

# Network Rail launches Cardiff masterplanning for key city centre regeneration opportunity

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**Network Rail** is launching its masterplanning process around Cardiff Central Station, which will see the comprehensive design and redevelopment of over 10 acres of railway land and the delivery of new homes.

Cardiff Central currently attracts 13 million passengers a year and the station is a vital gateway to the city centre.

The masterplanning process, led by Network Rail, working alongside Cardiff Council, Transport for Wales and Rightacres, aims to regenerate and open up the site, improve connectivity and deliver homes within a new mixed-use neighbourhood creating a new entrance gateway for the Welsh capital.

One of the last parcels of land to be regenerated in the city centre, the Network Rail land has been a barrier to investment for other parts of the city for many years. The regeneration and integration of this strategic parcel with the wider Cardiff Central Quay creates a catalyst to unlock future development

opportunities to the south of the City and to Cardiff Bay. The scheme will improve the area for pedestrians, enhance transport connectivity and the customer experience, whilst making the most of its riverside location.

Network Rail has recently appointed Cardiff-based developer Rightacres to deliver a new 695-space car park on the adjacent Central Quay development. Consolidating the car parking to its new site, unlocks the former surface car park land and other areas around the station to become part of the masterplan area and deliver a comprehensive vision for the station neighbourhood.

Network Rail has selected a masterplanning team led by Hawkins Brown. The full masterplanning team has extensive experience working on both rail and regional projects. These include Tottenham Court Road, the Elizabeth Line and Over Station Development in London, alongside regional successes such as the sbarc/spark campus, Cardiff Central Square and many of its new buildings including BBC Wales.

A period of stakeholder and community consultation, followed by an initial design phase will take place over the coming months with the ambition to submit an outline planning application during 2024.

Alongside the masterplan creation, major improvements to the station are also underway. Transport for Wales is leading a £139m investment programme, funded by the Department for Transport, the Welsh Government and Cardiff Capital Region, which will improve the passenger experience at the station.

To the south-side of the station, Rightacres has commenced initial phases of the 1.5m sq ft Central Quay development, a regeneration of the former Brain's Brewery site which will see hotel, commercial and leisure space and up to 2,000 waterfront homes.

Robin Dobson, Group Property Director at Network Rail, said: "Unlocking our strategic land holdings in Cardiff has been a long-time in the making and by working with our partners at Transport for Wales, Welsh Government and the City Region we are now in position to regenerate this important brownfield site, with much needed housing, a wide mix of uses and public space. The introduction of Hawkins Brown and the wider team means we are perfectly placed to deliver a vision for a world-class welcome to Wales' capital and new neighbourhoods, enabled by integrated transport infrastructure."

Iain Cochran, Partner at Hawkins\Brown, said: "We're excited to be working once again with Network Rail, to set the development framework for this mixed-use scheme around Cardiff Central Station. Working closely with our multi-disciplinary team and stakeholders, we will deliver a new place at the centre of the city, connecting the surrounding sites to create a capital welcome."

Paul McCarthy Chief Executive Officer, Rightacres Property Co. Ltd., added: "We are looking forward to working with the Network Rail team to regenerate this prime piece of the Cardiff jigsaw. The Southern Gateway to the City is becoming increasingly important as Cardiff Indoor Arena, the Sports Village and Cardiff Bay move forward."

Alexia Course, Chief Commercial Officer, Transport for Wales, said: "TfW is delighted to be supporting Network Rail in developing the south side of Cardiff Central alongside TfW's £140M Cardiff Central Enhancement Scheme, ensuring a holistic regeneration of this prime commercial site alongside Wales'

largest transport Interchange and bringing long-term benefits to the city region.”

*Photo credit: Network Rail*