

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29th APRIL 2015

ITEM NO. 13

Ward: Whitley

App No.: 141944/REG 3

Address: Land West of Longwater Avenue (Green Park Railway Station), Green Park
Proposal: Construction of a new Railway Station, bus interchange, multi-storey car park (park and rise facility), short stay car park, taxi drop-off, disable parking facility, station access road from Longwater Avenue, landscaping and associated works.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council - Highways and Transport

Date received: 9th December 2014

Major Application: 13 week target decision date: 10th March 2015

Planning Guarantee: 26 week date: 2th June 2015

App No.: 150254/FUL/OOB

Address: Land West of Longwater Avenue (Green Park Railway Station), Green Park
Proposal: Construction of a new Railway Station, bus interchange, multi-storey car park (park and rise facility), short stay car park, taxi drop-off, disable parking facility, station access road from Longwater Avenue, landscaping and associated works.

Date received: 12th February 2015

Consultation Application Target: 27th February 2015

RECOMMENDATION - 141944

Subject to no objections from the Environment Agency **GRANT** permission.

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE

1. TL1 - Time limit (3 years)
2. Material samples for all buildings and specifications of materials
3. Hard and soft landscaping details
4. Hard and soft landscaping works
5. Replacement hard and soft landscaping works
6. Tree planting
7. Arboricultural Method Statement including tree protection details
8. Boundary treatment
9. Landscape and Ecological Management Plan
10. Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
11. Reptile survey and mitigation plan
12. Bat mitigation plan
13. Timing of site clearance so that does not coincide with bird nesting season of March to August inclusive
14. CMS including control of noise and dust, hours of working, culverts
15. In accordance with submitted and approved in construction and operational waste management plans

16. Temporary access constructed before the opening of the station. Details to be submitted and approved.
17. No construction work on the Multi storey car park shall commence until the access road from Longwater Avenue has been constructed.
18. Details of Cycle Parking
19. Details of security cameras - Safer Parking Award
20. Details of waiting room facilities, ticket machines, and real time passenger information systems
21. Details of lighting, including during construction, to be submitted to and approved
22. Detailed scheme for sound insulation for the proposed dwellings at GPV to be submitted and approved.
23. Noise assessment
24. Air Quality Assessment
25. A contaminated land verification report to be submitted and approved to demonstrate that certified clean topsoil has been imported for landscaping.
26. Reporting of unexpected contamination and Remediation scheme
27. Land gas remediation scheme and its implementation
28. Bonfires
29. No soakaways on contaminated ground
30. Details of piling and foundations
31. Development to accord with the FRA
32. Sustainable drainage scheme to be submitted and approved to include a timetable for implementation, and management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development.
33. Ditch along western boundary to be retained as an open ditch
34. Drainage ditch diversion
35. No development within 5m of the top of the bank of any watercourse
36. No part of the development hereby approved shall commence until the applicant has submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its written approval a Report which demonstrates how the design, construction and operational phases of development have addressed applicable sustainable development principles to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority for that part of the development. The scheme shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved Report, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
37. A programme of archaeological work for each construction phase/area in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the scheme approved pursuant to this condition.
38. Protection of crop mark sites.

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE

1. Terms and conditions
2. Include suitable fire hydrants or other suitable emergency water supplies to meet RBFR requirements. Any gates for emergency access should provide a minimum 3.1m clear opening.
3. Building Regulations approval
4. All vehicular construction traffic to use the A33 and Green Park access roads, and not any residential streets in the Whitley area (including Basingstoke Road)

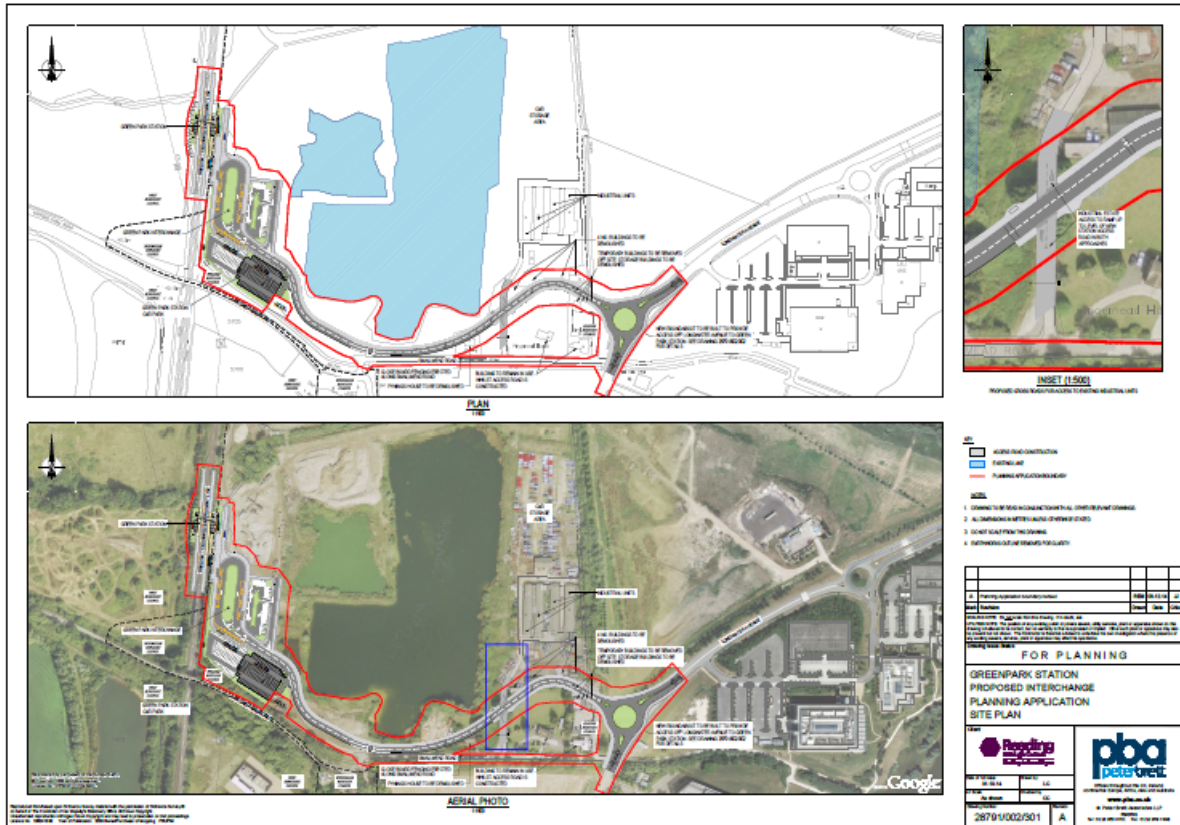
5. In respect of surface water it is recommended that storm flows are attenuated or regulated into the receiving public network through on or off-site storage. When it is proposed to connect to a combined public sewer, the site drainage should be separate and combined at the final manhole nearest the boundary. Connections are not permitted for the removal of groundwater to ensure that the surface water discharge from the site shall not be detrimental to the existing sewerage system. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. They can be contacted on 0800 009 3921
6. Applicant to ensure that there are suitable fire hydrants or other suitable emergency water supplies to meet Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services requirements.

RECOMMENDATION - 150254/FUL/OOB

That West Berkshire District Council be informed that this Council does not raise an objection to the proposed development, and that West Berkshire District Council is sent a copy of this report for their information and use.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The 2.56 ha application site is located to the north-west of the Green Park Business Park, adjacent to the main railway line linking Reading and Basingstoke. It is within the western section of the Green Park Village gpv Masterplan, granted consent in 2011. The approved GPV, which will lie to the east is a mixed use development of 737 residential units, commercial facilities, community facilities including a one-form entry primary school, and office space. To the north of the site is the former Smallmead landfill site, now capped and restored, and to the west of the site is land within West Berkshire previously used for minerals extraction.
- 1.2 The application is made by Reading Borough Council Highways and Transport Section and the total station site area includes land within West Berkshire and Reading Borough Areas. Duplicate applications have been submitted to both Councils, but it is for each Council to determine the application within their administrative boundaries. The majority of the proposed station itself is within West Berkshire and the public access, interchange, multi-storey car park and access road within Reading Borough.



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 Consent was granted on 14 December 2010 for the construction of a new railway station, bus interchange, multi-storey car park (park and ride facility), short stay car park, taxi drop off, disabled parking facility, station access road from Longwater Avenue, landscaping and associated works (10/01905/FUL). The station platforms and concourse are actually situated within West Berkshire and consent was granted by West Berkshire District Council for the station development in January 2011.
- 2.2 Both of these applications have now lapsed and therefore it has been necessary to submit new applications for the proposed station development.
- 2.3 The proposed scheme is largely the same as that approved in 2010 & 2011 respectively, but includes the following amendments:
- The design allows for the electrification of the railway line;
 - The design of the footbridge has been updated to reflect Network rail's requirements;
 - Consideration has been given to the access bridge/ lift requirement;
 - The size of the interchange has been reduced;
 - The size of the car park area has now been increased to accommodate 42 surface parking spaces; and
 - The construction and design of the station canopies for the station platform have been simplified

2.4 The key elements of the scheme are:

- A station to be accessed from the interchange located on the eastern side of the railway tracks. Access to the western platform will be via a footbridge from the eastern platform. Lifts will be provided.
- Bus interchange with space for 6 bus bays with level access through
- Vehicular and pedestrian access to the station and interchange from Longwater Avenue;
- 5 taxi bays;
- 242 long stay spaces (surface and multi-storey);
- 5 drop off spaces;
- 5 short stay spaces; and
- 12 disabled spaces

2.5 It is anticipated that the development will be built out in four phases dependent on the availability of funding and the phased build out of Green Park Village including the access road:

Phase 1 - Service road and bus stop

Phase 2 - Interchange and drop-off parking

Phase 3 - Surface Car Park

Phase 4 - Full scheme including multi-storey car park

2.6 The following plans and supporting documents were submitted with the application received 9th December 2014:

- Planning Statement prepared by Peter Brett Associates;
- Design and Access Statement prepared by PBA
- Sustainability Statement prepared by PBA
- Floor Risk Assessment prepared by PBA
- Transport Statement prepared by PBA
- Location Plan - Drawing no: 28791/002/100 Rev A
- Planning Application Boundary Area within Reading Borough - Drawing no: 28791/002/101 Rev A
- Site Plan - Drawing no: 28791/002/301 Rev A
- Illustrative General Arrangement Final Scheme - Drawing no: 28791/002/206
- Proposed Interchange Layout Phase 1 - Service Road & Bus Loop - Drawing no: 28791/002/204 Rev A
- Proposed Interchange Layout Phase 2 - Interim Access Road - Drawing no: 28791/002/203 Rev A
- Proposed Interchange Layout Phase 3 - Surface Car Park and Access Road - Drawing no: 28791/002/202 Rev A
- Proposed Interchange Layout Phase 4 - Full Scheme - Drawing no: 28791/002/201 Rev A
- Green Park Station Platform Level - Drawing no: 645-001 (for West Berks)
- Green Park Station Roof Plan - Drawing no: 645-002 (for West Berks)
- Green Park Station Elevation 645-003 (for West Berks)
- Green Park Station Section C - Drawing no: 655-004 (for West Berks)
- Green Park Station Section D - Drawing no: 645-005 (for West Berks)
- Green Park Station Section E+F - Drawing no: 645-006 (for West Berks)
- Proposed Multi-Storey Car Park Floor Plans - drawing no: A-03-106
- Proposed Multi-Storey Car Park Cross Sections - Drawing no: A-04-003
- Proposed Multi-Storey Car Park Elevations - Drawing no: A-05-001

- Multi-Storey Car Park Vehicle Access and Visibility Splays - Drawing no: 28791/002/209
- Proposed Interchange Layout Phases 1 & 2 Vehicle Swept Path Analysis - Drawing no: 28791/002/207
- Proposed Interchange Layout Vehicle Swept Path Analysis Phases 2, 3 & 4 - Drawing no: 28791/002/208
- Proposed Interchange Layout Illustrative General Arrangement Service Road and Bus Loop - Drawing no: 28791/002/205
- Proposed Interchange Proposed Highway Layout - Drawing no: 28791/002/302
- Proposed Interchange Proposed Highway Vertical Alignment and Levels - Drawing no: 28791/002/303
- Proposed Interchange Station Interchange Finished Levels - Drawing no: 28791/002/304
- Proposed Interchange Typical Sections Through Station Interchange Area - Drawing no: 28791/002/305
- Landscape Masterplan - Drawing no: 403_DR_001 Rev A
- Baseline Tree Survey - Drawing no: 402_DR_003
- Tree Survey Plan - Drawing no: 429 12/01
- Heritage Assets (Archaeology) Statement - Addendum October 2010
- Geoenvironmental Data Technical Note prepared by PBA, 24th Oct 2014
- Utility Infrastructure Site Appraisal Report
- Bat and Otter Survey Report prepared by PBA
- Bat Survey Assessment prepared by PBA
- Ecological Walkover prepared by PBA
- Operational Waste Management Strategy prepared by Peter Brett Associates October 2010
- Construction Waste Management Plan prepared by Peter Brett Associates October 2010

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 00/00612/OUT - Erection of a railway station with road access, bus turning, parking and associated works - Granted 10/01/2001.
- 03/01514/OUT - Erection of a railway station with road access, bus turning, parking and associated works (renewal of application number 00/00612/OUT) - Application permitted 04/06/2004.
- 07/01108/FUL - Construction of a new railway station, bus interchange, decked park and ride facility, short stay car park, taxi drop off, disabled parking facility, access road, landscaping and associated works - Application permitted 14/12/2007.
- 07/01156/WBKADJ - Construction of a new railway station including 5-car platforms, footbridge, lift, concourse, disabled access provision, engineering works including diversion of existing drainage ditch to the west of the railway line and associated works - Application withdrawn.
- 07/01594/WBKADJ - Construction of a new railway station including 5 car

platforms, footbridge, lift, concourse, disabled access provision, engineering works including diversion of existing drainage ditch to the West of the railway line and associated works - Observations sent 10/01/2008.

- 07/01275/OUT - (Green Park Village) A planning application for mixed-use development comprising:
"Phase 1 (submitted in full with no matters reserved and as defined on Plan Ref. PA-P1-002): the construction of housing - 46 houses and 22 apartments (Class C3), local retail (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5), management suite, village hall, engineering and infrastructure works including reconfiguration of the lake, lakeside access, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes, services and infrastructure, landscaping and other associated works; and
Subsequent phases (submitted in outline with all matters reserved except for details of the main access proposals): the construction of housing - 669 dwellings (Class C3), extra care housing with ancillary community uses (Class C2), 16,000 square metres office space (Class B1), one-form entry primary school including nursery (Class D1), health surgery (Class D1), sports pitches, children's play facilities, engineering and infrastructure works including reconfiguration of the lake and vehicular access, lakeside access, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes, services and infrastructure, landscaping and other associated works." Application Permitted.
- 09/00347/FUL - Construction of new access road, car park, landscaping proposals and associated works to be implemented in conjunction with planning permission 07/01108/FUL. Application Permitted.
- 09/00349/VARIAT - Construction of a new railway station, bus interchange, decked park and ride facility, short stay car park, taxi drop off, disabled parking facility, access road, landscaping and associated works without complying with conditions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 28, 29, 31 and 32 of Planning Application Reference: 07/01108/FUL, with alternative conditions imposed to allow for a phased discharge of the alternative conditions. Application Permitted.
- 09/01494/VARIAT - Construction of a new railway station, bus interchange, decked park and ride facility, short stay car park, taxi drop off, disabled parking facility, access road, landscaping and associated works without complying with conditions 13 and 34 of Planning Application Reference 09/00349/VARIAT.
- 10/01461/OUT - (Green Park Village) A planning application for mixed-use development.
- 10/01905/FUL - Construction of a new railway Station, bus interchange, decked park and ride facility, short-stay car park, taxi drop off, disabled parking facility, access road, landscaping and associated works. Permitted 14th December 2010
- 10/02048/ADJ Application for renewal of planning permission 07/02570/COMIND - Construction of a new railway station including 5-car platforms, footbridge, lift, concourse, disabled access provision,

engineering works including diversion of existing drainage ditch to the west of the railway line and associated works. Permitted January 2011

- 150254/FUL/OOB : Construction of a new Railway Station, bus interchange, multi-storey car park (park and rise facility), short stay car park, taxi drop-off, disable parking facility, station access road from Longwater Avenue, landscaping and associated works. Currently under consideration by West Berkshire

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory consultation

Environment Agency: Object on flood risk grounds for two reasons. These reasons are about surface water control measure and loss of flood plain storage. More information has been provided to the EA and their further comments are awaited.

Natural England: Do not consider that this application poses any likely or significant risk to those features of the natural environment, so does not wish to make specific comment on the details of this consultation.

(ii) Non statutory consultation

RBC Transport Strategy: see below

RBC Landscaping: see below

RBC Ecology: Confirms that the ecological surveys that have been undertaken in support of this application are sufficient to determine the likely ecological impacts of the proposals, and, subject to a number of conditions about sensitive site clearance etc., the proposals are likely to be acceptable.

RBC Sustainability: No comments received

RBC Environmental Protection: Concerns regarding Noise arising from development; Air Quality impact - increased emissions; Contaminated Land ; Light - external ; Construction and Demolition phase.

Although Green Park Village has not yet been constructed, we have concerns over the noise from the railway and bus interchange affecting the amenity of future residents of the proposed Green Park Village. In order to minimise the impact on future resident's, where possible, noise minimisation should be designed into the development, rather than retrofitted at a later date. A noise assessment is recommended from the nearest noise sensitive receptor (usually a residential dwelling). It is important to ensure that new developments do not increase background noise levels.

The proposed development has the potential to increase emissions of harmful pollutants in the area. An assessment and/or mitigation measures should be

provided as part of the application process. Reading Borough Council's Air Quality Policy DM19 requires that developments have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality through design, mitigation and where required planning obligations to be used to help improve local air quality.

Several site investigation reports have been carried out in recent years to assess the extent of contamination and land gas at the site. Technical note: 28791 submitted with the application summarises the findings of the previous reports and concludes that remediation is not necessary for the protection of human health at the site, although a clean cover system should be installed where any landscaping is proposed. It will be necessary to install protection against land gas ingress at the site and conditions are recommended, required to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination or land gas.

Concerns raised regarding proposed lighting resulting in a loss of amenity to nearby residents. A condition is recommended regarding further details of lighting.

We have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses). Conditions are recommended for the control of noise and dust during construction, bonfires and hours of working.

RBC Emergency Planning: See below.

RBC Access Officer: Number of matters raised regarding the disabled parking bays, gradients, and emergency situations including lift failure.

RBC Waste Operations: No comments received.

RBC Valuation team: No comments received.

RBC Sustainability team: No comments received.

Berkshire Archaeology: No objections subject to conditions.

Thames Valley Police: No comments received.

SSE Power distribution: No comments received.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service: No public mains in the area to provide suitable supply to fight a fire. Request for suitable fire hydrants or other suitable emergency water supplies to meet RBFR requirements. Any gates for emergency access should provide a minimum 3.1m clear opening. Fire safety is assessed by Building Control. An informative is recommended.

Network Rail: Previous correspondence [not in direct response to the consultation on this] confirmed their support for the principle of a new station at Green Park on the reading to Basingstoke Line between the Kirtons Farm Road overbridge and the Kennet and Avon Canal underbridge.

Health & Safety Executive: No comments received.

Thames Water: Surface water drainage - responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or a suitable sewer. Advise that with regard to sewerage infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application. No objection with regard to water infrastructure capacity. An informative is recommended.

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust: Objection - Insufficient information submitted to ensure that protected species and their habitats are protected and enhanced in line with the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) (1981), the national Planning Policy Framework and the Reading Core Strategy. A number of conditions are recommended.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council: No comments received.

West Berkshire District Council: No objections, but request that comments as follows be considered:

- Disabled access to be maintained from the parking spaces to the concourse and from platform to platform
- Two surface water drain culverts pass under the railway. Both have an important role in flood relief and vital that development does not have a detrimental effect on these. During the winter of 2013-14 land to the wets of the railway line flooded quite severely. Since that time various improvement works to drainage situation have been undertaken, but the two culverts take much of the flow. If there is an opportunity to improve the culvert that would be of great benefit. It is important that construction activities and permanent works do not adversely affect the working of the culvert or open watercourses and this should be conditioned. Any flooding that does occur must not lead to backing up of water thus preventing free flow in the watercourses. Flood relief culverts under the proposed access road must be considered to aid cross flow of any flood water between the south and north.
- Transport officer support due to its ability to support sustainable travel. Local Economic Partnership has committed funding to help deliver the station and West Berkshire will work with RBC and LEP to assist in seeing this scheme delivered. Inclusion of lifts is essential for access for all. Links to wider cycle hire scheme and cycle parking are of benefit. Will electric charging points be included? [this would be part of the detailed design]
- Highways Authority has no objection.
- Ecologist is not convinced that sufficient effort in regards to reptile survey. Recommend that a condition be included requiring a reptile survey and mitigation prior to the commencement of development. Pre-commencement conditions regarding lighting, timing of site clearance, bat mitigation plan and landscaping recommended.

Wokingham Borough Council: No comments.

Shinfield Parish Council: No comments.

Burghfield Parish Council - No objections.

(iii) **Public/local consultation and comments received**

The following addresses were consulted:

- Longwater Avenue: 100, 200-250, 350.
- Brook Drive: 100, 200, 250, 300, 350, 400.
- South Oak Way: 100, 200, 220, 240, 250, 300, 400, 500.
- Shooters Way: Madejski Stadium, Royal Berkshire Conference Centre, Radio House.
- Pingemead Business Estate (all), Pingemead House.
- Island Road - RE3
- Reading Gate Retail park (all)
- Deloitte for Oxford Properties - owners of Green Park

No responses received.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Document 2008.

Policy CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design

Policy CS2: Waste Minimisation

Policy CS4: Accessibility

Policy CS5: Inclusive Access

Policy CS7: Design

Policy CS21: Major Transport Projects

Policy CS24: Car/Cycle Parking

Policy CS34: Pollution and Water Resources

Policy CS35: Flooding

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Sustainable Design and Construction (2007)

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

6. APPRAISAL

Main considerations

(i) Principle of Development

6.1 The principle of the development of a station in this location has been established by the granting of the previously referenced planning consents on this site. Notwithstanding that the site is identified in the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (2001) as a safeguarded rail depot site under saved Policy 26, the Core Strategy (CS21) and Local Transport Plan specifically refer to the provision of a railway station/transport interchange at this site as being an important development for the area and Reading as a whole. Therefore, whilst the development of the station at this site may remain a technical departure from the Minerals Local Plan, the proposed development is considered appropriate and accords with more recent adopted policy and therefore does not require referral to the Secretary of State under the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 on the basis of conflict with policy.

6.2 The delivery of the railway station and interchange is intrinsically linked to the implementation of the adjacent Green Park Village (GPV), with it a requirement of the approved Section 106 agreement and deed of variations to the GPV consent to deliver the railway and interchange.

(ii) Design, Layout and Appearance

6.3 The design is much simpler than that approved under 2010 application. The station entrance oriented towards the main direction of arrival from the bus interchange and car park. A double sided canopy identifies the entrance and projecting canopies are proposed over parts of the platforms and are supported on circular columns. The overbridge span over the track is open to the sky but the sides are enclosed with transparent screens as are the screens to the stairs, bridge and back of platforms. The materials will be hard wearing and low maintenance that comply with Network Rail standards. A condition is recommended regarding materials details.

6.4 The bus interchange and taxi rank comprises four bus shelters and a taxi shelter. The shelter design is in keeping with the platform canopies, and the overall design concept across Green Park. The bus interchange requires a large area of hardstanding. Landscaping will soften the overall impact of the development and conditions for further details are recommended.

6.5 The proposed materials for the multi-storey car park are timber clad louvered panels on the north-east elevation, seeking to relate to the wooded area to the south west and in order to complement Green Park's landscaped image. In contrast the stair cores will be clad in grey brick and the south-western elevation using a metal panel system similar to that used elsewhere in Green Park decked car parks. These materials are considered to be appropriate and a condition is recommended requiring details of the materials to be submitted for approval.

6.6 As in the approved 2010 scheme the car park will be a maximum of 12.8 metres high with 4 decks of car parking with a shape resembling a capital D in plan form so that the front elevation has curved corners to the road which was accepted as softening the appearance of the building as one approaches it.

6.7 Officers are satisfied that the different elements of the station complex, including those in West Berkshire result in a coherent overall design which will appear as a contemporary and appropriate addition to Green Park.

(iii) Amenity of neighbouring occupiers

6.8 The transport interchange would be located approximately 50m away from the closest existing dwellings (a terrace of three houses by the junction of Smallmead Road and Kirtons Farm Road, within West Berkshire). Although, the development is currently a significant distance from any residential occupiers, there will be future occupiers of the residential development at GPV, which need to be considered. Noise from trains, ancillary equipment on the railway, buses and use of the multi-storey car park need to be considered and mitigated. Conditions regarding noise assessment, and lighting are recommended.

- 6.9 In terms of impact upon other users, it is anticipated the new station will have a positive impact on the amenities of employees at the small-scale commercial units close to the site and the major office units located within Green Park itself.

(iv) Highways and Parking Issues

- 6.10 This application is for the new Green Park Station which will result in the existing large business park and subsequent consented residential development being able to have direct access to the rail network. The station has had planning permission in the past but this has lapsed. The application is essentially in two parts, the first covering the completed scheme and the second detailing the phases as funding becomes available.

Complete Scheme

Vehicle Access

- 6.11 Access to the station will be via a new 7.3 metre wide single carriageway road which will be accessed from a new roundabout on Longwater Avenue. The road and roundabout comply with the design requirements of the Department for Transport (DfT) Document "The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges". At the station, vehicles will be sent to either the 2 deck long stay car park, the short stay (kiss and ride) parking area, or for public transport vehicles (Buses, Taxi's, MRT vehicles) the bus interchange. The layouts of the parking areas and bus interchange are acceptable.
- 6.12 The MRT is also accommodated in the Bus Interchange and, as it will be a rubber wheel vehicle system, it will use the new access road from Longwater Avenue to enter the site. If further development in the area occurs the possibility is still available for these vehicles to have their own dedicated route.
- 6.13 The design also ensures that passengers who arrive by public transport / taxis will be dropped off closest to the station with those coming by private motor car having to walk through the bus interchange to reach the station.

Pedestrian / Cycle Access

- 6.14 The station will also have dedicated pedestrian routes linking the site with other areas within the Green Park development both residential and commercial. A cycle route will also be provided linking the station to National Cycle Route 23, cycle routes along the A33 Relief Road and other areas of Green Park. On match days at the nearby Madejski Stadium this cycle route will also be used as a pedestrian marshalling route, allowing supporters to arrive at the stadium by train. These provisions are acceptable.

Traffic Generation

- 6.15 The station has been identified within Readings Local Transport Plan, Local Development Framework, the former Berkshire Structure Plan and the Thames Valley Berkshire Strategic Economic Plan as a key transport objective to achieve modal shift away from the private car. The station proposals have also received Growth Point and Local Growth Deal funding as a key infrastructure project within the Thames Valley.
- 6.16 While the station will generate some vehicular movements, these will be vehicular movements that would already be on the network, but will result in the length of these vehicular journey's substantially decreasing as the drivers transfer to the train for the majority of their journey. Given this the station will not have a material effect on traffic flows in the vicinity of the site.
- 6.17 The station will also be of great benefit of the Green Park community as it will enhance the good public transport facilities that already exist.

Phased Scheme

- 6.18 In **Phase 1** the station will be accessed from Kirtons Farm Road via the existing Smallmead Road. In order to prevent vehicle access to Green Park from the west, it is proposed that a traffic regulation order and the continued use (or upgrade) of the barrier system will restrict access to buses only. This arrangement is acceptable.
- 6.19 It is forecast that Green Park Station will principally be a destination station until residential developments, such as the consented Green Park Village are built out. Therefore the number of vehicles likely to approach the station from Kirtons Farm Road is not expected to be significant. Other stations such as Theale, Reading West and Stratfield Mortimer are likely to be more attractive for rail passengers coming from the villages to south and west of Reading. The layout of the junction to Kybes Lane is acceptable and complies with DfT design standards.
- 6.20 A footway / cycleway will be constructed along the new access road which will continue on to Smallmead Road, thereby enabling pedestrians / cyclists from Green Park and the Madejski Stadium to have direct access to the station. The station will accommodate bus services, and a cycle hire hub. Phase One will provide the following:
- i) 2 bus bays and turning loop;
 - ii) Shared cycle/footway/ link to station;
 - iii) Cycle parking and cycle hire hub; and
 - iv) Existing shuttle buses that serve Green Park would be re-routed to serve Green Park Station.
- 6.21 **Phase Two** would be implemented as adjacent developments progress and associated S106 obligations are triggered and received. Phase Two provides a public transport interchange, dedicated drop off/pick up area and a ground level car park located outside of the station. A 3.0m wide footway running adjacent to the carriageway will replace the footway/cycleway of Phase One.

- 6.22 Phase Two will provide the western section of the proposed access road. From the junction with Kirtons Farm Road the existing carriageway of Smallmead Road will be used to provide vehicular access to the station. The barrier control on Smallmead Road, as established in Phase One, will continue to operate to allow bus access from Green Park to be maintained but again will prevent access / egress to Green Park from the west for all other motor vehicles.
- 6.23 At this stage the need for a separate drop off area is not predicted and there will be sufficient room within the proposed interchange to support bus services as well as limited numbers of drop off/pick and taxi traffic. Phase Two will provide the following:
- i) 3 bus bays
 - ii) 5 taxi bays
 - iii) 7 drop off spaces (temporary); and
 - iv) Zero short stay spaces, disabled spaces or long stay spaces.
- 6.24 **Phase Three** would be implemented when funding or agreed triggers require additional provision at the Station Interchange. This would include the remainder of the access road to Longwater Avenue. In addition to the access road and roundabout on Longwater Avenue, a dedicated drop off/pick up area will be constructed as well as a ground level car park for 103 cars.
- 6.25 At this point the interchange will be dedicated to buses and taxis only. In order to prevent vehicle access to Green Park from Kirtons Farm Road, the connection with the new access road will be removed. Phase Three will provide the following:
- i) 6 bus bays
 - ii) 5 taxi bays
 - iii) 12 disabled spaces
 - iv) 5 drop off spaces
 - v) 5 short stay spaces
 - vi) 103 long stay spaces (surface)
- 6.26 Subject to the level of funding coming forward it may be possible to omit Stage Two and build the full Stage Three.
- 6.27 **Phase 4** - As demand for parking increases the construction of multi-storey car park on the site of ground level car park can commence. In order to allow for the future expansion of the car park, the ground level will be designed to accommodate the additional stories with minimal alteration. Phase Four will provide:
- i) 6 bus bays;
 - ii) 5 taxi bays;
 - iii) 12 disabled spaces;
 - iv) 5 drop off spaces;
 - v) 5 short stay spaces;
 - vi) 42 long stay spaces (surface); and
 - vii) 200 long stay spaces (multi-storey)

- 6.28 The phasing proposals are acceptable and allow the station to expand as funding and passenger levels increase. The design of the access road, car parks and interchange facilities in all phases are acceptable and comply with the required DfT standards and requirements
- 6.29 Transport has no objections subject to conditions regarding a temporary access being constructed before the station opens; final access road to be constructed before the construction of the multi-storey.
- 6.30 No RUAP contribution is required given the proposals are providing a key infrastructure project.

(v) Sustainability

- 6.31 The proposed development would play an important role in providing alternative modes of transport to the car, particularly relevant given the scale of office development on the adjoining Green Park Business Park and the approved residential and commercial development at Green Park Village. The development is therefore welcomed in this respect.
- 6.32 In terms of sustainable design, conditions are proposed to ensure measures such as low energy lighting.
- 6.33 From April 6th 2015, sustainable drainage provision became a material consideration in all major planning applications, however, the application was submitted in December 2014 before the Government announcement on sustainable drainage becoming a material consideration was made.
- 6.34 The applicant has stated that run off rates will be limited to greenfield rates and the discharge volume will be limited by either using infiltration drainage or where this is not practical the run off rates will be limited by a flow control mechanism and additional attenuation will be provided to ensure there is no increased downstream flood risk. It is also confirmed that the design will comply with the DEFRA technical guidance published in March 2015 and thus will be NPPF and NPPG compliant. There is no objection with regard to SuDs subject to a condition.

(vi) Landscaping & Ecology

- 6.35 In terms of landscaping, it is recognised that a transport interchange is largely functional and as such, proposals for landscaping may be somewhat limited.
- 6.36 The Landscape officer has highlighted a number of areas where additional information is required and conditions are recommended in this regard.
- 6.37 In relation to the proposed soft landscape species, the officer notes the proposed ground cover species. Since the 2010 consent was granted, there has been a request from Environment Health to avoid ground cover planting in planting schemes as rats in Reading (& a couple of other places in the UK) have mutated such that they have a resistance to anti-coagulants and need to eat about 3 times the normal poison dose for it to have any affect. Therefore they have requested

no planting that would harbour rats on public health grounds. The landscaping should be amended to remove ground cover planting and low level planting that could not be pruned to maintain ground clearance.

- 6.38 With regard to trees in planters, concern was expressed previously given the long-term issues these raise. Confirmation is required on the reasons for the use of planters and, if required, how these will be designed to allow for tree growth.
- 6.39 A plan is required showing the existing and proposed utility services on the Landscape Masterplan to demonstrate that there is no conflict, this is recommended as part of the landscape related conditions.
- 6.40 It has been highlighted that it is important to ensure that lighting is located to avoid conflict with proposed trees and is designed to minimise impact on wildlife. A condition is recommended.
- 6.41 As recommended in the Ecological Walkover Survey new tree and scrub planting should be provided between the development site and the adjacent lakes to reduce disturbance to wintering wildfowl during construction and operation of the of the station. Any landscape plan should include this, and further landscape details are recommended as a condition.
- 6.42 In view of the protected species and their supporting habitats present within and adjacent to the proposed development site, it has been suggested by consultees that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) be submitted to ensure that construction activities do not cause adverse effects on these protected species or their habitats. A condition is recommended.
- 6.43 Some concerns have been raised through consultation that there is a lack of information regarding protected species and therefore it is not possible to be able to appropriately evaluate measures which may be required to avoid and / or mitigate for adverse impacts on reptiles. A condition is recommended.

(vii) Lighting

- 6.44 The lighting proposed within the development would have the same fitting as used within the adjoining business park. These fittings have been designed to concentrate light fall on the ground and accordingly minimise light pollution. The general lux levels will meet standards issued by the Institute of electrical Engineers. Recommend a condition which requires implementation of an appropriately detailed Sensitive Lighting Strategy to be submitted to and approved by the Council before works can commence for light sensitive biodiversity.

(viii) Flooding

- 6.45 The site currently lies largely in Flood Zone 2 (Medium Probability), but partly in Zone 3b (Functional Floodplain). Proposed works would raise the land to Zone 1 (Low Probability). In terms of the Sequential Test under PPS25, a transport interchange is considered to fall under the definition of 'essential transport infrastructure', which PPS25 identifies as being appropriate within Flood Zone2.

For this type of development within Flood Zone 3b the Exception Test is required. For this Test to be passed, the development must (i) provide wider sustainability benefits, (ii) be on previously developed land or there must be no reasonable alternative sites on previously developed land, and (iii) a FRA must demonstrate that the development will be safe, and where possible reduce flood risk. The development is considered to clearly comply with (i) and (ii), and the Environment Agency's further comments are awaited on (iii). An update will be provided.

- 6.46 It is clear from issues raised by the Emergency Planners of Reading and West Berkshire that significant flooding has occurred in the area in recent years. They highlight that there are 2 culverts under the railway, which were blocked, and the myriad of ditches and streams on both sides of the railway were overgrown hindering the flow of floodwater. Albeit much work has been done since 2012 to clear ditches etc, they suggest that enhancement to existing culverts would be of great benefit.
- 6.47 That state that it is important that construction activities and permanent works do not adversely affect the working of the culvert or open watercourses and this should be conditioned. Flood relief culverts under the proposed access road must be considered to aid cross flow of any flood water between the south and north. A condition is recommended regarding culverts during the construction period.

(ix) Security

- 6.48 To achieve rail industry technical approval, the station is required to meet the latest security and antiterrorism provisions and this is reflected in the proposed scheme. CCTV provision would be accessed by Transport Police.
- 6.49 The entire scheme has been designed to provide a high degree of natural surveillance of all areas including the interchange and station. Frequency of activity will increase further in the area from future commuters, residents and pedestrian traffic associated with the school when the Railway Station and Green Park Village schemes come forward.
- 6.50 In addition, for the multi-storey car park light coloured internal finishes will be specified together with an internal lighting strategy which would give the interior of the car park an evenly lit and bright appearance with no dark corners.
- 6.51 A condition requiring that the car park area achieve the Safer Parking Scheme Award status (or equivalent) is recommended. There is therefore no objection on security grounds.

(x) Disabled Access

- 6.52 There will be step free access to the Basingstoke bound platform and a lift access to Reading bound platform. Access to the car park is provided by two stair cores designed to have level thresholds and doors sized for wheelchair access and there is a lift which is sized to admit wheelchairs.

- 6.53 Pavements are proposed as a minimum of 2m in width, a level approach throughout the bus interchange. A total of 12 dedicated disabled parking spaces are proposed in close proximity to the station and bus stops.
- 6.54 The RBC Access Officer highlighted some issues regarding good practice for disabled spaces including that disabled parking spaces are near to the station entrance; no significant gradients to get from the parking to the entrance; dropped kerbs adjacent to the disabled parking bays to enable disabled drivers/passengers to get safely onto the pavement and make their way to the station entrance; would be useful to have at least one space for disabled drivers/passengers on the ground floor of the multi-storey car park, as it would provide shelter in rain/snow; disabled spaces as part of Phase 2. The detailed design of the car park area and Multi-storey car park will include consideration of the issues raised and would be in accordance with Department for Transport document "Inclusive Mobility".
- 6.55 The Access officer raised some issues regarding what happens in an emergency situation at an unmanned station. The relevant Train Operating Company would have an emergency button linked to a 24 hour centre.

(xi) Impact Mitigation Contributions

- 6.56 Community Infrastructure Levy was implemented by Reading Borough Council from 1st April. Transport infrastructure is CIL liable development, but there is a zero charge within the Borough for such.
- 6.57 In terms of S106 obligations the benefits associated with the development i.e. providing alternatives to the private car, reduction of traffic movements, sustainability etc mean that contributions would not be required as the development itself provides a significant piece of transport infrastructure identified in adopted plans.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The current Core Strategy and the Local Transport Plan have specifically referred to the provision of a railway station/transport interchange at this site as being an important development for the area and Reading as a whole. The development is considered to be sustainable, and wholly in line with government's aims of reducing reliance on the private car. Transport confirm that they endorse the proposal. The detailed design of the interchange is considered to be acceptable. Further details are recommended via condition. Subject to the receipt of satisfactory comments from the Environment Agency, Members are requested to support the proposal. Further EA comments will be reported through an update report along with any further detail on recommended landscaping and ecology conditions.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

Image of Station



Elevations of Multi-Storey Car Park

