

## MEMBERS' UPDATE

### Planning Committee – 12 December 2018

Site Address: 8 Medway Close, Wokingham  
Application No: 182236, Pages 13 - 27

No update.

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Site Address: Land between Thames Valley Business Park and Napier Road Reading,  
South of the River Thames and north of the Great Western Main Line Railway  
Application No: 182892, Pages 55 - 116

#### **External statutory consultee comments**

**Thames Water:** No objection, provided informative.

#### **Comments received after the publication of the committee report.**

*Thames Valley Berkshire LEP*  
Support

- This scheme is included in the LEP's Growth Deals with central government and has been allocated £19,067,000 of Local Growth Funds (LGF); we understand the total scheme cost to be £23,867,000.
- The allocation of these funds is overseen by the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB), a formal Joint Committee of all six unitary authorities in Berkshire. In 2014 the LEP agreed for the BLTB to act as the competent body to a) prioritise and b) implement transport capital schemes on its behalf. The Body consists of six elected members and six private sector representatives, the latter recruited and appointed by the LEP. It oversees the work of independent assessors that scrutinise transport schemes in accordance with its DfT-approved Assurance Framework. The BLTB approved the full business case for East Reading MRT in November 2017 after the independent assessment concluded that the scheme offered high value for money, in line with DfT criteria...
- Now that the scheme is to be considered by the Wokingham Borough Council Planning Committee, I wanted to use the opportunity to make clear the LEP's support for the East Reading MRT scheme, which has been independently assessed to ensure value for public money and strategic impact. The fact that the scheme is jointly promoted by two authorities is also a key factor in it attracting such a significant amount of public funding.

*Reading Buses*  
Support

- The proposed scheme will provide substantial benefits for public transport by securing a dependable access route, with reliable journey times.
- Provide much needed capacity for public transport operators

- Will benefit existing and proposed park and ride services and our inter-urban buses services from Wokingham and Bracknell, as well as a proportion of other local bus services. Including services run by other operators,
- Potential for new routes and enhanced frequencies.
- The scheme would be well used.

*Reading and Wokingham Chamber of Commerce Thames Valley Group*

Support

- They aim to help shape, frame and deliver solutions to secure the economic prosperity of the local area and wider Thames Valley.
- Published a Policy Principles Statement, central to which is their commitment to advocate the strengthening of regional infrastructure networks.
- This will include providing greater business input into the East Reading Mass Rapid Transit project.

*Reading Business Growth and Skills Committee*

Support

- Need for serious improvements to public transport delivery across Reading.
- Infrastructure improvements is recognised by the Business Growth and Skills as key levers for sustained growth of Readings economy
- Proposal is long overdue, given regions continued growth in population and employment.

*Thames Valley Park Management Ltd*

Support

- The MRT is a key piece of highways infrastructure and supported at local policy level
- The delivery of the MRT is fundamental to the wider sustainable transport strategy for Reading and the Thames Valley
- Will see a significant reduction in length of time taken by the TVP shuttle bus which is delayed by traffic during peak periods and can act as a barrier to individuals using sustainable transport modes.
- The proposal would improve the reliability of the journeys and encourage bus use – this is a significant benefit to the existing businesses and occupiers of TVP.
- It will help attract new businesses and occupiers in the TVP
- Will improve access to TVP and Reading town centre for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Fundamental to economic growth in Wokingham, Reading and wider area
- Provides link to other key infrastructure improvements

*Microsoft*

Support

- Employs 5,000 people in the UK, with majority based in 5 buildings in Thames Valley Park.
- Many employees live in the surrounding area, but also commute including arriving by train.
- Very keen to support initiatives that further improve transport connections between the centre of Reading and the surrounding areas.
- Improving local transport routes will encourage employees to travel by means other than cars.

#### *Network Rail*

##### *Comment*

- Commercial agreement is required with regard to any proposal on their land.
- Suggest conditions/ informative that relate to impacts upon Network Rails land/ infrastructure rather than those material to planning.

**Officer comment: these comments have been forwarded to the agent.**

#### *Tesco*

##### *Objection:*

- Concern to impacts upon Tesco land (located in Reading) in terms of retail operation, future trading potential, or ability to access and develop land - as a result of adjustments to customer car park, details of construction impacts, re-establishment of landscaping, and highways issues, loss of land.

**Officer comments: these issues relate to commercial considerations on land within Reading and as such are not material considerations for the determination of this application**

#### *SOAR*

##### *Objection*

- Napier Road junction, Napier Road and Vastern Road are accident black spot for cyclists
- Area misrepresented as being dangerous and unsavoury by (Reading) Cllr Tony Page
- Claims that area has limited Ecological value/ wildlife are not true
- Under reporting of the number of trees felled
- The scheme is not segregated, as Napier Road does not have a dedicated bus lane

**Officer comments: these issues are addressed in the main report.**

#### **Additional parish comments**

Cllr Bill Luck

##### *Objection*

- The design of the bridge and viaduct are unsightly and little attention has been paid to minimising their impact when viewed from the river and the associated towpath.
- We believe these proposals do not meet the aims of NPPF Para 124... Whilst some amendments have been made to the previous scheme, these are in the main cosmetic and do not alter the mass or bulk of the proposals and their visual impact on the riverside
- environmental impact on the National Thames Path and the natural environment of the River Thames of the large concrete bridge and viaduct... do not accord with NPPF Para 130
- one of the amendments to the current application includes moving the route closer to the River Thames.
- Viaduct is too close to the river, just over 4m from the river bank
- concerned about the landscape impact and loss of wildlife habitat NPPF Para 170 that states the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains

**Officer comments: these issues are addressed in the main report.**

#### **Residential comments since the publication of the committee report.**

Objections; 3 Wokingham, 7 Reading, 2 other/unknown

The concerns raised have already been noted and addressed in the main report. The below details comments which require clarity;

- Money better spent on the Oracle car park displacement scheme or completion of the Green Park railway station. – **See Funding section of main report**
- If Early Town Council have objected, on what grounds would RBC override that output. **ETC comments are considerations in the determination of the application and have been taken into account in the main report.**
- Park and Ride can be better served by increasing parking at Winnersh Triangle and increasing rail services there – but SWR plans for this are on hold. **For information, the proposal forms part of a wider strategic transport plan that links public transport routes – see section...**
- We live right where the bridge will be built and will be forced to move **For clarity, the proposal is located to the north of the mainline railway, between the railway embankment and river. It is not located immediately adjacent to housing and no homes are proposed to be demolished.**

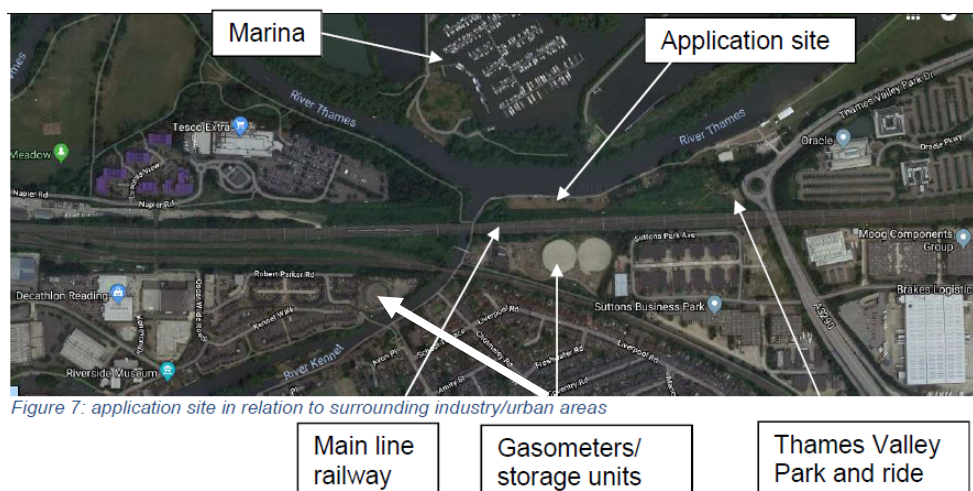
#### **Amendments/ clarifications to the officer report**

##### **Formatting corrections:**

2 formatting errors occurred on:

- Pages 88 and 89 of the published Agenda, where figure 5 was split over 2 pages;
- Page 92 of the published Agenda, where figure 7 had lost its annotations.

These are reproduced below. For clarity the arrow to the gasometer should also include the remaining gasometer indicated by the thick arrow.



#### CP10 - Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network

Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network will be provided to ameliorate major environmental or safety problems and to support new development in partnership with other authorities. The improvements to the strategic transport network are:

Improvement to Strategic transport network	Extent Improvement is part of Core Strategy			Funding		
	Sub-Regional <sup>55</sup>	Integral to Core Strategy	Adjacent authority strategy	National/regional funding	Apply for through LTP	S106 and WBC funds
10 – High quality express bus services or mass rapid transit along the A4 and A329 corridors		✓	✓			✓

Figure 5: Excerpt of policy CP10

Site Address: Kestrels, Scarletts Lane, Hare Hatch  
Application No182595, Pages 33 - 39

No update.

Pre-emptive site visits

**181499 - Land South of Cutbush Lane, Shinfield, RG2 9AG**

Full planning application for the erection of 249 dwellings, new public open space, landscaping, surface water attenuation, access and associated works at land to the south of Cutbush Lane Shinfield.

*Reason: To assess the impact upon the character of the area.*

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Non-householder appeal decisions

***To follow***