

# GB Railfreight announces major new investment in Peterborough

November 23, 2022



GB Railfreight (GBRf) is investing £4.7 million into a new maintenance depot in Peterborough next to the East Coast Mainline.

Starting next month, the project, being built by Cairn Cross Engineering will create 60 jobs during construction and a further 20 permanent jobs when the project completes next summer. This continues GBRf's sustained investment in Eastern England following construction of its new £3 million Peterborough HQ last year.

David Golding, asset director, GB Railfreight, said: "The Peterborough maintenance hub is a major investment into the sector and will form an integral part of our infrastructure long into the future.

"The derailment in Llangennech was a huge wake-up call for everyone across rail freight, our state-of-the-art maintenance hub demonstrates our commitment to ensure that this type of incident doesn't happen on our fleet. Our ability to service wagons quickly will also allow us to deliver an even more reliable service to our customers and support GB Railfreight's growth aspirations."

The state-of-art maintenance hub will be a major milestone in GBRf's ambitions to improve safety and reliability across its wagon fleet. The Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) recently highlighted inadequate maintenance practices as partly to blame for the Llangennech derailment in August 2020.

The investigation identified a defect in the braking system as the cause for 25 laden tank wagons to derail, which resulted in a major fire and 446,000 litres of fuel to spill. To avoid incidents like Llangennech happening again, the new GB Railfreight maintenance hub in Peterborough will use smart sensor technology to quickly and accurately analyse wheel wear and degrading wheel-bearing conditions and identify faults in the braking system integrity much earlier.

From next summer, the company will be able to carry out 'pitstop style' assessments to wagons on the East Coast Mainline rather than lengthy field maintenance. Wagons will be returned to service far quicker using these assessments and it is anticipated that their time in traffic between repairs will be significantly reduced. Currently, GB Railfreight runs in excess of 50 intermodal services per day serving all the major seaports across the UK. The new Peterborough maintenance hub will support GB Railfreight's growth plans as it works up to running 75 intermodal services a day by 2025.

Phil Williamson, managing director, Cairn Cross Engineering Ltd, said: "Cairn Cross is delighted to have secured this project in partnership with GBRf at the Peterborough maintenance hub. The project will significantly improve the efficiency of rail freight maintenance in Eastern England."