public Right of Way or Other Route with Public Access
	Canal Towpath
	Northamptonshire County Council Definitive Map Reference
	Proposed Public Right of Way (2m Width)
	Indicative New Road Infrastructure and Improvements to Existing Road Infrastructure
	Site Boundary

The footpath routes within the J15A works boundary will not require diversion to facilitate the works. The existing route (LA1) will be retained running through the ecological mitigation area on its existing path. In addition, a new public right of way is proposed running down along the existing farm track from the existing LA1 route down to the lane that borders the south of the site. The existing crossing point across the A43 between LA13 and KX2 will be retained within the new road layout.

## J15A - Ecological Mitigation Area



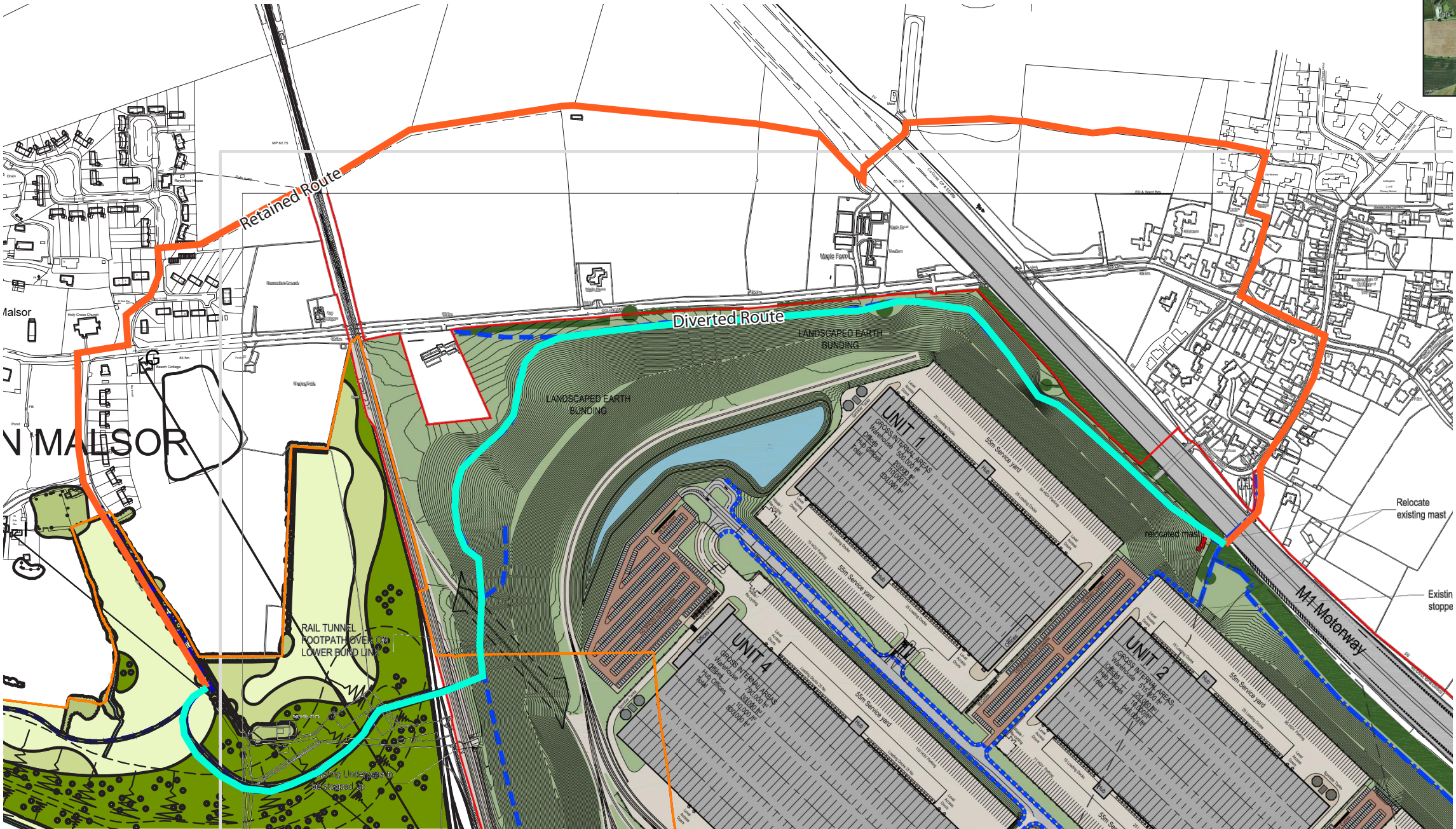
# Footpath Connectivity should Northampton Gateway be granted development consent

Another key element of the Rail Central public rights of way strategy is to demonstrate how the proposals would interact with the adjacent Northampton Gateway scheme were both schemes to be given approval. The land to the east of the Northampton Loop Line is within the Northampton Gateway Order Limits but is subject to an option to purchase in favour of Rail Central. The proposed works for each are depicted within their respective illustrative colour masterplans. (The same nature of works is proposed by both parties on that area of land (being landscaping with the provision of a footpath). Northampton Gateway’s intermodal facility would also, in part, be located on this land.

In the event that Rail Central alone is granted development consent, this land will be retained as farmland and is required to deliver structural landscaping and footpath diversion works. However, our DCO works in such a way that should both projects be granted development consent, the Northampton Gateway landscaping will be provided in this location. This landscaping will also serve to mitigate Rail Central’s visual impact and impact on landscape character, to the extent that the Rail Central landscaping will not be required in this location. In either scenario, footpaths connecting to the wider network are proposed. Should both projects proceed, Rail Central’s footpaths will connect into the Northampton Gateway footpath network rather than being standalone footpath diversion works.



Existing Route 2



Proposed Route 2 - With Northampton Gateway

This section of the public rights of way strategy looks at the effect that the two schemes together will have on the 4 key routes identified in this report should the Northampton Gateway be granted development consent. Of these 4 routes, route 2 and route 4 will pass through the Northampton Gateway site. The first of these is the Milton Malsor / Collingtree loop (route 2). This would require the diversion of a further section of the loop around the northern edge of the Northampton Gateway scheme. The crossing over the Northampton Loop line would remain in the same location with the Rail Central diversion route tying into the Northampton Gateway route to the east of the railway. The diversion would result in a reduction in the length of the loop from 4.75km to 4.24km. This is a result of the diversion of a further section of the loop around the northern edge of the Northampton Gateway scheme.

- Length of Collingtree / Milton Malsor Loop
- Existing Route - 4.75km
  - Diverted Route - 4.24km

## Route 2 - Collingtree / Milton Malsor Loop (With Northampton Gateway)





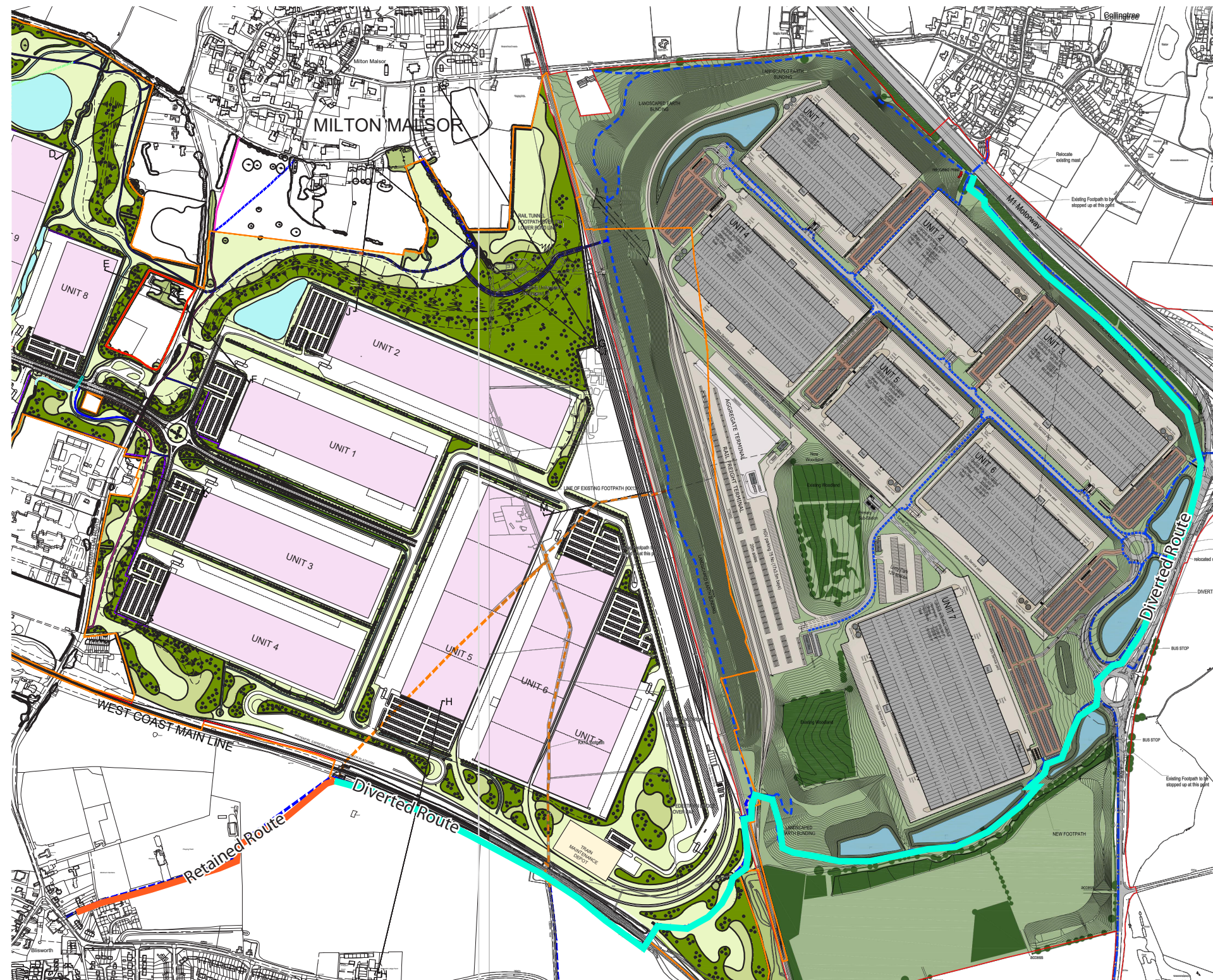
Existing Route 4

The second route where the implementation of both schemes will affect the route of the diversion is the footpath link between Blisworth and Collingtree. The diverted route will need to continue around the southern edge of the Northampton Gateway scheme following a route adjacent to their attenuation features. The Rail Central diversion will cross the Northampton Loop line in the same location as before linking into the Northampton Gateway footpath network to the east of the railway.

This amended route will increase the length of the diverted route. The current route is 3km in length which will increase to 4km to accommodate the Rail Central scheme as a standalone scheme. This will increase further to approximately 4.72km to accommodate both the Rail Central and Northampton Gateway schemes.

Length from Courteenhall Road to M1 footbridge

- Existing Route - 3km
- Diverted Route - 4.72km



Proposed Route 4 - With Northampton Gateway

The footpath diversions proposed by Rail Central serve to mitigate the impacts of the Rail Central scheme and enhance connectivity on the public rights of way network. The proposed development is flexible as to whether these diversions link into those that would be provided by Northampton Gateway or can be constructed in their entirety should only Rail Central be granted development consent.

Rail Central will notify the relevant planning authority in advance of the option being delivered in line with the scenarios above so as to provide assurances that the works being constructed by the Applicant are in accordance with the Applicant's strategy and the corresponding Northampton Gateway plan.

## Route 4 - Blisworth to Collingtree (With Northampton Gateway)



# Summary and Conclusions

The public rights of way strategy for the Rail Central site identified 4 key routes that interact with the proposals for the site. The scheme looks to divert each of these in a considered way that largely places the diverted routes within the strategic landscape that runs around the periphery of the site. The design of these diverted routes will follow a set of key principles:

- Footpaths running adjacent to the development will be placed within linear buffer zones around the periphery of the site to retain openness and provide a landscaped setting.
- Areas to the north of the site will be developed as a linear country park with informal footpath links established to provide better linkages to the wider footpath network.
- Existing landscape structure will be retained where feasible and enhanced with new structure planting.
- As the structure planting establishes it will be actively managed to ensure that it forms an increasingly effective screen to views towards the development.
- Structure planting and mounding will be strategically placed to provide a visual buffer between the proposed footpaths and the development.
- New native hedgerow planting on the rail-side edge of footpaths running adjacent to the railway will aid with screening views into the proposed development
- The proposed footpath network will be clearly marked with way markers with interpretation boards at key points to explain key features and the local environment.
- The proposed public rights of way will be constructed using 2m self bound gravel surfacing to ensure better year round accessibility.
- The footpath link between Blisworth and Milton Malsor will be upgraded to a 3m wide combined cycle way footpath.
- Additional informal (and un-designated) routes within the linear country park and pocket park will remain un-surfaced to create a hierarchy of footpath types. These informal routes are not plotted on the footpath strategy plan and will be determined as part of the post DCO design of the infrastructure works.

In addition to these key principles, the footpath strategy will ensure that the Rail Central scheme is compatible with the adjacent Northampton Gateway proposals by having a flexible approach to the land to the east of the Northampton Loop. The crossing points across the Loop Line have been strategically placed to ensure compatibility with the Northampton Gateway scheme were both schemes to proceed.



Example of an informal footpath route within a country park setting



Example of a self bound gravel surface with established belts of structure planting



Photomontage showing a self bound gravel surface and established hedgerow planting adjacent to the Northampton Loop Line



Example of a footpath running through a landscape corridor with a mix of retained existing planting and new structure planting to screen the buildings to the left of the view