

Four Major Rail Freight Companies Come Together at Mossend International Railfreight Park

Four main rail freight companies came together at Mossend International Railfreight Park (MIRP) with their electric and hybrid locomotives, in support of the decarbonisation of the logistics supply chain network. It is the first time they have been pictured together in one location.



This rare photo opportunity coincided with the launch of the Scottish Government's Green Investment Portfolio, which saw Economy Secretary Fiona Hyslop also at the MIRP site to promote market-ready projects seeking private capital that will help Scotland transition to a net-zero economy by 2045.

The locomotives on display on site at MIRP included the Direct Rail Services Class 88 (an electro-diesel locomotive manufactured by Stadler Rail), GB Railfreight Class 92 (the most powerful electric locomotive produced for the UK, DB Cargo Limited Class 90 (an electric locomotive built by British Rail Engineering Limited) and two Freightliner UK Class 90s (an electric locomotive).

David Stirling, Director of MIRP operator Peter D Stirling Ltd, said: "In a UK first, four of the most prominent rail freight companies came together to show their support for decarbonising the logistics supply chain and helping to green the Scottish economy. This is a mission we fully embrace with plans to expand MIRP to be Scotland's largest international multi-modal rail freight park facilitating zero carbon logistics.

"Electric and hybrid locomotives are not only more sustainable, they are faster, more reliable and attract commercial freight to our modern freight railways. An increasing number of food retailers are now opting for this solution to move their goods, not least because the major railway routes they use can accommodate electric locomotives; for example, 30 trains per week from Daventry to Mossend. We hope more follow suit."



(From the left), Andrew Stirling, Keith Brown and David Stirling at the official launch with a team of Clydesdale horses in April 2018 (DevlinPhoto Ltd)

David Stirling of PD Stirling Ltd, which owns MIRP, said; "This is an exciting day for us as we launch Mossend International Railfreight Park. It is a significant milestone for low carbon logistics for the UK, creating more opportunities for freight, both into and out of the very heart of Scotland. We will continue to work closely with North Lanarkshire Council, our local communities and the Scottish Government to ensure that we deliver a truly modern, strategic rail facility in central Scotland which connects the country to the UK and Europe.

"This project will also transform the local community in Lanarkshire, bringing jobs, local investment and a sustainable green legacy for Bellshill, by incorporating a network of community greenspace. Crucially, this will help Scotland lead the world in providing a lower cost, efficient and more sustainable alternative, to long haul road transport."

Keith Brown, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work, said: "The Mossend International Railfreight Park marks an exciting chapter for the delivery of sustainable transport in central Scotland.

The family business marked the opening of the Bellshill Railhead with a team of Clydesdale horses, launching its expanded railhead project with a throwback to its origins - horse-drawn carriages. The business, which has been delivering logistics for more than 140 years, marked the opening with a team of Clydesdale horses hauling a horse lorry across a new M8 bridge linking directly to the MIRP site. MIRP began in the 19th century using horse-drawn carriages as a coal merchant and carrier in Glasgow. It has now worked in rail transport for 85 years.

It provides round-the-clock access to intermodal transport facilities all year long, operating as an 'inland port' handling the transfer of cargo from rail on to truck. Key partners and businesses from across the UK were invited to join them at a reception to celebrate the launch of the project. MIRP hopes the Railhead will help it fulfill its ambition to become a leading provider of low carbon logistics - putting Scotland at the forefront of the Europe-wide network.