

# Plans unveiled for new depot near Manningtree

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Greater Anglia has unveiled plans for a brand new state-of-the art train maintenance depot to be built on the site of a derelict chemical works factory on the Essex/Suffolk border.

The new depot, at Brantham, near Manningtree rail station, will be used for stabling and light maintenance of about 20 of the brand new trains due to arrive in East Anglia from 2019. The new trains will be commissioned into service from the new depot.

Once open, at least 30 people will work at the multi-million-pound depot, which Greater Anglia plans to complete by December 2018.

It will include 13 tracks where trains can be parked overnight for cleaning and toilet maintenance. Two further tracks will be undercover in a 300-metre shed, with full under-train inspection pits and cranes for general train maintenance.

Covering an area of 22 acres on the north side of the existing railway, the depot will be fully electrified.

In addition, a new wheel lathe will be installed, to provide another location on the Greater Anglia network where train wheel repairs can be carried out, minimising the length of time trains are out of service. This is especially useful during autumn, when slippery conditions damage wheels.

Other facilities will include a train wash, remote train monitoring systems, a control room and spares storage.

Land owners St Francis Group will also clear derelict land opposite the new depot and fully landscape it.

Design work and construction planning for the new depot starts this month (February). The site is due to be cleared in March and building should begin in the summer.



Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia Managing Director said: “These are exciting plans which are integral to our commitment to improve and transform the railway in East Anglia. Providing a depot at Manningtree will enable us to bring in our ambitious new timetable with more frequent trains and reduced journey times. It also reduces the amount of time that trains are out of service for maintenance.”

The plans have been welcomed by South Suffolk MP James Cartlidge and Cllr Simon Barrett, Babergh District Council portfolio holder for business growth and increased productivity.

James Cartlidge, MP, said: “I am delighted that Abellio has chosen to make such a significant commitment to the economy of South Suffolk. The Brantham industrial site

has been largely derelict and decaying for many years and it was perhaps therefore understandable that local residents were sceptical if Babergh's plans to regenerate the site would ever deliver new high quality commercial occupants. In fact, we have a very substantive and long-term commitment from a major international business creating skilled job opportunities in the local area. Moreover, the fact we have a train depot also reduces the potential road traffic pollution we might have expected from other potential occupants. Ultimately, this announcement proves that private investment in the railways can have a wider benefit for Suffolk's economy."

Simon Barrett, Portfolio Holder for Business Growth and Increased Productivity at Babergh District Council, said: "This is great news for the District: the Brantham Industrial Site has already been identified as a key employment site by Babergh, and this shows that this vision is becoming a reality, thanks to the hard work put in by St Francis Group, Abellio and Babergh. Bringing this brownfield site back into use will help provide the growth and the jobs that the district needs."

Fred Garner, Rail Sector Director from Taylor Woodrow, the contractor appointed to design and build the depot said: "We are excited and honoured to be entrusted with this important project, which will benefit from the skills and expertise that Taylor Woodrow has gained building a similar facility for Crossrail. We look forward to working with Greater Anglia and all of the stakeholders to make it a success."

By enabling some of the service improvements associated with Greater Anglia's new train fleet, the construction of the new depot at Brantham will also help fulfil some of the aims of the Great Eastern Main Line Taskforce. It will provide a new state-of-the-art train maintenance facility at a strategically important point on the Great Eastern Main Line, helping underpin wider economic growth, as well as creating some local employment at the depot itself.