



# **SWINDON**

A Centre of Excellence that  
will deliver the Rail Revolution

# 1. OUR VISION

180 years ago, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, authorised the establishment of the railway works in Swindon. It was a decision that turned a small agricultural holding into a railway powerhouse and made Swindon what it is today.

Brunel was a brilliant engineer and visionary. He knew Swindon's superb location was ideal for his works. Just a few decades later, the works had become the largest in the world, employing nearly 16,000 people and exporting locomotives across the globe.

The railways continue to be part of the town's DNA.

Our vision is for Great British Railways to be the core of a world leading rail cluster that will herald a new golden era for Britain's railways, making Swindon the beating heart of the nation's railways once again. Just like Brunel did.

We will support GBR by establishing a national centre of excellence for the railway sector, which will build on the wealth of rail organisations and businesses that are already thriving in Swindon.

We have one of the country's most productive workforces, but we also have high levels of deprivation in a number of our communities and a significant skills gap.

Almost a third of our residents are in low-skilled jobs, much higher than the national average, and a low percentage of our students go on to higher education.

We are taking steps to change that, but GBR will supercharge our efforts.

Swindon is embarking on the most ambitious training revolution in the country, equipping our youth and GBR with the skills needed to deliver the transformation of the rail sector.

Brunel did not compromise on excellence. We offer the ideal location for the HQ so that GBR does not need to compromise.

The HQ fits perfectly with our plans to rejuvenate our proud railway heritage. We can even offer Brunel's former [Carriage Works](#) as an immediate option to welcome the railway's 'home'.

Not only do we offer a fantastic location, we also have sites that are ready to go and which represent outstanding value for money.

Swindon's superb location, combined with our celebrated workforce, our dynamic businesses, our rail institutions, and seven national UKRI departments, will provide the strongest foundation for GBR to flourish.

Cllr David Renard  
Leader  
SBC

Cllr Jim Grant  
Leader of the Labour Group  
SBC



Brunel's former **Carriage Works** welcomes home Britain's railways.



## 2. OUR HEADQUARTERS SITE LOCATION

### THE GBR OPPORTUNITY AREA

No compromises need to be made. We have the perfect location and are ready to go.

The opportunity area is centred on the Swindon Mainline Station. Most of the land in the area is in Swindon Council or Network Railway ownership and we have available buildings that are ready for fit out.

We even offer the opportunity for the HQ to be located in a Railway Works Building at the heart of the [Swindon Railway Conservation Area](#).

The HQ will sit at the centre of what will become the best training and innovation cluster in the country.

The 'GBR opportunity area' lies at the heart of Swindon Centre and will turbo charge our work to rejuvenate the railway heritage quarter, connecting the railway of the past to the industry's exciting future.

Below

Heritage Action Zone  
Opportunity Area







The HQ will support our vision for Swindon to become a railway heritage destination with an international profile.

The GBR opportunity area offers 5 locations at and around Swindon’s mainline station, comprising available office buildings and a vacant Railway Works building which formed part of the renowned Great Western Railway Works.

Above  
GBR Opportunity Area

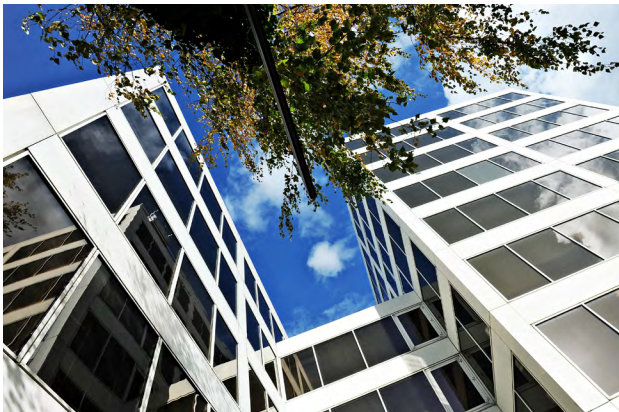
1.	Carriage Works (Phase Two)
2.	Signal Point
3.	Tri-Centre
4.	Kimmerfields
5.	Station Car Parks



1. Swindon Carriage Works – Phase 2
- › 2,500m<sup>2</sup> (GIA)
  - › Grade II Listed former Railway Works building
  - › Under restoration and ready for fit-out in summer 2022
  - › Next to Mainline
  - › 500m from Station
  - › Swindon Council ownership
  - › Wider Carriage Works complex offers opportunity for future expansion
  - › GBR have full flexibility in utilising floorspace



2. Signal Point
- › Available now
  - › 9,000m<sup>2</sup> (GIA)
  - › Landmark, office building above Mainline Station
  - › [Network Rail ownership](#)
  - › Great views over Mainline and GWR Works
  - › Local Planning Authority flexible on floor space utilisation



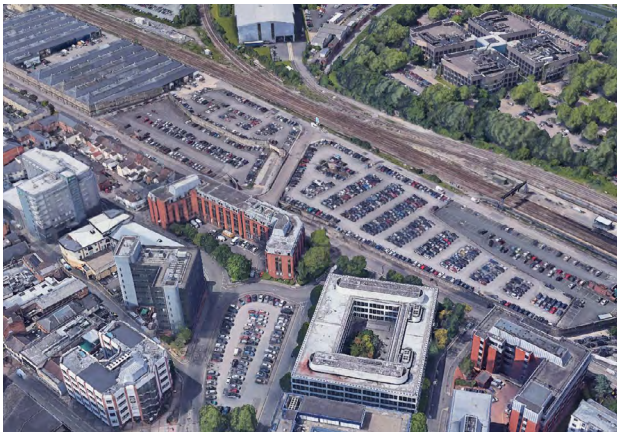
3. Tri-centre, One New Bridge Close
- › 2,500m<sup>2</sup> (GIA)
  - › Available on interim or permanent basis from Summer 2022
  - › Grade ‘A’ office building
  - › 200m from Station



**OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER EXPANSION  
AND PARTNER ORGANISATION CO-LOCATION**

**4. Network Rail Car Parks**

- › Extensive Swindon Station Main and Swindon Station West Car Parks, adjoining Swindon Mainline Station.



**5. Kimmerfields**

- › Serviced plots with planning permission
- › Up to 15,000m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) of new office space
- › Flagship regeneration scheme
- › 350m from Station
- › Land in Council ownership
- › Opportunity to deliver purpose built building with kerb appeal
- › Fronts new £33m Bus Boulevard



The GWR Headquarters, Network Rail and a wealth of other rail organisations are already in Swindon, an endorsement of the location and our skilled railway workforce.

**Right**  
Old Railway Quarter  
*Thomas Homes*





OUR PARTNERS

Swindon Council has worked with the following organisations, based or operating in Swindon’s Centre, in the preparation of this Expression of Interest:

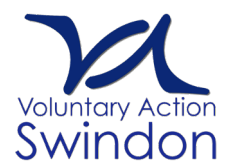
- › University of Bath’s Innovation Centre for Applied Sustainable Technologies
- › SETsquared Business Incubator
- › New College Swindon
- › Swindon Institute of Technology
- › Swindon University Technical College
- › STEAM – Museum of the Great Western Railway

Swindon and Wiltshire LEP and Business West have also helped shape the EOI.

Network Rail have agreed to put forward their landholdings at and around Swindon Station to form part of the EOI. The Council is working with Network Rail on a station area masterplan under a Memorandum of Understanding.

[This EOI is endorsed by a wealth of businesses and organisations across Swindon and beyond,](#) including GWR, Wiltshire Council & Cotswold District Council.

This bid is supported by multiple MPs, including Robert Buckland, Justin Tomlinson, Danny Kruger, Michelle Donnelan and Andrew Murrison.





### 3. SUPPORTING LEVELLING UP

Swindon is **producing the next generation** of railway workers and driving rail innovations



Left  
Railway Centre of Excellence

1.	Designer Outlet
2.	National Trust HQ
3.	STEAM Museum
4.	English Heritage HQ, Historic England HQ & Archive
5.	UTC
6.	Railway Village
7.	Health Hydro
8.	RAU Cultural Heritage Institute
9.	iCAST
10.	Network Rail Wales & Western Region HQ
11.	GWR Head Office & Atkins
12.	Aecom
13.	UKRI/Innovate UK/UK Space Agency
14.	Electrification Training Centre
15.	Institute of Technology

#### THE SKILLS GAP

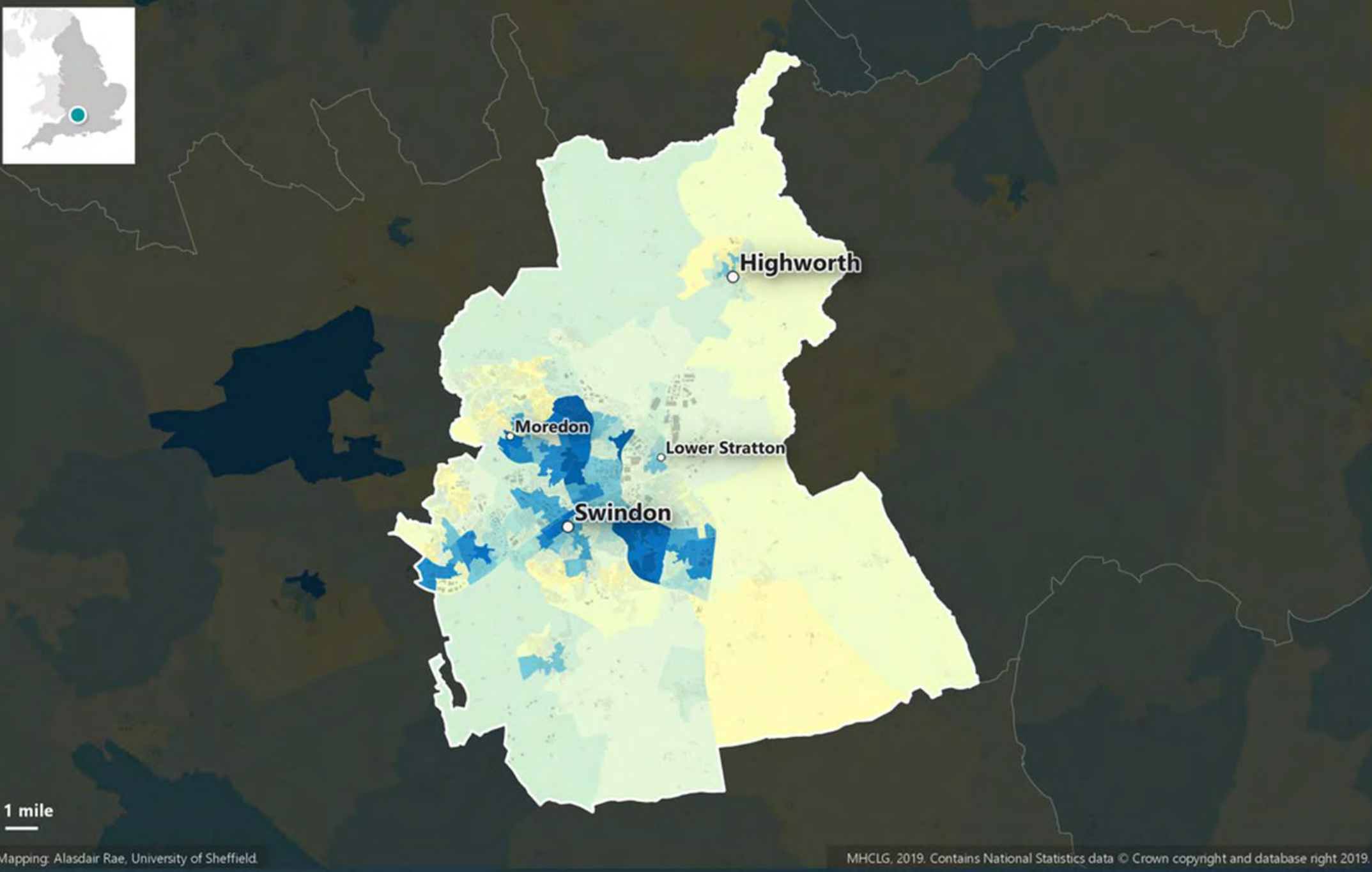
Despite being in an area of high productivity and employment, Swindon has a skills gap. We are tackling this. Our educational institutions are collaborating with employers, and in the future with GBR, to deliver the highly skilled workforce the country needs.

Many of Swindon’s residents are in low-skilled jobs (31.2% versus 23.7% nationally) and local businesses identify a shortage of recruits with higher level skills as a barrier to growth (31% of vacancies in Swindon are skills related compared with 23% nationally).

This labour market weakness is partly due to low Higher Education progression and below-average attainment in Swindon. (While 86% of English students achieved at least two substantial Level 3 qualifications in 2018/19, just 66% of Swindon’s students achieved this).

Swindon also has a low uptake of higher and degree level apprenticeships. (The national average for students with an A level or level 3 qualification moving into higher education is 58%. In Swindon it’s 35%).





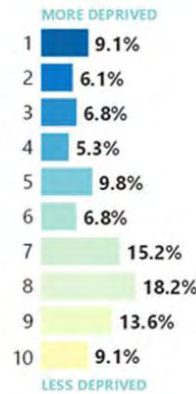
Retaining talent is a challenge with a higher than average proportion of learners leaving the area and not returning. Swindon and Wiltshire currently experience a net loss of graduate talent. (57.1% leave for study and do not return versus 33.1% nationally).

The skills gap challenge is amplified by the fact that much of inner Swindon (eight super output areas) is within the bottom 10% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas in England.

**Left**  
English Indices of Deprivation 2019  
HM Government

### Local deprivation profile

% of LSOAs in each national deprivation decile





### BRIDGING THE SKILLS GAP

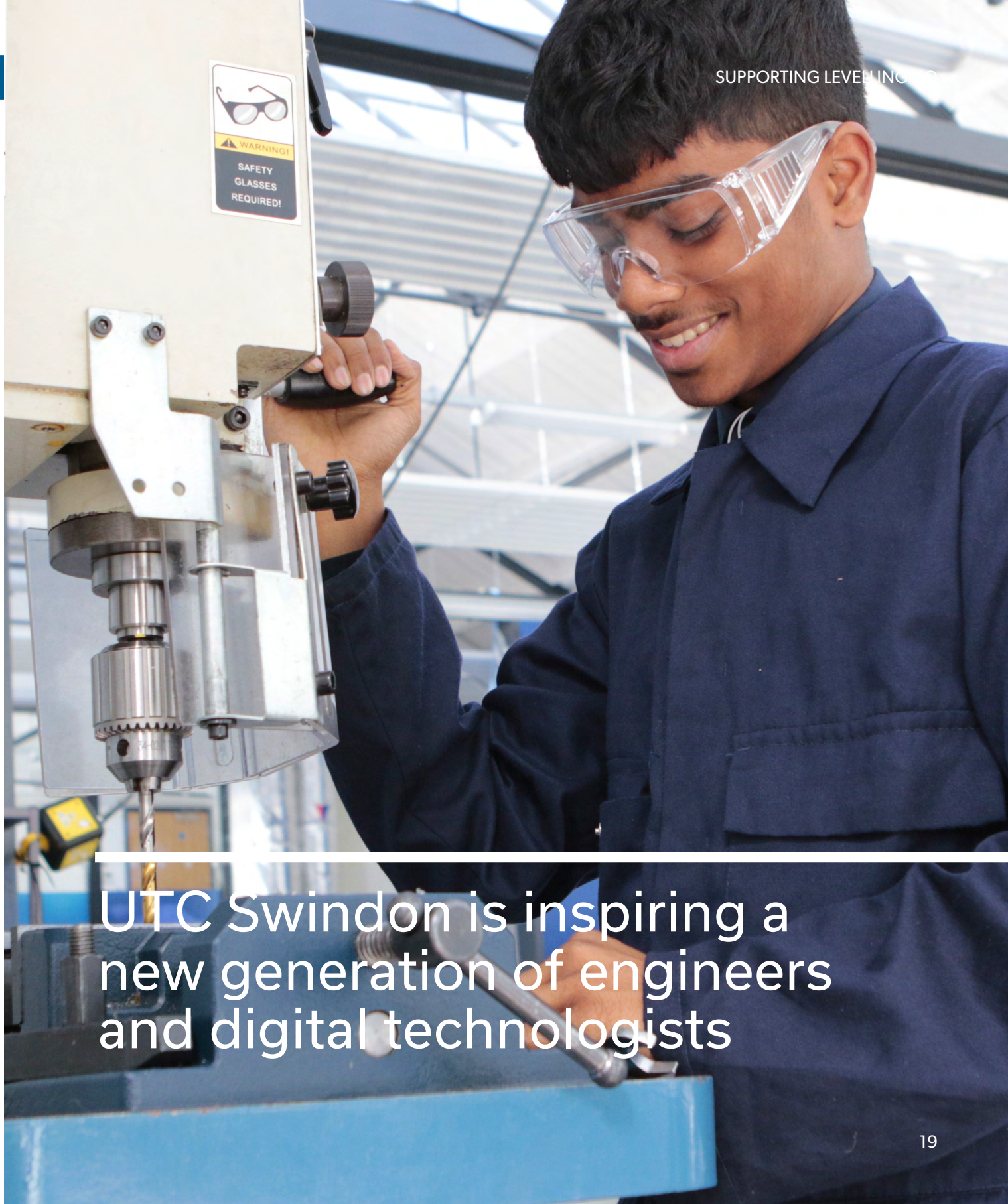
The Government has made Swindon an **Education Investment Area (EIA)**. Swindon is addressing its education challenges by investing in technical education with a focus on STEM subjects. A formidable technical educational and training offer is now emerging in Swindon Centre. This inspiring offer will attract the brightest and best to join the rail sector:

- › The £21m **Swindon and Wiltshire Institute of Technology (IOT)** provides technical qualifications and higher apprenticeships for technical and digital roles. The IOT is offering to provide a bespoke training programme for the rail sector.
- › **UTC Swindon** is an innovative, employer-focused, high-tech school, specialising in Engineering and Digital Technology. Students between 14 and 19 follow technical qualifications to develop STEM skills, making them highly successful in securing apprenticeships and employment. UTC already provides apprentices to Network Rail. It has proposed to scale up support to the rail sector by becoming a feeder school to the IOT for Level 4 Rail Apprenticeships. Students completing Post-16 studies are among the highest nationally in gaining STEM-related apprenticeships, with over 45% being successful, versus 7% nationally.
- › The **Electrification Training Centre** is a £10m state-of-the-art Network Rail facility providing practical training to engineers in the maintenance of electrified railways.
- › The £17M **Innovation Centre for Applied Sustainable Technologies (iCAST)** is a

research and development and collaboration hub for companies working on clean growth technologies. Led by the Centre for Sustainable and Circular Technologies at Bath and University of Oxford, iCAST is offering to collaborate in rail sector research.

- › Swindon's rail sector works with the **University of Bath** by accommodating multiple work placements from its **highly ranked** Faculty of Engineering and Design as part of the University's **industrial placement scheme**. The Royal Academy of Engineering and HS2 Ltd. are sponsoring University of Bath to examine the geology and engineering properties of the HS2 route.
- › The Royal Agricultural University has recently opened its **Cultural Heritage Institute**, offering postgraduate courses in cultural heritage and conservation management. The Institute is offering to provide bespoke modules on railway heritage.

**Right**  
Engineering Student  
UTC Swindon



UTC Swindon is inspiring a new generation of engineers and digital technologists



GBR's HQ will sit at the heart of this educational and training (and RD&I) cluster.

Our offer to GBR is to knit these institutions into a national centre of excellence in support of the rail sector, with all stakeholders collaborating to deliver future generations of highly skilled people into the sector.

This inclusive, flexible and non-traditional approach will attract those from under represented backgrounds into the rail sector boosting diversity and skills amongst the workforce.

#### **ALIGNMENT WITH PLACES FOR GROWTH**

The GBR HQ at Swindon aligns with Build Back Better in relation to infrastructure investment by utilising investments at national level (including rail electrification) and Swindon level (including Towns Deal and Future High Streets Funding).

Swindon is a hub location for two rail routes serving the South West and Wales. By strengthening Swindon as a Railway Hub, the HQ will bring new opportunity to these areas.

#### **PRODUCTIVITY**

Swindon is the second most productive location in the UK with an average productivity of £86,000 GVA per worker (Centre for Cities). Innovation is central to Swindon's strong economic performance. Swindon based businesses are driving productivity and growth throughout the UK. GBR will leverage this productivity to advance the rail sector in line with the Levelling Up agenda.

#### **PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

The GBR Opportunity area is in 'Central Swindon', a diverse ward, with 36.7% of residents from an ethnic minority background. The percentage of people from an ethnic minority background working at Network Rail is 8.51% of the total workforce (versus 13.8% of the UK population). The percentage of women at Network Rail is 17.3%.

The UTC, New College and the IOT are supporting more women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds into engineering and STEM subjects through outreach work to parents, schools and employers. There is a vibrant STEM Ambassador Hub operating from Swindon that is having a big impact on the numbers of women and ethnic minorities taking STEM subjects.

#### **CIVIC PRIDE**

The Railways are at the core of Swindon's identity and a huge source of civic pride. However, unfavourable perceptions of Swindon Centre exist.

The Swindon Town Deal is delivering projects that use Swindon's railway heritage to change perceptions of the town. The approach is to promote Swindon Centre as a distinctive place of historic interest and to engender a strong sense of identity.

The GBR Headquarters will spearhead the shift in perceptions, once again placing Swindon at the heart of the railways.



# 4. A WELL CONNECTED LOCATION

The only place in the UK that is accessible from two of the nation’s capital cities by train in under an hour



## A LOCATION ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

To promote accessibility for a changing workforce the GBR opportunity area is easily accessed from a variety of transport options:

- › Rail Station on an electrified Mainline provides easy rail access from as far as Cardiff and London.
- › Central [Multi-Modal Transport Hub](#) is integrating rail, bus and cycle networks.
- › All [‘Swindon Flyer’ express cycle network](#) routes travel through the area, linking to national cycle routes.
- › £33m ‘bus boulevard’ scheme provides exceptional bus facilities.
- › Walking routes being delivered through the [Swindon Town Deal](#).

Left  
Swindon’s Connectivity

Below  
Swindon Southern Flyer

## ONE OF THE MOST ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS IN BRITAIN

Swindon benefits from excellent connections, by rail, road and air, with all regions of the UK. It is perfectly positioned to attract a diverse range of local talent, and from further afield, as well as supporting multiple labour markets.

Britain’s capital cities are easily reached by Swindon:

- › London - 52 minutes by rail
- › Cardiff - 55 minutes by rail
- › Edinburgh - 140 minutes by rail and air (via Bristol)
- › 1.9 million people live within an hour of Swindon.
- › Multiple rail routes from stations near Swindon offer flexibility reaching the North.
- › Major road improvements such as A417 ‘Missing Link’ further improve UK-wide connections.







**Left**  
Bus Boulevard

The Swindon Network Rail offices serve London Heathrow and provide connections to Cardiff, Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester and London Gatwick. They are supporting Transport for Wales' ambitious vision to transform rail through Wales & Borders and are working with TfL to prepare for the Elizabeth line.

**Below**  
Town Centre Wayfinding  
*Elmar Rubio*

**DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY**

Good connectivity is essential for high-quality conversations across offices and homes. Swindon is investing in a 'full fibre' broadband network using 100% fibre optic cables to carry data at light speed, providing GBR's HQ with extremely fast speeds (up to 1,000 Mbps) and near limitless bandwidth.

**SUPPORTING TIES BETWEEN TOWNS AND CITIES ACROSS THE UK**

Swindon is a 'Hub' location for the South West.

With extensive GWR routes, Swindon benefits from strong social and economic ties with southern seaside towns, stretching to Cornwall. The practical and cultural importance of the railway to Wales and the South West is high. GWR created the modern day tourist spots of the South West and southern Wales. The railways remain a vital link for

rural communities there. Swindon's HQ will bring levelling up opportunities to the entire region, whilst supporting GBR in growing the railway leisure market.

Swindon plays an active role in knitting together two regional, economic partnerships: the [Western Gateway](#) and England's [Economic Heartland](#).

Swindon is also home to multiple national and international Headquarters, with strong links to regional offices across the UK.

**CONNECTING TOWNS THROUGH RAIL**

[Network Rail's Wales & Western region](#), headquartered in Swindon, includes over 2,700 miles of railway and 453 stations serving rural and urban communities.





# 5. OPPORTUNITIES FOR GBR

Tapping into the **best technical skills cluster** in the country

## SWINDON IS THE BEST LOCATION FOR PUTTING GBR'S "GUIDING MIND" INTO ACTION

The Swindon HQ provides the unique opportunity for GBR to engage with all its customers: commuters, leisure travellers and freight. The GBR opportunity area is located in the heart of Swindon overlooking one of the busiest mainlines in the country.

## COLLABORATING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Openness and collaboration is a feature of Swindon's businesses, with the resulting network effect making Swindon the most dynamic and productive railway town in the country. Global brands including BMW, Dialog / Apple, Intel, Siemens, and Amazon have chosen Swindon as their home. The railway sector has huge potential to tap into the innovation that businesses in Swindon are already harnessing.

The town is also a booming manufacturing and logistics hub. Swindon has one of the highest location quotients (1.86) in the country for "Transportation and Storage" (ONS), offering GBR the opportunity to tap into the cutting edge logistics and transport specialisation of the town.

Swindon's economy is famously diverse. As well as railway and transport expertise, the town has a strong presence in several knowledge economy sectors.

## A LOCATION THAT MAKES COLLABORATION EFFORTLESS

Knowledge economy collaboration is particularly strong and continues to strengthen. The Institute of Technology and Carriage Works (home to iCAST, the Cultural Heritage Institute and Workshed) are creating the opportunity for deep 'business to business' and 'business to institution' interaction.

With GBR's ambition, and the central location, the HQ will become an integral element of Swindon's fast growing knowledge economy ecosystem. Swindon will drive productivity improvements and stimulate innovation at GBR.

Swindon's highly accessible location means that 12 major universities are within one hour of the town.

Engineering Students  
IOT





FEEDING OFF SWINDON'S RAIL EXPERTISE

GBR will be part of a highly developed rail ecosystem already thriving in Swindon Centre.

Swindon's Western House 'Integrated Control Centre' is home to Network Rail, GWR and Hitachi Teams. They work together to ensure effective route management. Swindon is also home to major engineering businesses such as AECOM and Atkins.

Swindon will enable GBR to work with the rail sector supply chain. Siemens (Rail Mobility and Software) and Knorr-Bremse (Rail systems) are located nearby. Hitachi Rail Europe's purpose built depots are less than an hour away.

FEEDING OFF A WORLD BEATING RD&I CLUSTER

The best technical training cluster in the country is taking root in Swindon.

UK Research & Innovation (UKRI) is headquartered there and is home to 7 Research Councils, the UK Space Agency, Innovate UK and Research England.

Innovate UK is driving productivity improvements in the railway sector, running rail innovation competitions from Swindon for the DfT, NR, RSSB and HS2. In recent years it has provided circa £80m of research funding for "Enabling the Digital Railway", "Enhancing Customer Experience in Rail Travel", "Low-cost high-value rail", "A greener railway", "Freight" and "Tomorrow's trains today".

SUPPORTING DELIVERY OF A ZERO CARBON RAIL NETWORK

The Railways play a critical role in the shift to net zero, achieved only through collaboration.

[iCAST](#), a collaboration between University of Bath and Oxford University, opens in 2022. iCAST will aim to be the 'go-to' place in the UK for innovation in sustainable technologies.

The [Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy](#) places a strong focus on clean technology supporting our manufacturing sector.

Swindon is home to a [major 'hydrogen hub'](#) with a hydrogen centre planned as part of the former Honda Site's redevelopment.

The [Great Western Community Forest](#) covers the Borough of Swindon. Through this network we will support GBR and the Tree Council to accelerate tree planting across GBR's estate. University of Bath's Faculty of Engineering and Design, which is conducting pioneering research into rail side earthworks and railway tree management, will advise on tree selection and siting.

OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED TO ENABLE GBR TO DEVELOP AS AN ORGANISATION

Access Deep and Talented Labour Pool

The Northern Policy Foundation report "[Bursting the Westminster Bubble](#)" demonstrates that the HQ's location needs to be of reasonable size to ensure adequate depth in the local labour market. The benchmark population is over 140,000.

Swindon's population is [234,500](#) and is projected to grow to 264,300 by 2036 (5 times faster than the English average).

1.9 million people live within an hour of Swindon. Tapping into the area's deep talent pool will help ensure that there is a diversity of staff at the GBR Headquarters. This diversity of thought, life experience, skills and perspective has contributed to Swindon becoming one of the most productive and dynamic places in the country.

Retaining Talented Employees

National surveys ([PWC](#) and [USwitch](#)) put Swindon towards the top of national league tables in a range of quality of life indicators. Swindon house prices are the most affordable in the M4 corridor with an average price of £233,486 ([HM Land Registry](#)).

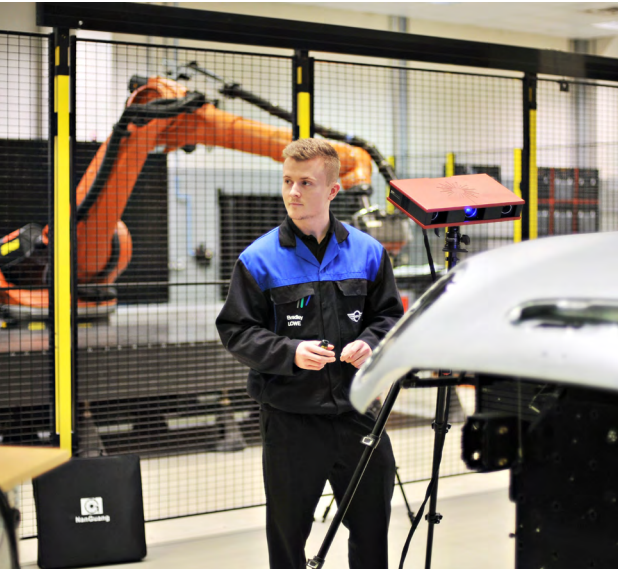
The town has an abundance of green spaces and excellent ([national award winning](#)) housing, with outstanding countryside and picturesque villages in the Cotswolds and Wessex Downs nearby.

Evidence from previous HQ relocations to Swindon from, for example the National Trust, have shown that relocation has delivered lower staff turnover rates and substantial reductions in operating costs.

We are refurbishing our [Health Hydro](#) as a wellbeing hub for the Town. Built in 1891 for all railway workers, Swindon will offer entry to this facility with 33m pool and Victorian Turkish Bath, to GBR staff at a discounted price – continuing Brunel's vision for a healthy and motivated rail workforce.



Engineering Student  
IOT



BMW Mini Production  
Elmar Rubio



# 6. SWINDON RAILWAY HERITAGE AND CURRENT NETWORK LINKS

The **largest and most innovative Railway Works in the World**, exporting rail expertise across the globe

## SWINDON'S UNPARALLELED RAILWAY HISTORY

In 1840, GWR Engineer Daniel Gooch wrote to Brunel to recommend Swindon as the site for the new GWR works, observing that Swindon was "by far the best point" for their "principle engine establishment". Brunel agreed.

GWR Swindon Works were operational from 1843. Modern Swindon was born. GWR's workforce peaked in c.1920 at nearly 16,000 employees, 75% of Swindon's working population. The works had become the largest rail establishment in the world.

It also provided the Blueprint for our NHS. Aneurin Bevan remarked of Swindon's GWR Medical Fund Society:

'There it was, a complete health service. All we had to do was to expand it to embrace the whole country!'

After the winding up of railway works, Swindon attracted further hi-tech businesses to the town. This trend continues today.

Swindon is a town created by the railways, with a strong well-understood railway identity and legacy. As the Alfred Williams Society puts it:

"Railways are to Swindon what the Royal Navy is to Portsmouth and shipbuilding is to Belfast".

## RAILWAY HERITAGE BENEFITS FOR GBR

Brunel's spirit of innovation lives on.

Swindon is now home to 450 digital and tech

firms and 10,000 people in Swindon work in advanced engineering.

Just as the GWR engineers did, Swindonians in headquarters, classrooms and offices are solving problems, using imagination, knowledge and skill then exporting ideas across the UK.

We value our partnerships and the power of collaboration. This is a place where all people and businesses are fully connected. GBR will flourish here.

## AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE BRITAIN'S RAILWAY HERITAGE

The Council is delivering an ambitious ['heritage led' regeneration plan](#) to realise the potential of Swindon through embracing our railway heritage. The Council has partnered with Historic England to establish a Heritage Action Zone, with the aim of making Swindon a railway heritage destination with an international profile.

The headquarters will directly support the enhancement of Swindon's railway heritage. We offer the opportunity to accommodate the GBR HQ in a former Railway Works Building ([the Carriage Works](#)).

Resources at Historic England, English Heritage, the National Monuments Archive, the National Trust, Cultural Heritage Institute and STEAM museum are all located in the Railway Area, making Swindon the nation's centre for heritage.

Council owned STEAM will lend out exhibits to GBR for display in the HQ.





**Above & Right**  
Swindon Railway Conservation Area  
*Elmar Rubio*





# 7. OFFERING GBR GREAT VALUE FOR MONEY

A location that will drive down development costs and whilst maximising organisational effectiveness

Designer Outlet  
DS.EMOTION



## MAKING GOOD USE OF PUBLIC MONEY

The HQ will build on Government investment, secured through the [Future High Streets Fund](#), [Swindon Heritage Action Zone](#) and [Swindon Town Deal](#), channelled into Swindon’s Centre.

GBR’s HQ will capitalise on wider Government investments in the electrification of the Great Western mainline and investments in HS2, Cross Rail, East-West Rail and the western rail link to Heathrow.

## MAXIMISE AFFORDABILITY AND KEEPING COSTS DOWN

Swindon’s ‘opportunity area’ approach provides GBR flexibility in specifying new accommodation to maximise organisational efficiency.

We offer reduced costs through re-using vacant Network Rail Office Space above the mainline, or utilising public investment at The Carriage Works with ‘fit-out’ of the restored building to GBR’s specification as the only cost.

## COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Network Rail owns over 30,000m2 of prime real estate and 9,000m2 of vacant office accommodation at Swindon station. GBR’s HQ provides an ideal anchor for regenerating this area, which should become a major commercial hub, whilst enhancing customer experience of the station.

The Rail Station lies at the heart of Swindon with the retail core only 250m away. The Kimmerfields regeneration scheme (with new Cultural Quarter) is even closer. Also within walking distance (800m)

is the former Railway Works, home to [McArthur Glen Designer Outlet](#), [STEAM](#) and [Heelis - National Trust’s Headquarters](#). This area, past winner of the South West Tourism Visitor Attraction Award, attracts 4 million people each year, the bulk of whom arrive by car. This area provides an excellent opportunity for GBR and Swindon to develop a strategy for markedly increasing leisure based rail custom.

## Freight

The Network Rail Wales and Western Region, based in Swindon, moves over 500,000 tonnes of freight per week. Western Gateway research shows that there is a need for additional capacity to transport freight between industrial centres such as Swindon and the ports.

Not only is Swindon a major industrial centre, it is also a major logistics hub. The town has over 1.5 million m<sup>2</sup> of distribution space, in the form of large, modern units, occupied by businesses such as [Amazon](#) that are using cutting edge technologies to transport products.

Swindon’s logistics floorspace is set to dramatically increase with Panattoni’s £700 million redevelopment of the former Honda site (delivering 2.3 million sq.ft of floorspace) to create the most advanced logistics centre in the country. The site benefits from direct access to a large, mainline rail sidings.

Swindon provides excellent opportunity to develop a strategy for markedly increasing rail freight custom.



**PUBLIC VALUE GENERATED**

Commercial office values in Swindon Centre yield low returns, discouraging private sector-led investment. Public investment is needed.

Delivery of GBR’s HQ will build on plans already being progressed providing both an impetus and focal point for Swindon Centre’s regeneration.

Much of the extensive area of land around the station is in public ownership (Council or Network Rail). The HQ will increase the value of this land.

**LAND VALUE UPLIFT**

The Swindon Town Deal programme includes two projects delivering new office space in Swindon Centre: [Kimmerfields](#) and The [Carriage Works](#). Both sites are available for the HQ.

In December 2021, Government approved Outline Business Cases for both projects. A Land Value Uplift appraisal quantified their economic benefits, measuring the change in value from converting land to a more productive use. As both sites are currently vacant, the existing land value is zero.

The appraisal concluded that Kimmerfields had a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 2.05, demonstrating good value for money. The Carriage Work’s BCR was 1.9 due to higher construction costs related to heritage conversions but with the benefit of bringing vacant, Listed railway buildings into use.

**NON-MONETISED BENEFITS**

**Placemaking**

- › The HQ will provide a catalyst for regeneration

of extensive vacant and under-used land at the heart of Swindon’s Centre.

**Raised profile**

- › The GBR HQ will occupy a highly prominent location overlooking the mainline.

**Integration with other Swindon Centre projects**

- › The HQ will complement the wider regeneration programme aimed at helping to attracting additional investment into Central Swindon.

**Restoration of Railway Heritage Assets**

- › Investment will support restoration of Swindon’s railway heritage area (including important railway heritage assets identified by [Historic England as being ‘At Risk’](#)).

**Housing Delivery**

- › Housing developments in Central Swindon are unviable. GBR’s HQ will support an increase in values to unlock delivery of over 2,000 homes on unviable sites ([Swindon SHELAA](#))

Heelis – National Trust HQ  
Elmar Rubio

GREAT VALUE TO GBR





## 8. DEMONSTRATE HOW THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS WILL BE WELCOMED BY THE LOCAL PUBLIC

An open arms welcome for GBR and an offer for the whole Town to get behind the transformation of Britain's Railways

Swindon is home to the nation's most loved Railway Heritage Area. Swindon residents proudly celebrate their railway heritage. The Railway Village was named [England's favourite conservation area](#) by the Civic Voice in a recent public vote.

Values of resilience, innovation and hard work fostered by the railways still characterise Swindon today. Swindon's communities have the mind-set and strong desire to lead the way in delivering technical excellence in the rail sector. The deep local community support for the railways can be seen in the Swindon [Heritage Action Zone](#). The HAZ is supported by numerous local community, civic and business stakeholders, representing thousands of residents, who are all working

together to make the area a heritage destination with an international profile. Through the HAZ the Swindon community is re-energising our proud railway past.

[STEAM](#) expands this message. It tells the story of the men and women who built, operated and travelled on the Great Western Railway - an invaluable resource that introduces children to the railways. STEAM is ranked as Swindon's favourite visitor attraction.

Swindon's residents recognise the significance of GBR locating its transformative new HQ in Swindon. A poll of over 1,000 residents showed that 95% strongly support the EOI.



| STEAM Museum