

Agenda

Planning and Regulatory Committee

Tuesday, 25 August 2015, 10.00 am
County Hall, Worcester

Notes:

Councillors are advised that letters of representation received from local residents in respect of the planning applications on this agenda will be available for inspection in the Member Support Unit 3 days before the Committee and in the meeting room from 9.30am on the day of the meeting

Planning Officers are available for up to 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting to enable Councillors and the public to ask questions about the applications to be considered. This is not a part of the meeting itself but is an informal opportunity for anyone present on the day to clarify factual details about the applications, examine background documents and view plans that are on display

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اردو۔ اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی مشمولات کو سمجھنے سے قاصر ہیں اور کسی ایسے شخص تک آپ کی رسائی نہیں ہے جو آپ کے لئے اس کا ترجمہ کر سکے تو، براہ کرم مدد کے لئے 01905 765765 پر رابطہ کریں۔ (Urdu)

كوردی سۆزانی. ننگەر نئاوانی تێبگی له ناوهرۆکی نهم بئێگیه و دستت به ههچ کس نئاگات که وهیگر نهمه بۆت، تکلیه تهلخون بکه بۆ ژمارهی 01905 765765 و داوای پێنوونی بکه. (Kurdish)

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮਸ਼ਹੂਰ ਸਮਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ, ਜੋ ਇਸਦਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰ ਸਕੇ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਮਦਦ ਲਈ 01905 765765 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ। (Punjabi)

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DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

Planning and Regulatory Committee
Tuesday, 25 August 2015, 10.00 am, County Hall, Worcester

Councillors: Mr R C Adams (Chairman), Mr A T Amos, Mrs S Askin, Mr J Baker, Mr PJ Bridle, Mr M H Broomfield, Mr S J M Clee, Mr P Denham (Vice Chairman), Mrs A T Hingley, Mr A P Miller, Mr D W Prodger, Mr A C Roberts and Mr R J Sutton

Agenda

Item No	Subject	Page No
1	Named Substitutes	
2	Apologies/Declarations of Interest	
3	Public Participation The Council has put in place arrangements which usually allow one speaker each on behalf of objectors, the applicant and supporters of applications to address the Committee. Speakers are chosen from those who have made written representations and expressed a desire to speak at the time an application is advertised. Where there are speakers, presentations are made as part of the consideration of each application.	
4	Confirmation of Minutes To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2015. (previously circulated – pink pages)	
5	Proposed development of a new rail station and associated infrastructure. The application comprises of new platforms on the Birmingham - Bristol railway line and one platform on the Cotswold railway line, a new station building, a public right of way footbridge over the Birmingham - Bristol railway line, car parking, flood attenuation and a new roundabout on the B4084 on land to the east and south of the Crucible Business Park, Norton, Worcester, Worcestershire	1 - 80

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email: slewis@worcestershire.gov.uk

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Date of Issue: Friday, 14 August 2015

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Planning and Regulatory Committee
25 August 2015

5. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW RAIL STATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE. THE APPLICATION COMPRISES OF NEW PLATFORMS ON THE BIRMINGHAM - BRISTOL RAILWAY LINE AND ONE PLATFORM ON THE COTSWOLD RAILWAY LINE, A NEW STATION BUILDING, A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY FOOTBRIDGE OVER THE BIRMINGHAM - BRISTOL RAILWAY LINE, CAR PARKING, FLOOD ATTENUATION AND A NEW ROUNDABOUT ON THE B4084 ON LAND TO THE EAST AND SOUTH OF THE CRUCIBLE BUSINESS PARK, NORTON, WORCESTER, WORCESTERSHIRE

Applicant

Worcestershire County Council

Local Councillor

Mr R C Adams

Purpose of Report

1. To consider a planning application under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 for a proposed development of a new rail station and associated infrastructure. The application comprises of new platforms on the Birmingham - Bristol railway line and one platform on the Cotswold railway line, a new station building, a Public Right of Way footbridge over the Birmingham - Bristol railway line, car parking, flood attenuation and a new roundabout on the B4084 on Land to the east and south of The Crucible Business Park, Norton, Worcester, Worcestershire.

The Proposal

2. The proposed development comprises the provision of a new railway station at the intersection of the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton railway line (Cotswold railway line) and the Birmingham and Bristol railway lines at Norton, near Worcester, Worcestershire.

3. In summary the proposed development would comprise of the following:

- A single platform on the north side of the Cotswold railway line
- Two platforms on the Birmingham and Bristol railway line
- A station building, including a staffed booking office,

toilets, retail space, real-time passenger information screens and cycle storage

- A means of shelter on the platforms for waiting passengers
- Platform and associated access route lighting
- CCTV, telecoms and station safety and security systems
- A 500 space car parking, including spaces for disabled users, accessed from a new roundabout on the Whittington Road (B4084)
- Replacement of the existing level crossing accommodating the Public Right of Way crossing between the Birmingham and Bristol line by the provision of a dedicated footbridge
- Station forecourt, encompassing a turning circle, bus stops, taxi rank, and a drop off area
- Upgrade of the Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-523) off Woodbury Lane to a 3 metre wide footway with cycle access; and a realigned route of the Public Right of Way through the application site
- Construction of a flood compensation area.

4. A Planning Statement; Design and Access Statement; Flood Risk Assessment; Transport Assessment; Travel Plan; Consultation Report; and Environmental Statement accompanies the planning application. The Environmental Statement covers socio-economic impacts; air quality; archaeology and cultural heritage; landscape and visual impacts; ecology and nature conservation; geology and soils; noise and vibration; water environment; transportation and access; and cumulative impacts.

Station Building and Platform Bridges

5. The proposed station building would measure approximately 350 square metres in area. The station building would comprise of two flat living green roof rectangular single storey buildings divided by a booking hall that would house the ticket gate line, with a transparent roof connecting the two buildings. The flat roof buildings would be steel frame buildings would measure approximately 17 metres long by 15 metres wide by 4 metres high and 17 metres long by 5 metres wide by 4 metres high. The intervening covered ticket gate line area including the interchange bridge would measure about 39 metres long by 12 metres wide by 13.5 metres high. The smaller of the two station buildings would include a retail space (measuring approximately 25 square metres), public toilets, storage and a staff area. The larger of the station buildings would include a staff area, ticket office and associated facilities including a kitchen and staff toilets, plant areas, storage areas, cycle storage, and lockers.

6. Passengers would pass through this building to an enclosed atrium measuring about 350 square metres in area and would include public circulation, stairs, a lift and interchange bridge. On passing through the ticket gate lines passengers would enter a hallway leading to stairs to the

Cotswold line on their left hand side and an interchange bridge access for the Birmingham and Bristol line on their right hand side. Two lifts are proposed as part of the application, one would be located within the station building providing access to the overbridges, and the other lift would be located on the opposite side of the Birmingham and Bristol line to the interchange bridge.

Platforms

7. Two platforms are proposed to serve the Birmingham and Bristol railway lines (up and down line provision). The western platform would be a minimum length of 282 metres and the eastern platform would measure a minimum length of 265 metres, both platforms would measure about 3.6 metres wide.

8. A single platform would serve the Cotswold railway line (bi-directional single line) measuring a minimum of 265 metres long by 3.6 metres wide. The proposed platform would be constructed on the north side of the existing railway line.

Station Forecourt

9. The proposed station forecourt would measure about 1,500 square metres and would provide pedestrian links from the proposed car park, drop off area, bus and taxi loops to the station building. The forecourt would include public seating, landscaping, and provide a space for public artwork.

Car Park

10. A 500 space landscaped car park is proposed to serve the new railway station with an approach (internal access road) shared with buses, taxis and those dropping passengers at the station. The parking area would be located in the northern part of the application site and would measure approximately 1.36 hectares in area. Parking for disabled users would be provided in a separate area, in the south-west corner of the site, immediately to the north and adjacent to the proposed station building. There would be approximately 28 spaces for disabled users, 3 of which would be for use by Network Rail. The applicant has confirmed that electric car charging points would be incorporated into the overall car parking provision where feasible, as part of 'future proofing' the development.

Access

11. Access to the proposed station would be via a new three arm roundabout on the B4084, with realigned approach roads from the north and south of the B4084. A new culvert, located south of the proposed roundabout is required to maintain the route of the existing unnamed ordinary watercourse that crosses the site and beneath the B4084. The application includes the provision for a taxi rank, bus stop, dedicated bus lane and a drop off area. The applicant states that the aim is provide sheltered and accessible bus stops with seating as close as possible to the proposed station building.

12. Additional access would be provided for Network Rail personnel in order for them to maintain their assets along the southern boundary of the application site, adjacent to the Cotswold railway line, as well as allowing access along the upgraded Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-523) from Woodbury Lane.

Public Right of Way Footbridge

13. Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-523) runs from Woodbury Lane, across the Birmingham and Bristol railway line via a level crossing and joins Footpath NJ-524, which runs west to east through the centre of the application site. The applicant is proposing to upgrade Footpath NJ-523 to a combined cycle and pedestrian access measuring approximately 3 metres wide, with a gravelled surface. The applicant is also proposing to close the existing level crossing on safety grounds and construct a new footbridge to accommodate this Public Right of Way. The Footpath NJ-524 would be realigned running along the southern part of the site to provide a safe pedestrian route minimising the interface with car parking areas and internal site roads. This Footpath would measure approximately 2 metres wide and would be constructed using a Hexapath or equivalent, which is similar to grasscrete.

14. The proposed Public Right of Way footbridge would provide pedestrian access across the Birmingham and Bristol line for both users of the Public Rights of Way and for passengers to access the station building from Woodbury Lane. Access on both sides of the footbridge would be by means of stairs only. The vertical clearance of the proposed bridge above the railway line would be approximately 6.3 metres to accommodate any future installation of overhead line equipment to electrify the track. The bridge deck would have a pedestrian parapet, which would measure approximately 1.8 metres high, with solid infill panels. The stairs and landing would have guardrails measuring approximately 1 metre high, with solid infill panels. The applicant proposes that the colour of the bridge could be agreed by condition.

15. Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-548) currently joins Footpath NJ-524 on the eastern side of the B4084. The applicant proposes a minor realignment of the footpath due to the location of required safety barriers adjacent to the proposed roundabout.

Drainage and Flood Storage Areas

16. A flood mitigation area is proposed in the south of the application site, enclosed by the unnamed ordinary watercourse to the north, the Cotswold line to the south and the B4084 to the east. This area would be designed to flood and store water during flood events. Within the development area, the ground levels would be raised by about 0.6 metres above the 100 year flood level, sloping to meet the existing ground levels by the adjacent residential property of the

Follies. The ground earthworks would use a cut and fill approach (i.e. excavated material would be used on site for land raising or infilling).

17. Drainage attenuation for the proposed building and forecourt would be via the combination of a living green roof and belowground geo-cellular storage units, which would store water in times of heavy rainfall. The proposed car park would be constructed with permeable parking bays and impermeable trafficked areas and underground drainage. A proposed attenuation pond with maintenance access is proposed to the east of the roundabout in order to restrict surface water discharge to match the existing outfall.

Lighting

18. Lighting of the platforms would be in accordance with the relevant standards set by Network Rail. The applicant anticipates that lighting columns would be between 5 and 6 metres tall above the platform surface at a 12 metres spacing, however this would be confirmed during the detailed design. As with the car park lighting, environmental requirements (such as hoods and using LEDS to minimise light spillage) would be incorporated into the final design. Lighting for the public highway, drop off areas, car parking and the proposed cycle route from Woodbury Lane would be provided in compliance with the recommendations of BS 5489 1:2013 Code of practice for the design of road lighting.

Cycle Storage

19. Cycle storage is proposed in two locations within the application site. Firstly, 25 cycle spaces are proposed within the station building, and secondly, up to 20 cycle spaces are proposed within a cycle shelter to be located on the western side of the Birmingham and Bristol railway line, near to the upgraded Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-523) from Woodbury Lane.

Construction Programme

20. The applicant anticipates that, should planning permission be granted, construction works would commence in Spring 2016 and would take approximately 13 months to complete, with the Parkway Station opening to passengers in 2017.

The Site

21. The application site, is approximately 7.5 hectares in area, and comprises agricultural land, primarily used for arable crops; an area of land south of the existing industrial units on the Crucible Business Park; and part of the B4084. The site is located approximately 6 kilometres south-east of the centre of the city of Worcester. The villages of Norton and Littleworth are situated about 1 kilometre west and 785 metres south-west of the application site, respectively. Junction 7 of the M5 Motorway is located about 1.8 kilometres north-west of the proposal. The proposed development is situated within a triangular shaped area of land, which is formed by the intersection of the Cotswold railway line to the south, and Birmingham and Bristol) railway

lines to the west, and Whittington Road (B4084) to the east.

22. The site is predominately flat, rising up to the Follies by about 3 metres, with an unnamed ordinary watercourse, a tributary of the Bow Brook catchment, running from the south-west to the east through the site. This watercourse flows underneath the Cotswold railway line embankment and B4084. The watercourse is lined with mature hedgerows, which also form field boundaries within the site. There is also a short watercourse running from the western boundary into the centre of the site, which is a culverted watercourse, originating from the attenuation pools serving the Crucible Business Park. The application site is located within Flood Zone 3.

23. An agricultural building is located within the eastern side of the application site. The Cotswold line embankment runs in a mainly east-west direction and crosses over the Birmingham and Bristol lines at the western side of the application site on a high level bridge. The embankment is steep sided, approximately 6 metres high and is well vegetated. The Birmingham and Bristol lines are on a lower and shallower embankment, which is less densely vegetated and includes an unmanned pedestrian crossing, over which the Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-523) runs. The site is crossed west to east by a Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-524), which joins to Footpath NJ-548, which runs eastwards away from the B4084. Footpath NJ-545 runs along the western boundary of the site, parallel to the Birmingham and Bristol line. The National Cycle Network (Route 442) is located approximately 1.3 kilometres south-west of the application site, running along Station Road (C2209), beyond which is National Cycle Network (Route 45), which is located about 1.5 kilometres south-west of the application site, running along Hatfield Bank.

24. The site is surrounded by arable fields to the north, east and south, and by the Crucible Business Park, located alongside and west of the Birmingham and Bristol railway lines to the north-west of the application site. A range of businesses and uses are situated within the Business Park, this includes indoor go-karting, waste recycling (EnviroSort Materials Recycling Facility), metal product distribution and offices. Wychavon District Council Planning Permission Ref: W/11/01436/PN, dated 14 October 2011 for 7 portal framed industrial/warehouse units has commenced development and is located at the rear of the Crucible Business Park, on the western side of the Birmingham and Bristol railway line and adjacent to Footpath NJ-523.

25. The Cooksholme Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located about 180 metres south-west of the site. The Bow, Shell, Swan and Seeley Brooks Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is situated about 710 metres east of the development site. The Botany Bay Meadow LWS and Spetchley Deer Park & Plantation Meadows LWS and associated historic park and gardens are situated

approximately 925 metres and 1.3 kilometres north-east of the application site, respectively. Kempsey and Stonehall Commons LWS is situated about 1.7 kilometres south-west of the proposal. Norton Brickpits LWS and Crookbarrow Hill LWS are situated approximately 1.6 kilometres west and 2 kilometres north-west of the proposed development. The Grade II Listed Buildings of Crooksholme Farmhouse and Pound House Farmhouse are located about 905 metres south-west and 1 kilometre west of the proposal, respectively.

26. The nearest residential property is that of 'The Follies' situated immediately to the north of the application site, within the triangle of land formed by the B4084, Cotswold line and Birmingham and Bristol line. Further residential properties are located along Woodbury Park and Woodbury Lane, situated approximately 85 metres and 200 metres north and west of the application site, respectively, and over 300 metres from the proposed railway station building. Sanghoi Cottage and Norton Fields Farm are located about 220 metres north and 130 metres north-east of the proposal, respectively. Woodbury Holding is located about 380 metres south-west of the proposal. The village of Norton and the village of Littleworth are situated about 1 kilometre west and 785 metres south-west of the application site, respectively. The village of Stoulton is located approximately 1.1 kilometres south-east of the proposal and the village of Whittington is situated about 2 kilometres north-west of the application site.

Summary of Issues

27. The main issues in the determination of this application are:

- Justification for the proposal
- Location of the development
- Alternatives
- Economic Impact
- Impact on other railway stations
- Traffic, highway safety and impacts upon the Public Rights of Way
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Landscape character and visual impact
- Residential amenity
- Noise and Vibration
- Air Quality
- Contaminated Land, and
- The Water Environment.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

28. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published and came into effect on 27 March 2012. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision takers and is a material planning consideration in determining planning applications. Annex 3 of the NPPF lists the documents revoked and replaced by the NPPF. At the

heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through plan-making and decision-taking.

29. Sustainable Development is defined by five principles set out in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy:

- "living within the planet's environmental limits;
- ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
- achieving a sustainable economy;
- promoting good governance; and
- using sound science responsibly".

30. The Government believes that sustainable development can play three critical roles in England:

- an economic role, contributing to a strong, responsive, competitive economy
- a social role, supporting vibrant and healthy communities and
- an environmental role, protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

31. The following guidance contained in the NPPF is considered to be of specific relevance to the determination of this planning application:

- Section 1: Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 4: Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 7: Requiring good design
- Section 8: Promoting healthy communities
- Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The Development Plan

32. The Development Plan is the strategic framework that guides land use planning for the area. In this respect the current Development Plan consists of the Adopted Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy and Saved Policies of the Adopted Wychavon District Local Plan.

33. Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

34. Annex 1 of the NPPF states that for the purposes of decision-taking, the policies in the Local Plan should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the NPPF. However, the policies contained within the NPPF are material considerations. For 12 months from the day of publication, decision-takers may

continue to give full weight to relevant policies adopted since 2004 even if there is a limited degree of conflict with the NPPF. In other cases and following this 12-month period, due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy Development Plan Document (WCS)

Policy WCS 16: New development proposed on or near to existing waste management facilities

Policy WCS 17: Making provision for waste in all new development

Wychavon District Local Plan (Saved Policies)

Policy GD1 Location Strategy for New Development

Policy GD2 General Development Control

Policy GD3 Planning Obligations

Policy SR5 Minimising Car Dependency

Policy SR6 Safeguarded Land for Transport Infrastructure

Policy ENV1 Landscape Character

Policy ENV4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Policy ENV5 Sites of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance

Policy ENV6 Protected Species

Policy ENV7 Protection of Wider Biodiversity

Policy ENV8 Protection of Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland

Policy ENV17 Development in Areas of High Flood Risk

Policy ENV19 Surface Water Run-Off

Policy SUR1 Built Design

Policy SUR2 Landscape Design

Policy SUR3 Parking Provision

Policy ECON1 Protection of Existing Employment Land

Draft Planning Policy

Draft South Worcestershire Development Plan

35. The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) is being prepared jointly by the three local authorities and communities of Malvern Hills, Wychavon and Worcester City. The plan considers the long-term visions and objectives for South Worcestershire.

36. On 28 May 2013 the SWDP was submitted to the Secretary of State. The Examination in Public on Phase 1 took place on 1-3 October 2013 and the publication of the Inspectors interim findings was published on 30 October 2013. The Inspector's interim conclusions on Phase 1 asked the three councils involved in compiling the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) to look again at the figures they prepared on the number of homes needed in the area by 2030 and do more work on the technical evidence used to establish how many homes the area will need. An additional hearing took place on 13-14 March 2014 following new evidence submitted by the three councils. The Inspector's interim conclusions dated 31 March 2014 on Phase 1 provide a full, objectively assessed need for housing over the plan period for South Worcestershire of 28,370 dwellings.

37. Following the Inspector's interim conclusions, the three South Worcestershire Councils agreed at their meetings held on 30 September 2014 to undertake formal consultation (between 6 October and 17 November 2014) into the proposed uplift in housing numbers in the SWDP. The Phase 2 hearings took place in February, April and May 2015, relating to SWDP Policies 1 to 7 and Strategic Sites, Development Management Policies, and Proposed Sites in the Main Town and Villages, respectively.

38. Following the discussions during the examination hearing on 9 April the Councils submitted copies of revised housing trajectories to the examination. It had become clear that there was a need for further amendments to the housing trajectories. As a result, the Inspector decided to hold a further procedural session on the trajectories on 3 June. In addition, a further hearing session was held on 17 June 2015 to discuss formal sports pitches/courts.

39. The Examination formally remains open until the Inspector issues his binding report and it is possible that further hearings could be held if the Inspector chooses to do so. In the circumstances the SWDP cannot yet be declared sound and cannot be adopted. It is not yet, therefore, part of the development plan. Having regard to the advice in the NPPF, Annex 1, it is the view of the Planning Development Control Manager, that little weight will be attached to the SWDP in the determination of this application. The draft SWDP policies that are relevant to the proposal are listed below:

Policy SWDP 1 Overarching Sustainable Development Principles

Policy SWDP 2 Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

Policy SWDP 4 Moving Around South Worcestershire

Policy SWDP 5 Green Infrastructure

Policy SWDP 6 Historic Environment

Policy SWDP 7 Infrastructure

Policy SWDP 21 Design

Policy SWDP 22 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy SWDP 24 Management of the Historic Environment

Policy SWDP 25 Landscape Character

Policy SWDP 28 Management of Flood Risk

Policy SWDP 29 Sustainable Drainage Systems

Policy SWDP 30 Water Resources, Efficiency and Treatment

Policy SWDP 31 Pollution and Land Instability

Policy SWDP 32 Minerals

Policy SWDP 33 Waste

Other Documents

Wychavon District Council's Developer Contributions Towards Service Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance (2003)

40. The provision of the necessary infrastructure to serve new development is an essential objective of the development process. This Supplementary Planning

Guidance assists developers in terms of what contributions are normally required in relation to service infrastructure.

41. Of particular relevance to this proposal is that of the Highway Infrastructure Section, which states that where the capacity of the existing network is inadequate or the increased use arising from the development will give rise to safety concerns, developers will have to provide or fund the necessary new or improved off-site infrastructure.

Wychavon District Council's Planning and Wildlife Supplementary Planning Document (2008)

42. The main objectives of this Supplementary Planning Document are to conserve, restore and enhance biological diversity; to provide guidance for developers, planners and members of the public on how to take account of and incorporate biodiversity issues into developments; to protect and improve wildlife corridors and stepping stones; to safeguard protected and priority species and habitats; and to promote the benefits of biodiversity.

Wychavon District Council's Water Management Supplementary Planning Document (2009)

43. The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Document is to set out a commitment to minimising flood risk, managing surface water and achieving sustainable drainage principles in new and development whilst ensuring that the reuse, recycling of water, water supply and quality are given priority.

Worcestershire Partnership's Single Sustainable Community Strategy for Worcestershire for 2011 to 2021

44. The Single Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the strategic vision for Worcestershire and focuses activity on what is needed in the short-term to improve the quality of life of people who live, visit or work in Worcestershire. It sets three priorities for Worcestershire, which includes 'a skilled and prosperous economy', within this priority is a commitment to work with partners to secure improvements to the rail network to enable better access for businesses.

Worcestershire County Council's Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2013-2018

45. Green Infrastructure is the planned and managed network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages. Green Infrastructure comprises many different elements including biodiversity, the landscape, the historic environment, the water environment (also known as blue infrastructure) and publicly accessible green spaces and informal recreation sites.

46. The Green Infrastructure Strategy is a non-statutory county-wide guidance document which aims to direct and drive the delivery of Green Infrastructure in Worcestershire; and inform relevant strategies and plans of partner organisations over the next five years. The Strategy contains high-level priorities which should be explored in more detail

at the local and site level.

Worcestershire County Council's Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3)

47. The Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) was adopted in February 2011. The plan focuses on attracting and supporting economic investment and growth, by delivering transport infrastructure and services to tackle congestion and improve the quality of life.

48. Table 1.3 of the LTP3 identifies a number of economically focussed aims, together with the LTP3 policies which would enable each aim to be realised. Under the aim 'to improve accessibility by all modes', is reference to promoting further rail parkway stations and rail facilities to maximise the amount of workers and visitors, including shoppers and tourists that can access Worcestershire's constrained urban areas without increasing congestion and journey times and thereby controlling transport costs and supporting improved economic performance.

49. The LTP3 identifies a number of major schemes, which would involve substantial investment in transport infrastructure and services and are designed to deliver commensurately large benefits to Worcestershire's economy, environment and quality of life. Worcestershire Parkway is identified as a major scheme.

50. The Worcestershire LTP3 is made up of a number of documents, which include transport policies and plans. It is considered the Traffic Management and Parking Policy is particularly relevant to the consideration of this application.

Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) Business Plan 2012

51. This sets out the WLEP vision, which is to "*create the right economic environment to inspire businesses, encourage investment and to create lasting and sustainable employment in Worcestershire by 2017 and beyond*". It also sets their key measures of success; their role; funding sources; and strategic objectives, which includes 'Objective 4: Planning, Development and Infrastructure'.

52. Objective 4 states that "*transportation through the movement of goods and people creates opportunities to trade and create economic growth. This connectivity and good infrastructure is essential to maximize Worcestershire's potential and to create a competitive environment*". The list of key projects includes the development of the Worcestershire Parkway railway station.

Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership's World Class Worcestershire Our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)

53. The Strategic Economic Plan's (SEP) vision and strategic framework is to ensure that Worcestershire's economy grows even more rapidly and makes an

increasingly important contribution to the national economy. The SEP aims to grow the local economy by 2025 by generating over 250,000 jobs and to increase GVA by £2.9 billion.

54. The SEP sets three objectives:

- Create a World Class business location
- Provide individuals with World Class Skills, and
- Develop World Class competitive and innovative business.

55. The SEP sets out integrated programme areas, which comprise prioritised projects and initiatives to meet these objectives. Transport Investment Programme is an initiative identified within the SEP to meet the objective of 'create a World Class business location'. The SEP recognises that additional investment in Worcestershire's transport infrastructure and services is essential to provide business with improved access to markets and employees and to encourage economic growth. The SEP states that transport investment will be targeted to unlock the potential of key employment and housing sites to support the overall growth vision. Within the Transport Investment Programme initiative priority projects are set out. Short-term priority projects for 2016/17 include the Worcestershire Parkway Station. The SEP identifies the Worcestershire Parkway Station, (together with Hoobrook Link Road and Worcester Southern Link Road) as one of three major schemes for funding for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19.

Consultations

56. Wychavon District Council - supports the proposal, subject to the following comments:

- There are no outstanding objections from statutory consultees
- Improvements to the B4084 in respect to combined cycle and pedestrian facilities are considered
- Regard is given to the existing flooding of Woodbury Lane
- That appropriate art work is considered through a sponsored competition
- A liaison group made up of local representatives, including the Parish Councils and District Council is set up for the duration of the construction works and for a two year period following the operation of the scheme, and
- The 40mph speed restriction on the B4084 is extended beyond the new roundabout.

57. Worcester City Council (Neighbouring District Council) supports the proposal subject to the following comments:

- Improvements to the B4084 in respect to combined cycle and pedestrian facilities are considered
- Regard is given to the existing flooding of Woodbury

Lane

- That appropriate art work is considered through a sponsored competition
- A liaison group made up of local representatives, including proportionate representation from Worcester City Council, Wychavon District Council and the Parish Councils is set up for the duration of the construction works and for a two year period following the operation of the scheme, and
- The 40mph speed restriction on the B4084 is extended beyond the new roundabout.

58. Malvern Hills District Council (Neighbouring District Council) fully supports the principle of proposal, referring to the benefits outlined within the SEP. It considers that the provision of 500 car parking spaces would help to encourage potential car users to utilise train travel, a sustainable transport mode, which would support the overall objectives of the NPPF and local development plans.

59. It considers the design of the development offers a high quality contemporary response to the site. The use of materials represents the contemporary nature of the development while respecting the surrounding character. They request that they are re-consulted on any future design changes.

60. Overall, it considers the visual impact of the proposal on the Malvern Hills District would be limited. However, the facility would undoubtedly improve public access to the national railway network and in turn support economic growth within Malvern Hills District and beyond.

61. Norton Juxta Kempsey Parish Council supports the proposal in principle, but considers that there are three main areas that have not being adequately addressed in the submission.

62. Firstly, it is recommended that a more co-ordinated, holistic view is taken regarding traffic flow along Woodbury Lane and the village of Norton. As the application fails to take account of the traffic flow from the South Worcestershire Development Plan together with the Worcestershire Parkway Station.

63. Secondly, is the issue of pedestrian and cycle access to the proposed railway station. The main pedestrian and cycle access emerges on Woodbury Lane, which in the direction of St Peter's, Worcester is a narrow stretch of road, without pavement, and with blind bends. Furthermore, recent speed monitoring along Church Lane by the Safer Roads Partnership indicates that speeds are excessive, and hence traffic calming measures may be appropriate.

64. Thirdly, is the issue of flooding along Woodbury Lane, making it impassable.

65. Consequently, the Parish Council recommend the imposition of conditions regarding the implementation of traffic calming measures; measures to discourage users of the railway station parking along Woodbury Lane; construction travel plan, prohibiting construction traffic along Woodbury Lane.

66. Finally, the Parish Council supports the proposed sculpture or public art work at the railway station.

67. Whittington Parish Council (Neighbouring Parish Council) has no objections, commenting that the Parish Council would like to see an increase of traffic and speed management and parking enforcement, and a reduction of the speed limit in the residential areas in Norton. It would also like to see the County Highways Department and the Safer Road Partnership being more proactive in the preservation of the rural area that surrounds the proposal.

68. Drakes Broughton and Wadborough Parish Council (Neighbouring Parish Council) supports the proposal in principle, however, concerns are raised regarding the impact of the proposal on local communities and the road network, particularly local roads being used as rat-runs, including Stonebow Road.

69. Stoulton Parish Council (Neighbouring Parish Council) supports the proposal, but considers further consideration should be given to improving the safety and sustainability of the proposal. In particular the Parish Council request consideration is given to additional signage and speed restriction measures along the B4084 through Stoulton. It is considered that whilst much is made of cycle access in the planning application submission, the changes being proposed are very modest and entirely focused towards the residents of Worcester. The road connecting Mucknall Abbey to the B4084 should be re-routed to join the proposed new roundabout. This junction near to the highway bridge over the railway line is already awkward and with the addition of the new station it would become a dangerous exit.

70. Kempsey Parish Council (Neighbouring Parish Council) has no objections, but raises major concerns regarding access from Kempsey and the villages and hamlets south and east of Worcester. The Parish Council considers that the lanes, particularly Brookend Lane in Kempsey and Norton Road, Broomhall will be even more heavily used as a rat-run between the A38 and the proposed development. This would cause considerable inconvenience to the residents along these lanes as well as presenting significant traffic safety concerns. It requests the applicant examines measures in which traffic can be controlled and/or regulated before the proposal and South Worcester Urban Extension are developed.

71. Public Health England wishes to make no comments.

72. Environment Agency has no objections, stating that it has reviewed the Flood Risk Assessment. The modelling identifies that the application site is at risk of flooding. The proposal involves the raising of levels to ensure that the proposed railway station and associated infrastructure is free from flood risk. The raising of the levels and subsequent impingement on the flood plain is offset by the flood compensation areas and would ensure flood risk to and from the site is acceptable. Mitigation to protect the culverts in the area from blockage should be in place to ensure they are maintained accordingly.

73. The alterations to the watercourse would require the formal consent of the Lead Local Food Authority. It welcomes the commitment to provide habitat improvement and a comprehensive sustainable drainage scheme. Both measures should contribute to, and ensure no deterioration of Water Framework Directive targets of downstream watercourses.

74. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has no objections, subject to the imposition of conditions regarding detailed design and management and maintenance plan for surface water drainage and their completion prior to the occupancy of the station building; details of the range of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) components to be used; methods for the protection of SuDs and Green Infrastructure during each phase of construction; and details of phasing arrangements to ensure flows along the ordinary watercourse and Stoulton Brook do not increase until the flood mitigation and SuDs features are operational.

75. The LLFA are satisfied with the flood modelling and key principles of the drainage and flood mitigation design. It welcomes the inclusion of SuDS within the proposal, and the proposed methods of rainwater capture and harvest are to be commended. It also welcomes the reference to the Water Framework Directive and the status of the receiving watercourse catchments of the Stoulton and Bow Brooks and proposals for pollution control measures.

76. South Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership has made no comments.

77. Severn Trent Water Limited has no objections to the proposal, subject to the imposition of a pre-commencement condition requiring details of foul and surface water drainage.

78. Worcestershire Regulatory Services has no objections, subject to the imposition of conditions requesting a Construction Environmental Management Plan; provision of secure cycle parking; electric car charging points shall be installed at 5% of the allocated parking spaces; and a two part condition relating to contaminated land.

79. Worcestershire Wildlife Trust has no objections, subject to the imposition of conditions requiring a

Construction Environment Management Plan; and long-term habitat management plan; lighting plan; and the drainage strategy should be designed to maximise biodiversity benefit wherever possible. It considers that sufficient ecological information has been submitted for the County Planning Authority to determine the application in line with guidance and the law. It supports the recommended ecological mitigation measures and considers that the proposed mitigation would be adequate and acceptable in terms of the legislative framework and that there should be opportunities for biodiversity enhancement in line with the NPPF.

80. Natural England has no objections, stating that the proposal is located within 200 metres of the Cooksholme Meadow SSSI and within 5 kilometres of the Great Blaythorn Meadow SSSI, River Teme SSSI and Napleton Meadow SSSI. Natural England is satisfied that the proposal being carried out in accordance with the application submission would not damage or destroy the interest features for which the sites have been notified.

81. Natural England would expect the County Planning Authority to assess and consider the other possible impacts resulting from the proposal on local biodiversity and geodiversity sites, local landscape character and local or national biodiversity priority habitat and species.

82. Finally, Natural England confirms that they have not assessed the impact of the proposal on protected species. Notwithstanding this, they note that monitoring of Great Crested Newts has been discussed with the applicant, and there is considered to be no operational effect. It refers the County Planning Authority to their Standing Advice on protected species.

83. The County Ecologist has no objections, and welcomes the opportunities for the provision and enhancement of Green Infrastructure and the protection of and potential enhancement of biodiversity resources. They recommend the imposition of conditions regarding a comprehensive Ecological Management Plan and a Construction and Environment Management Plan, which includes Great Crested Newts Reasonable Avoidance Measures, Reptile Mitigation Strategy, monitoring strategy, and dust control measures; the re-inspection of identified trees with the potential, albeit minor for bat roosts prior to felling; and should development not commence within 12 months the ecological measures should be reviewed.

84. The County Ecologist states that the County Planning Authority must consider the three tests in Regulation 53 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) before determining this application. Their view is that an ecologist must be limited to offering advice on the second and third tests relating to satisfactory alternatives which deliver less or no impact to the European Protected Species in question, and the matter of Favourable

Conservation Status. The judgement on the first test (overriding public interest) must be wholly made by the Planning Officer. To pass this test there must be a high degree of need for the development which would result in beneficial results to the local area that are likely to be in accordance with local planning policy requirement(s).

85. In summary, the County Ecologist considers it is possible to give consent to the application in accordance with the planning authority's obligations of Regulation 53 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations.

86. The County Landscape Officer has no objections to the proposal, subject to the following:

- A detailed planting scheme should be imposed as a condition
- Details should be provided of the ponds designs, detailed outfall design and any watercourse profile changes
- The culvert under the B4084 should have a mammal ledge
- Further consideration needs to be given to the design of the proposed footbridge across the Birmingham and Bristol line, to minimise its visual impact
- Further consideration needs to be given to mitigation screening of the proposed platform supports along the Cotswold line, and
- Recommends the use of baffles to minimise any light pollution and considers the County Ecologist should be consulted with regards to the lighting scheme.

87. The County Council Emergency Planning has no objections.

88. The County Archaeologist has no objections, stating the application site has been subject to a number of archaeological assessments to determine the nature of any remains or deposits of significance present within the development area. To date this fieldwork has concluded that no such remains occur and that the impact on the historic environment caused by this proposal is low.

89. Earth Heritage Trust has no objections, confirming that there are no designated geological sites likely to be affected by this proposal. If, however, during construction any rock exposure is uncovered, the Earth Heritage Trust request to be notified so that they can arrange to visit the site and record the features.

90. Network Rail has no objections in principle, subject to the erection of a suitable trespass proof fence adjacent to Network Rail's boundary. All buildings should be sited at least 2 metres from the boundary fence. Where vibro-compaction/displacement piling plant is used in the construction of the proposal, details of the use of such machinery and a method statement are required. All

excavations/earthworks carried out in the vicinity of Network Rail's property or structures must be designed and carried out in such a way as not to interfere with the integrity of the property or structure. If temporary site compounds are to be located adjacent to the operational railway, a method statement is required. It is recommended that no trees are planted closer than 1.5 times their mature height to the boundary fence. Any scaffold which is to be constructed adjacent to the railway must be erected in such a manner as to ensure that at no time will any poles or cranes over-sail or fall onto the railway. Any lighting associated with the proposal (including vehicle lights) must not interfere with the sighting of signalling apparatus and/or train drivers vision on approaching trains.

91. Network Rail also states that the applicant should contact Network Rail and enter into a Basic Assets Protection Agreement before works commence. With regards to foundations, Network Rail offers no right of support to the development. Additional or increased flows of surface water should not be discharged onto Network Rail's land or into Network Rail's culverts or drains. All roads, paths or way providing access to any part of the railway undertaker's land shall be kept open at all times during and after the proposed development.

92. First Great Western supports the proposal in principle, subject to the station design facilitating the redoubling of the Cotswold line; that the full design including the second platform and the access to it is included within the current planning application; and a commitment from the applicant to provide a second platform and the associated access in due course.

93. It acknowledges that a new railway station would attract new passengers to the Cotswold line, capturing growth from the greater Worcester area, provided it is added to the rail network in a way that is sensitive to the timetable and performance impacts.

94. First Great Western consider it is important that the proposed station is added to the rail network in such a way that does not create performance and timetable risk, or affect other rail infrastructure priorities. First Great Western considers the best mitigation against this would be the provision of a second platform and track through the proposed station. This would provide resilience to the network, reducing the impact of delays, and manage the timetable impacts. However, it notes that this approach cannot be achieved from the outset. Therefore, it is essential that the design of the proposal enables this future option.

95. First Great Western also state that they are working with Worcestershire County Council and Oxfordshire County Council to promote the redoubling of the Cotswold line.

96. Highways England (formally Highways Agency) has

no objections, and directs the imposition of a condition requiring a Construction Traffic Management Plan and an appropriate legal agreement being entered into requiring a detailed road signage strategy on the M5 Motorway and Junction 7 of the M5 Motorway to be developed in consultation with Highways England and implemented in full.

97. It considers that the traffic impact of the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on the operation of the Strategic Road Network. However, due to the nature of the proposal and sensitivity of its location near to Junction 7 of the M5 Motorway, a detailed road signage strategy is required.

98. Highways England is also concerned about the management of construction traffic. This matter is of particular concern due to the proximity of the proposal to the M5 Motorway, but also due to the potential issues of the timing of the construction of the proposed development coinciding with nearby works to provide local and strategic highway network improvements. Therefore, an agreement in consultation with Highways England, of a suitable Construction Management Traffic Plan is required.

99. The County Highways Officer has no objections, subject to the imposition of conditions regarding the construction of the access including the roundabout, turning areas and parking facilities; engineering details and specification of the proposed roads and highway drains; a Construction Environmental Management Plan detailing measures to prevent mud on the road and the location of site operate parking areas, material storage areas and site operatives facilities. They also state that they have assessed the application submission together with the relevant letters of representation and comments from consultees.

100. With regards to the concerns over fears of significant traffic increases in Norton and Wadborough. This is addressed within the submitted Transport Assessment, which confirms that the traffic difference (with and without the scheme) is estimated to be very little difference, however, to allay the concerns of local residents, the traffic calming scheme planned as part of the South Worcester Urban Extension could be extended into the village to further discourage motorists from using this route.

101. The County Highways Officer is satisfied that the proposed access and associated layout for highways, including cycling provision is considered appropriate for the development proposed.

102. County Council Transport Project Officer (Travel Plan Coordinator) has no objections, subject to the Travel Plan including a measure to promote the station and sustainable business travel to employers in the area; and the bus stop on site should include real-time information for passengers.

103. The County Street Lighting Engineer has no objections, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring a detailed lighting scheme. They state that the proposed highway lighting appears to be indicative. The extents of the lighting and the type of equipment used seem reasonable and in the areas which would be expected, however, further detailed design and a formal lighting scheme is required. The extent of lighting to areas adjacent to the highway and site car park seems to be acceptable in general, but again the detailed lighting design is required. If there are any particular areas of ecological and environmental concern, these should be addressed as part of a detailed lighting scheme.

104. The County Footpath Officer has no objections, stating that Footpaths NJ-523 and 524 are both affected by the proposed station complex and a public path diversion order, which will be made by the County Council in due course, is required to maintain public access across the site.

105. The Ramblers Association has no objections in principle, and considers that whilst this proposal would have a significant impact upon Footpaths NJ-523, NJ-524, NJ-545 and NJ-548 they consider the proposal is beneficial to walkers' ability to enjoy the countryside. It also accepts this is necessary for the Public Rights of Way network to be modified to accommodate the proposed development. It considers the proposed footpath arrangements are in most respects acceptable. However, it recommends the following amendments:

- With regards to Footpath NJ-523 they are glad to see that this will continue to cross the railway line and welcome the fact that a footbridge is to be provided rather than a level crossing as at present. However, the bridge would present a formidable problem for less abled users
- They request the imposition of a condition to ensure that the Public Right of Way bridge is constructed and made available for use within a reasonable time period
- They consider that the pedestrian and cycle access from Woodbury Lane (Footpath NJ-523) is too narrow and should be 4 metres rather than 3 metres wide to accommodate cycling and walking. They request that this path is tarmac
- They considered the re-aligned Footpath NJ-524 is acceptable and consider a gravel surface is acceptable in this more rural environment.
- Footpath NJ-545 is shown to be diverted between the proposed railway crossing and the new watercourse crossing. They would have preferred an alternative route utilising the former agricultural access under the railway, which has been blocked up. Should there be good reasons why this alternative route cannot be considered then they accept the proposed re-

alignment of Footpath NJ-545. They consider the footpath should be 4 metres wide, and

- The existing access from the B4084 road to Footpath NJ-548 is close to the proposed roundabout and the necessity of providing a safety barrier along the side of the road would obstruct the footpath requiring its diversion. This minor diversion is one that the Ramblers Association considers to be unsatisfactory and they are exploring ways to solve this issue with the County Footpath Officer. They do not consider that this issue should hold up the planning application as solutions can be explored when the application for the diversion order is submitted.

106. With regards to the other elements of the proposal, the Ramblers Association welcome the design and landscaping of the site, together with the areas set aside for nature conservation and sustainable drainage.

107. The Open Space Society has no objections, confirming that they are content with the proposed Public Right of Way arrangements.

108. With regard to the other elements of the development the Open Space Society are concerned that the existing bridge which carries the B road over the railway line restricts forward visibility near the point of site Parkway access. The unclassified Mucknell Lane, which services vehicular access to adjacent properties and the Monastery, also incidentally services Bridleway access and egress, and any improvements to the B road visibility may additionally assist the safety all users.

109. Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) objects to the proposal, stating that the proposal is incompatible with national policy, and consider the capital should be invested in other local railway stations. It raises three principle objections, namely:

- The site is not located well in terms of housing and economic development within the Emerging Worcestershire Development Local Plan
- The site could act as a catalyst for further development in the open countryside, and
- The location would only secure minimal use of sustainable modes of travel.

110. It also raises concerns regarding the predictions of future usage, costs and benefits of the scheme. It states that it is sceptical the proposal would deliver the service uplift predicted, particularly on the Birmingham and Bristol line, and the proposal may cause delays and service disruption at other local railway stations. It suggests alternative proposals, stating that are other potential new station locations, such as Rushwick/Henwick, Fernhill Heath and South Worcester, or improving car parking at Pershore Station that would improve access for all (not just for drivers) and potentially these could

be delivered more cheaply.

111. Sustrans supports the proposal, as it offers a tremendous opportunity to increase the usefulness and, therefore, the use of the railway network. It does, however, raise a number of concerns with regard to the facilities for cyclists. Sustrans consider that not many cyclists would want to enter the railway station from the rear of the site, along Woodbury Lane, and leave their bikes where they would not be overseen and then go up and over the railway line on a footbridge to enter the station. As the cycle storage would be out of sight, this would also ensure that users travelling by motorised transport would never know there is an alternative. It considers the path along Woodbury Lane is too narrow, and the proposed gravel surface is too short-term.

112. It notes that the proposed cycle route is shown to link with Worcester via the B4084, and whilst it is considered probably that some cyclists would access the proposed station via this way, it should be noted that National Cycle Network Route 45 already links to the southern end of Woodbury Lane and offers a more 'favourable' route for cyclists than the one proposed. This is the case now, and the 'favourability' of the National Cycle Network route would increase still further if the proposed bridge for cycling and walking over Broomhall Way is built in due course.

113. National Cycle Charity and Push Bike! (Worcestershire Cycling Campaign Group) has no objections, stating that the proposal encourages a model shift from car to train. Whilst it accepts the basic rationale for the proposed development they have the following comments:

114. It considers that the analysis used is based on existing demographics and catchment areas. The recent and major planning approvals for at least 2,450 dwellings in the Worcester South Urban Extension, but also other approvals will in fact bring a considerably larger population within a reasonable cycle time of the proposed new station.

115. Whilst cycling provision in terms of secure parking at the station is proposed at 10% of the number of spaces provided for cars; and the proposed new access to the application site from Woodbury Lane is welcomed, if the applicant is to encourage more cycling to the station from existing and proposed new residential areas then more needs to be done in terms of making Woodbury Lane cycle friendly.

116. It is recommended that the applicant implements either or both of the following measures. Firstly, that a safe on and/or off-road cycle route is provided to directly link the proposed railway station to the southern part of Worcester, including Worcester City Centre. Secondly, apply a 20mph restriction on all or part of the route as a way of discouraging car use and encouraging cycle and pedestrian use.

117. As the station will make Worcester and Worcestershire

more accessible to the more cycle friendly destinations of London, Oxford, Bristol and Birmingham, it is surely sensible for the County, City and Wychavon Councils to consider how there can be better linking of the station to cycle routes and tourist destinations in a way that would help the County to tap into the growing cycle tourism market.

118. West Mercia Police has no objections in principle, stating that they understand it is the applicant's intention to build to secured by design standards and incorporate the car park on the Park Mark safer parking scheme, and to provide the detailed design of the cycle storage on site.

119. British Transport Police comment that points for consideration include suitable lighting and the installation of CCTV cameras, particularly covering the car parks, cycle storage and platforms, and the inclusion of suitable suicide prevention measures.

120. Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Service wishes to make no comments.

121. Health & Safety Executive comments that the Health and Safety Executive consultation zone around the former Morganite Thermal Ceramics site at Norton, Worcester, was withdrawn in 2007, following the formal revocation of the hazardous substances consent for that site.

122. As the application site does not lie within the consultation zone of a major hazard site or major accident hazard pipeline, there is no need for the Health and Safety Executive to be consulted on this planning application and, therefore, the Health and Safety Executive has no comments.

123. Western Power Distribution has made no comments.

124. Worcestershire County Council Strategic Planning Applications Infrastructure Group (SPAIG) fully supports the proposal, noting that the proposal is a top priority in the Local Transport Plan and is consistent with the strategic aspirations of the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership and its partners to deliver increased frequency of services and reduced journey times from the County to London, the south-east and other key markets, which in turn supports the growth of the County. The proposal supports the strategic objectives outlined in the SEP to enhance Worcestershire's existing rail infrastructure and services. The delivery of this scheme is considered critical to the successful balanced growth of the local economy.

125. An efficient multi-modal transport network is essential in supporting and sustaining economic growth and success in modern economies. The quality of transport infrastructure and services, and how comprehensive the transport network is, will influence and contribute to the functioning of a successful economy. Where investment in transport

Other Representations

infrastructure and services has been inadequate, this has been shown to adversely impact on future growth and competitiveness.

126. With regards to Green Infrastructure, the Green Infrastructure Partnership have also contributed to the SPAIG response, confirming that they are satisfied that the proposal broadly addresses their concerns and reflects the Green Infrastructure priorities identified in the Worcestershire Parkway Green Infrastructure Concept Plan. They support the inclusion of living green roofs; consider the proposed landscaping should allow for a positive visitor experience; they welcome the considered lighting scheme, but note that the illumination of the pedestrian railway station interchange bridge may potentially impact on wildlife habitats; and request that the maintenance and management of the Green Infrastructure, including the sustainable drainage features should be addressed in a long-term Management Plan.

127. Prior to the submission of the planning application, the applicant undertook public and stakeholder engagement on the proposal, which commenced in October 2014 for an 8 week period. The public engagement included meetings with principal stakeholders which included Members of Parliament, County Councillors, Department for Transport, Natural England, landowners and Parish Councils; publication on the County Council's website; distribution of leaflet questionnaires; media releases; and a series of staffed and unstaffed exhibitions. Staffed exhibitions included and were held at The Hive, Evesham Railway Station, St Peter's Tesco, St Peter's Garden Centre, Shrub Hill Railway Station, Local Enterprise Partnership Annual Conference, Norton Parish Hall, Pershore Railway Station, Wychavon District Council Offices and Pershore Town Hall. Approximately 1,228 responses were received in response to the public and stakeholder engagement. The responses raised the following key issues:

- Generally supportive of the proposal
- Interchanging and linkages with buses
- Comments regarding commutes to London and/or Birmingham
- Impacts on other Worcestershire Stations, and
- Parking and scheduling.

128. Of the 547 questionnaire responses received, 91% of respondents supported the proposal. 73% of non-rail users would use Worcestershire Parkway if it was built and 61% of rail users would use it as an alternative to their existing railway station. Albeit that daily rail users would be less likely to use the new station (43%). 82% of respondents would consider travelling from the proposed new railway station for some or all of their journeys currently being undertaken by car.

129. In addition, the application and the accompanying Environmental Statement have been advertised in the press, on site, and by neighbour notification. To date 10 letters of

representation have been received objecting to the proposal. These letters of representation are available in the Members' Support Unit.

130. Their main comments are summarised below:

Traffic and highway safety

- Increased traffic, pollution and noise impacts
- Traffic currently using Woodbury Lane far exceeds the submitted data
- The 30mph restriction should be extended along Woodbury Lane up to the B4084, as it is difficult to access Woodbury Park and would be even more difficult for pedestrians and cyclists
- The cycle and pedestrian access to the proposed station from Norton direction is very narrow and has no footpath
- The cycle access to the proposed station from the direction of Worcester along the B4084, turning into Woodbury Lane is a dangerous junction due to the speed of traffic and a dip in the road
- Concerns regarding the increase in pedestrians and cyclists using the upgraded access off Woodbury Lane, given that there are a considerable amount of HGV's on the Crucible Business Park
- Concerns regarding indiscriminate parking along Woodbury Lane to avoid station car parking fees. Reasonable car parking fees would greatly reduce the temptation of parking "off-site". Parking restrictions (double yellow lines) should apply to the whole of Woodbury Lane
- The proposed Public Right of Way footbridge is shown as a staircase, it would be safer if this had ramps, as cyclists would be expected to carry their bikes up four flights of stairs and down four flight of stairs
- It would be more cost effective and aesthetically pleasing if the Public Right of Way bridge was combined with the railway station interchange bridge
- Glass shards are deposited along Woodbury Lane from HGV's using the EnviroSort Facility. This is a danger for cyclists, which should not be overlooked
- Concerns that local roads would be used as a 'rat-run'
- Poor existing bus service access to the site and local area
- Concerns regarding highway safety of the proposed roundabout, recommending an off-line roundabout where the road bends into the junction to ensure greater awareness and increased highway safety; and
- Concerns regarding the design quality of the proposed roundabout, particularly in light of concerns regarding other roundabouts within Worcestershire.

Delay to existing train services

- The problems of similar schemes raise serious questions about the financial viability of the proposed

Worcestershire Parkway, particularly in the absence of firm commitments from train operating companies and Network Rail on levels of service and supporting infrastructure. There is also the potentially negative impact this scheme would have on existing services and stations.

Impacts on the Crucible Business Park

- In relation to the proposed platform itself at the rear of Crucible Business Park, it is unclear what the impact would be on the existing Crucible Business Park water treatment infrastructure
- Concerns regarding the extent of the potential Compulsory Purchase Order and
- Impact of the proposal on the viability of the Crucible Business Park.

Residential amenity

- Loss of privacy.

Human rights

- Under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 the right to a private family life should be respected, but this certainly is not the case in this instance.

House prices

- Concerns that house prices would be adversely affected.

Noise

- Increased noise due to trains stopping at the proposed station.

Flooding

- Flooding regularly occurs along Woodbury Lane. This will need to be resolved to ensure that this access remains open at all times and
- The application site is at risk of flooding.

Ecology

- Loss of wildlife habitat and
- The flood mitigation area to the south should be maximised for ecological benefit. If this area was located further to the south-east corner of the application site, this would enable future scope for enlarging the car park area.

Future development

- Concerns that future development, such as bars and hotels would be developed at this location due to the presence of the proposed Parkway Station, creating a nuisance and
- Considered that most likely ancillary development will end up being promoted to fund the Worcestershire Parkway project once the principle of development has been established.

Conflict of interest

- The application should be determined by the Secretary of State because it is a “strategic transport scheme” of regional significance, and there is a conflict of interest in Worcestershire County Council’s role as planning applicant and the determining authority.

Landownership

- Key unresolved landownership issues which make it impossible to identify what the proposal might ultimately comprise. Referring to an alternative proposal by Norton Parkway Developments Ltd.

Prematurity

- The application is premature in strategic and local spatial planning terms. Improvements to Shrub Hill railway station should be a priority and
- Network Rail and Centro indicated that current proposals for securing high speed trains running on the Bristol and Birmingham line past Worcester would not fit easily with the concept of a Worcestershire Parkway and that the current proposals for restoring twin-tracking on the Cotswold line do not as yet include the Pershore-Norton Junction section. This would appear to confirm that such provision could not be an early priority.

Alternatives and additional design considerations

- The proposal fails to meet the requirements of European Environmental Impact Directive which specifies that a full assessment of alternative options is essential
- Consider that alternative designs, such as a multi-storey car park and off-line roundabout should have been considered by the applicant and
- Concerns about the development of the masterplan and efficiency of the site layout. In particular concerns regarding walk times between the car parking area and the platforms. They note that the submitted Design and Access Statement states that if walk times are too long, it is recognised to have a negative impact on generalised journey time thereby reducing demand for the railway station. The current design does not appear to address this matter, with many of the car parking spaces being a considerable distance from the station platforms with no covered walkways proposed. It is suggested that use of a multi-storey car park would shorten walking distances and provide a covered walkway.

Compulsory Purchase Order

- Objections to the proposed Compulsory Purchase Order proceedings and note that for the applicant to be able to exercise its powers of compulsory purchase it will have to be shown that the land proposed to be acquired is no more than is

The Planning Development Control Manager's Comments

reasonably required for the purposes of the development

- The design and layout of the car park is considered to be excessive and inefficient, and as a result require a much larger area of land to be used for the car park and drainage mitigation measures. They suggest a multi-storey car park located adjacent to the Cotswold line would be more efficient use of land. This alternative design solution does not appear to have been considered by the applicant
- Suggest an off-line roundabout, which may have the benefit of not requiring land to be compulsorily purchased on the eastern side of the B4084 would be a better solution. They also consider that the roundabout is oversized, which results in increased drainage mitigation requirements and
- The reptile zone, landscape buffer zone, car parking area and flood compensation area are considered to be excessive in terms of land-use.

Cost

- Cost of the development.

Infrastructure

- Due to poor local broadband speeds and no mains foul sewer, it is requested that should a mains sewer or fibre optics internet connection be installed that these are extended to the local community and businesses.

Consultation

- Not enough time (21 days) to comment on the application; and
- One letter of representation claims insufficient notice of the submitted scheme, not allowing a reasonable opportunity to review the application documents.

131. As with any planning application, this application should be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant policies and key issues have been set out earlier.

Justification for the proposal

132. The applicant has outlined the following reasons for the need for the proposed development. "*The need to deliver the scheme is now more important than ever because constraints on the existing Worcestershire transport network threaten to limit future growth. On the rail network, these constraints are illustrated by the following:-*

133. *Over the past three years, growth in rail demand across Worcestershire has been relatively modest at 4.3% per annum; in comparison the average across England and Wales was 5.6%, whilst in neighbouring Warwickshire it has increased at a rate of 7.4% per annum.*

134. There is currently a combined total of 418 car parking spaces at Worcestershire rail stations on the Cotswold line, in comparison the Chiltern line (comprising Lapworth, Hatton, Warwick Parkway, Warwick and Leamington Spa) has a total of 1,264 spaces. Analysis of population data for the respective catchments demonstrates that the Cotswold line has a ratio of 1 parking space per 693 people, whereas the Chiltern line is significantly more competitive at 1 per 204 people. The low number of car parking spaces is constraining access to rail stations in Worcestershire and creating suppressed demand for rail services.

135. There are limited direct destinations; hence rail is a poor alternative to the car for many journeys. Existing services to key destinations from Worcester rail stations are often uncompetitive as demonstrated by:

- *London: Limited service that is hourly within the peaks and every two hours off peak. Only 12% of Worcester trips are to London, compared to 22% at Cheltenham, where a more frequent and faster service is available. Recent line improvements have reduced travel times, but they remain uncompetitive and only 18% of trips are to the South East region. The recent timetable enhancements on the Cotswolds line have, however, resulted in over 12% growth in demand from the five Worcestershire stations on the line, demonstrating the potential of a market that is currently being suppressed. This growth has been achieved despite the increase in parking supply and demand at Warwick Parkway, suggesting there are significant levels of suppressed demand in the line catchment in north-east Worcestershire and south Warwickshire*
- *Birmingham: At Worcester Shrub Hill and Worcester Foregate Street, a total of 63% of existing trips are made to destinations within the West Midlands region, of which a total of 26% of demand travels to Birmingham. The overall level of service to Birmingham is good; however, a number of the services are slow and overcrowded*
- *South West and South Wales: There is a very poor level of service to these regions despite them containing a number of key business destinations that are situated within 100 kilometres of Worcester. Only 6% of rail trips travel to these regions, largely as a result of the M5 Motorway providing a fast alternative for car travel".*

136. The applicant continues, stating that "the scheme is considered to be a Strategic Transport Scheme with benefits that extend well beyond the south Worcestershire area. The poor quality rail service between Worcestershire stations and locations served by the Birmingham - Cheltenham - Gloucester - Bristol and Cardiff main lines is exacerbated by the lack of direct access to cross-country services. The

scheme would help to address this issue and improve access to national rail services, significantly improving local economic competitiveness. The benefits of the proposed new railway station include:

- *Direct access for south Worcester residents and businesses to long distance Inter City cross-country rail services, with consequent reductions to journey times and costs*
- *Improved accessibility to both United Kingdom and international markets for south Worcestershire businesses*
- *Improved access to Worcester - Oxford - London rail services, thus reducing the impact of limited car parking at existing stations, which deters rail use on this route*
- *Increasing the attractiveness of rail for journeys to London and the South East and associated business markets and international transport hubs such as Heathrow and St Pancras*
- *Improved interchange between rail journeys on the Cotswold line and the Birmingham and Bristol line, and*
- *Reduced journey times to Birmingham, Bristol and further afield.*

137. A major drawback for Worcestershire is access to the cross country rail service, with access to this only available from Bromsgrove, albeit with an infrequent service. South Worcestershire is not covered by any access to the cross-country network. Services to Birmingham and Bristol are only accessible via the local branch line from Worcester Shrub Hill and Worcester Foregate Street. Pershore and Evesham railway stations do not have any direct access to Birmingham or Bristol and, therefore, this is impacting upon the economic prosperity of the region. Existing stations along the Cotswold line in Worcestershire are limited with their parking capacity and do not provide adequate provision for the forecast population growth in the County over the next 25 years".

138. In view of this justification, the Planning Development Control Manager considers that there is a compelling need for the proposed development. The scheme is considered to be a key strategic transport scheme and the site has been safeguarded in the adopted Wychavon District Local Plan for this important transport infrastructure.

Location of the Development

139. Objections are raised by CPRE regarding the location of the development, stating that the site is not located well in terms of housing and economic development within the Emerging Worcestershire Development Local Plan.

140. The determination of a planning application is to be made pursuant to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which is to be read in conjunction with section 70(2) of the Town and Country

Planning Act 1990. Section 38(6) requires the local planning authority to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan, unless there are material circumstances which 'indicate otherwise'. Section 70(2) provides that in determining applications the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application and to any other material considerations.

141. As stated at paragraph reference ID: 21b-006-20140306 of the Government's Planning Practice Guidance, *"the NPPF stresses the importance of having a planning system that is genuinely plan-led. Where a proposal accords with an up-to-date development plan it should be approved without delay, as required by the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework."*

142. The reason why the Development Plan is at the heart of the planning system is because it is the forum where the need for new development is identified, and also where it would be inappropriate. The plan would have been through public consultation, and would have been subject of independent examination. The Development Plan consists of the Adopted Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy and Saved Policies of the Adopted Wychavon District Local Plan.

143. Policy SR6: 'Safeguarded land for transport infrastructure' of the Wychavon District Local Plan outlines specific sites that will be safeguarded for potential improvements to the District's transport infrastructure, this includes the Worcestershire Parkway Station, located within the triangle shaped area of land formed by the Cotswold line, Birmingham and Bristol lines and the B4084.

144. The supporting text to Policy SR6 confirms that a technical study carried out by Halcrow (2001) showed that there is merit in pursuing a parkway station at Norton that would enable a better rail service for passengers travelling on both the Cotswolds and Malverns Line and the South-West to North-East Main Line. It goes on to state that the District Council will continue to be represented on and support the Worcestershire Parkway Steering Group in its pursuit of this important strategic transportation project.

145. Furthermore, Emerging South Worcestershire Development Plan Policy SWDP4: 'Moving Around South Worcestershire', Part J safeguards the application site from any development that might prejudice enhancements to the local and national rail network. Paragraph i) of SWDP4 specifically refers to Worcestershire Parkway Station. The reasoned justification for this draft policy states:-

146. *"Worcestershire Parkway is considered to be a Strategic Transport Scheme with benefits that extend well beyond the south Worcestershire area. The poor quality rail service between Worcestershire stations and locations*

served by the Birmingham - Cheltenham - Gloucester - Bristol and Cardiff main lines is exacerbated by the lack of direct access to cross-country services. The proposed Worcestershire Parkway development will help to address this issue and improve access to national rail services, significantly improving local economic competitiveness. The benefits of the proposed new station include:-

- a. Direct access for south Worcestershire residents and businesses to long distance InterCity cross-country rail services, with consequent reductions to journey times and costs*
- b. Improved accessibility to both United Kingdom and international markets for south Worcestershire businesses*
- c. Improved access to Worcester – Oxford – London rail services, thus reducing the impact of limited car parking at existing stations, which deters rail use on this route*
- d. Increasing the attractiveness of rail for journeys to London and the South East and associated business markets and international transport hubs such as Heathrow and St Pancras*
- e. Improved interchange between rail journeys on the Great Malvern – Worcester – London line and journeys on the Birmingham – Bristol line*
- f. Reduced journey times to Birmingham, Bristol and further afield".*

147. In addition, the proposal is identified as a major scheme within the Worcestershire LTP3; is identified as a key project within the WLEP Business Plan 2012; and identified as a priority project within the SEP.

148. Concerns have also been expressed by a local resident that the application is premature in strategic and local spatial planning terms; there is a conflict of interest in Worcestershire County Council's role as applicant and the determining County Planning Authority, the application should be determined by the Secretary of State; and there are key unresolved landownership issues, which make it impossible to identify what the proposal might ultimately comprise. One letter of representation also claims insufficient notice of the submitted scheme, not allowing a reasonable opportunity to review the application documents. CPRE and local residents also object on the grounds that the site could act as a catalyst for further development in the open countryside.

149. It is considered that prematurity is not relevant in this instance, as the principle of the development is included in both the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan.

150. As the application is made under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, it falls to the County Planning Authority to determine this application, as these Regulations set out the procedure in

the case of development being undertaken by a Local Authority. The principle underlying these Regulations is that applications must be made to the appropriate local planning authority in the same way as any other person would make the application and must follow the same procedures as would apply to applications by others.

151. Furthermore, it is not unusual for the County Council as the County Planning Authority to determine planning applications made by, or on behalf of the County Council in relation to other functions or areas of responsibility. For example the County Council as the County Planning Authority is regularly required to determine applications for facilities required to deliver education, waste management and highway functions. In all these situations, the County Planning Authority ensures that in dealing with the matter both before and during the application process, as well as at the determination of the application, appropriate processes are put in place (Chinese walls) to ensure that there can be no conflict of interest in the decision making process. In its role as the County Planning Authority, the County Council approaches all applications and the decisions made on them solely on the basis of the planning merits of proposals. It is not swayed in anyway in its decision making processes by what may be viewed as wider County Council corporate or strategic priorities.

152. Applications for development consent for 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects' should be made directly to the Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State in accordance with the Planning Act 2008, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. However, this application is not one to which this procedure applies.

153. With regards to further development, the submitted application as proposed includes no enabling development. Should future planning applications be made for other uses, these applications would be considered on their own merits, and as set out earlier, should be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. With regards to the planning application consultation and notification arrangements, the Planning Development Control Manager is satisfied that appropriate consultation and notification of the planning application has taken place.

154. In view of the policy support for this proposal, the Planning Development Control Manager considers that the principle of the development in this location is acceptable and accords with adopted and emerging planning policy.

Alternatives

155. Objectors have suggested alternative proposals, stating that the applicant should investigate improvements to existing railway stations, such as a car park at Pershore railway station and opening new stations. Objectors also suggest that alternative designs, such as a multi-storey car

park and off-line roundabout should also be considered by the applicant and raise concerns regarding the efficiency of the site layout, suggesting walk times between the car park and platform are too great and suggest covered walkways. Objections have also been raised to the proposed Compulsory Purchase Order. With regards to alternatives, no substantive evidence has been provided to substantiate these views or to provide information which the Planning Development Control Manager could consider in making his recommendation. The design of the proposal has evolved over time through an iterative process following lengthy discussions between officers, Statutory Consultees and the applicant. These suggested alternative solutions have not been through this process, have not been subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment and they themselves may have impacts that have not been assessed, for example possible shading of the reptile areas by a multi-storey car park structure and the visual impact of such a building. Furthermore, applications should be determined on their own merits. With regards to walk times, it is noted that the submitted Design and Access Statement assessed alternative designs, one of which (Option 1) proposed two car parks located adjacent to the B4084. In the applicant's consideration of this design, they noted that the walk times between the car parks and the platforms were too long. In the final design (this application) the car parking is proposed closer to the platform and station building, with car parking spaces for disabled users being located adjacent to the station building. Covered walkways within the car park are not proposed as part of this application. The premise of this application is to minimise the scale of the built form on site. It is considered that the installation of covered walkways throughout the car park could diminish this premise.

156. With regards to landownership, the applicant has confirmed that this is a matter of confidential discussion at present, if required the applicant has authority to make a Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of the site. The Planning Development Control Manager considers that this is a distinct and separate process to that of the consideration and determination of the planning application.

157. Objectors also raise concerns regarding the cost of the development. The Planning Development Control Manager notes this concern, but advises Members that this is not a relevant planning consideration.

158. The applicant states that the location of the proposed development has been determined by the requirement for the scheme to be located at a point where the Birmingham and Bristol and Cotswolds lines can be accessed together or where they intersect. The site also has to be readily accessible for vehicles and convenient to the M5 Motorway. No alternative sites have, therefore, been considered due to the location of the intersecting railway lines and the accessibility of the B4084. Furthermore, the site is allocated in the Adopted Wychavon District Local Plan under Policy SR6 as safeguarded land for

transport infrastructure and the emerging South Worcestershire Development Plan.

159. The applicant has, however, included alternative designs for the proposal in this location; and concluded that the proposed station building should be located close to the Cotswold railway line and the Birmingham and Bristol railway line intersection to reduce the need for bridges and to have a more compact building design. With regards to vehicular access from the B4084, following consultation with relevant statutory consultees including the County Highways Officer, the applicant has concluded that a roundabout offers the best solution based on operational capacity and safety concerns.

160. One letter of representation has been received objecting to the proposal on the grounds that the proposal fails to fulfil the requirements of the European Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, which specify that a full assessment of alternative options is essential.

161. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance at Paragraph Reference ID: 4-041-20140306 states that the applicant does not need to consider alternatives, but where alternative approaches to development have been considered, Paragraph 4 of Part II of Schedule 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 requires the Environmental Statement to include an outline of the main alternatives studied and the main reasons for the choice made, taking into account the environmental effects.

162. The Planning Development Control Manager advises that the application is not one where the Council as County Planning Authority has an obligation to consider alternative sites as part of its consideration of the application, as this is not a case where the proposed development involves such adverse consequences as to outweigh its benefits.

163. Given that the premise of the development is a strategic interchange facility between the Birmingham and Bristol lines and the Cotswold line, which is unique at this location within the County, and as the site is allocated within the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan, it is considered that the approach taken to the consideration of alternatives is acceptable.

Economic Impact

164. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through the three dimensions of economic, social and environmental. In particular the NPPF sees the economic role of planning as *"contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating the development requirements, including provision of infrastructure"*.

165. In addition, the NPPF at Paragraph 19 states that the *"Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support economic growth, and therefore, significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system"*.

166. The proposal is identified within the LTP3, which focuses on attracting and supporting economic investment and growth, by delivering transport infrastructure and services to tackle congestion and improve quality of life. It is identified as a key project within the WLEP Business Plan 2012, helping to deliver Strategic Objective 4 'Planning, Development and Infrastructure', stating that connectivity and good infrastructure is essential to maximise Worcestershire's potential and to create a competitive environment; and is also identified as a priority project within the SEP, which states that transport investment will be targeted to unlock the potential of key employment and housing sites to support the overall growth vision for Worcestershire.

167. The primary socio-economic impact during the construction phase would be the creation of approximately 178 construction related jobs. The proposal would also lead to indirect economic impacts for retail and leisure establishments in South Worcestershire. Such businesses may benefit from increased expenditure associated with construction workers; and where it is not possible to source local contractors and suppliers, the hotel and accommodation industry in the immediate and wider area may experience a similar boost.

168. The applicant states that the 2011 Census demonstrates that typically, residents in Worcestershire are better qualified and more skilled than the wider population, and more likely to be employed in higher occupational categories relative to the regional and national population. Nevertheless, they tend to achieve lower levels of earnings. Improved connectivity and accessibility enabled by this proposal could allow residents in this area to find employment opportunities that are commensurate to their levels of skills and qualifications, which are currently lacking in the area. Furthermore, improved connectivity and accessibility would ease commuting into and out of South Worcestershire and enhance the area's attractiveness to businesses, which could lead to business relocation and inward investment.

169. The applicant has carried out an economic appraisal of the scheme, which attempts to monetise the time saving and decongestion benefits associated with the proposal. This appraisal estimates the value of journey time savings as about £52.6 million (over a 60 year period).

170. The proposed development also has the potential to generate employment during the operational phase related to the functioning of the station on a day-to-day basis. It is

proposed that the scheme would include a booking office, ticketing facilities and a retail unit that would all require staff. The applicant anticipates that the proposal would generate jobs for a small number of full-time equivalent employees, and has reviewed staffing levels at railway stations within the West Midlands, this indicates the level of staff provision could be between 2 (e.g. Lye and Coseley railway stations) to 25 (e.g. Stourbridge Junction railway station). Whilst a review of staffing levels at railway stations serving national routes (including Rugby, Stafford and Lancaster railway stations), indicates that 48 members of staff are employed on average.

171. Furthermore, Worcestershire County Council Strategic Planning Applications Infrastructure Group (SPAIG) fully supports the proposal, noting that the proposal is consistent with the strategic aspirations of the WLEP and its partners to deliver increased frequency of services and reduced journey times from the County to London, the South East and other key markets, which in turn supports the growth of the County. The delivery of this scheme is considered critical to the successful balanced growth of the local economy.

172. The Planning Development Control Manager acknowledges that the NPPF affords significant weight to sustainable economic growth and considers that the proposal would provide considerable sustainable economic development benefits in accordance with the NPPF.

Impact on other Railway Stations

173. The applicant anticipates that the market for the proposal is predominately for longer distance rail travel, which is suppressed within Worcestershire. The applicant states that a key part of rail suppression in Worcestershire is due to the lack of available car parking spaces at railway stations. In Worcester, car parking at railway stations is 90% occupied by 08:00 hours; hence there is little scope for inter peak demand to park at the railway stations. Overtime as rail demand grows, the level of suppression will increase and by 2031 this level of suppression could be as high as 67% of car access demand, equating to 300 car parking spaces per day.

174. The applicant has considered the impact of the proposal on passenger numbers at other railway stations. This analysis indicates that Malvern Link and Pershore railway stations would supply the largest proportion of trips to the proposed Worcestershire Parkway railway station in the future with change in annual demand equating to a loss of approximately 8.7% and 7.9%, respectively. A number of other stations would see a transfer of trips to Worcestershire Parkway railway station, and therefore, experience a reduction in passenger numbers. These notably include Bromsgrove (about -5.8% change), Great Malvern (about -5.4% change), Droitwich Spa (about -3.0% change) and Worcester Stations (about -2.9% change).

175. As such the proposal would not significantly reduce the demand for the existing Worcestershire railway stations, which would continue to be viable. The applicant anticipates that car parking spaces and seats on trains released by passengers transferring to the proposed Worcestershire Parkway railway station would be taken up by new rail passengers to the network, who are currently unable to access their nearest railway station by car because the car park are at capacity.

176. Furthermore, the applicant has confirmed *"that the proposal has been tested with robust economic models that have satisfied the Department for Transport that latent demand for travel, particularly following introduction of the Intercity Express Programme in 2018, would be satisfied by this scheme. High speed running was introduced on the Bristol to Birmingham Line in 2013, draft timetables have satisfied the Department for Transport that trains calling at the proposed Worcestershire Parkway would not be detrimental to that investment.*

177. First Great Western have commented that they are supportive of the proposal, subject to the railway station design facilitating the doubling of the Cotswold line in the future; the second platform and access being included in the current application; and a commitment to providing a second platform and associated access in due course.

178. In response to First Great Western's comments, the applicant has confirmed that the proposal and the associated train timetable have been specifically designed to be deliverable on the existing single Cotswold line infrastructure, however, passive provision has been incorporated into the proposed development to accommodate the second platform and the redoubling of the Cotswold line should it be required in the future. Furthermore, the applicant has committed in writing to the Department for Transport, that they would fund the second platform and associated access should this be required in future, subject to approval by the County Council. The applicant fully supports partaking in discussions with the relevant parties should the redoubling of the Cotswold lines occur in the future.

Traffic, highway safety and impact upon the Public Rights of Way

179. Objections have been raised regarding traffic, highway safety, including the safety of the proposed roundabout and impacts upon Public Rights of Way. This includes increasing traffic and rat-running on local roads; indiscriminate parking along Woodbury Lane; poor existing bus services; glass shards being deposited on Woodbury Lane by the Materials Recycling Facility being a hazard for cyclists; poor cycle and pedestrian access to the proposed development from Norton; and concerns that the proposed Public Right of Way footbridge only having stepped access. The Parish Councils also raise concerns regarding traffic through the villages and rat-running. CPRE objects to the proposal on grounds that the location

would only secure minimal use of sustainable modes of travel.

180. The proposal includes a new three-arm roundabout junction off the B4084 and a new access road into the site. In addition a 500 space car park (with electric charging points), taxi ranks, bus stops, pick up and drop off areas and cycle storage are included in the proposed layout. The B4084 is currently served by public transport, including 550/551 - Worcester to Pershore and Evesham. Provision would be made for bus stops and shelters within the application site adjacent to the proposed dedicated bus lane. At this stage the exact diversion of existing bus services has not been finalised, but the applicant anticipates at least one bus service would serve the site.

181. With regards to concerns regarding traffic levels and rat-running through the surrounding villages. A Transportation and Access Chapter was included in the submitted Environmental Statement, together with a separate Travel Plan and Transport Assessment, which states that in 2019 (used as opening year in the transport model) there would be approximately 110 peak morning vehicle movements and about 126 peak evening vehicles movements. It is predicted that in 2031 there would be about 259 peak morning vehicle movements and approximately 294 peak evening movements. The applicant estimates that the total weekday daily vehicle movements in 2019 would be approximately 426 (213 vehicles entering the site and 213 vehicles exiting the site per weekday) and in 2031 would be about 980 total weekday daily vehicle movements (490 vehicles entering the site and 490 vehicles exiting the site per weekday). The submission demonstrates that the wider strategic and local transport network has sufficient capacity to deal with the traffic generated by the proposal. The changes in traffic flow are minor with the greatest changes being on Church Lane (about +1.3%), Woodbury Lane (about +1.1%) and south of the proposed access on the B4084 (about +1.4%). Furthermore, it is understood that should planning permission be granted for the South Worcester Urban Extensions that the developer would be required to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to contribute to traffic calming measures along Church Lane. Whilst the Transport Assessment does not indicate a significant level of additional traffic using Church Lane and Woodbury Lane during the assessment period. The applicant has confirmed that should planning permission be granted for the Worcestershire Parkway Railway Station, and it can be demonstrated that traffic using the railway station are also utilising the minor road network, consideration would be given to extending the traffic calming measures along Church Lane.

182. Concerns have been raised by Norton-Juxta Kempsey Parish Council that the application fails to take account of the traffic flow from the South Worcestershire Development Plan together with the Worcestershire Parkway Station. The

applicant has confirmed that the highway modelling does take account of the background level of trips within the South Worcestershire Development Plan Phase 2 developments, and associated infrastructure schemes. This includes the South Worcester Urban Extension.

183. Wychavon District Council supports the proposal, subject to a number of requests, which include the 40mph speed restriction on the B4084 being extended beyond the new roundabout; and consideration is given to improving the B4084 in respect to combined cycle and pedestrian facilities. The applicant has confirmed that the existing 40mph speed limit would be extended to south of the proposed roundabout. The County Highways Officer states that they have assessed the application submission together with the relevant letters of representation and comments from consultees, and has no objections, and is satisfied that the proposed access and associated layout for highways, including cycling provision is considered appropriate for the development proposed, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions relating to the construction of the access including the detailed design of the proposed roundabout, turning areas and parking facilities; engineering details and specification of the proposed roads and highway drains; a Construction Environmental Management Plan detailing measures to prevent mud on the road and the location of site operate parking areas, material storage areas and site operatives facilities. The County Council Transport Project Officer has no objections, subject to the Travel Plan including a measure to promote the station and sustainable business travel to employers in the area; and the bus stop on site should include real-time information for passengers. Conditions are recommended to this effect.

184. To ensure that vehicles access the proposal using appropriate routes, a signage strategy would be developed which would focus on ensuring that the higher class roads would be utilised by traffic. Highways England considers that the traffic impact of the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on the operation of the Strategic Road Network. However, due to the nature of the proposal and sensitivity of its location near to Junction 7 of the M5 Motorway, they direct that the applicant enters into an appropriate legal agreement to provide a detailed road signage strategy. Conditions are recommended to this effect.

185. In response to the concerns from a number of local residents regarding the potential for indiscriminate parking along Woodbury Lane and the surrounding area, the applicant has confirmed that they are working with the County Council's Traffic Management Team to develop a package of Traffic Regulation Orders for the proposed development.

186. Since the submission of the planning application, the Department for Transport (DfT) Guidance: 'Design Standards for accessible railway stations: a code of practice'

(March 2015) states in relation to spaces for disabled users, *'5 per cent of the total capacity should be enlarged standard spaces of 3.6 metres wide by 6 metres long that could be adopted to be designated parking spaces to reflect changes in local population needs and allow for flexibility of provision in the future'*. Consequently, a condition is recommended to be imposed requiring final details of the layout of car parking spaces.

187. There are a number of Public Rights of Way on and in the vicinity of the application site. Footpath NJ-523 runs south-east from Woodbury Lane, along the southern edge of the Crucible Business Park, before crossing the Birmingham and Bristol railway line via a level crossing and joining to Footpaths NJ-524 and NJ-545. The site is crossed west to east by Footpath NJ-524, which joins to Footpath NJ-548, which runs eastwards away from the B4084. Footpath NJ-545 runs southwards along the western boundary of the site, parallel to the Birmingham and Bristol line.

188. There are a number of adjustments proposed to these Public Rights of Way, the most significant of which is the proposed upgrading of Footpath NJ-523 to a combined cycle and pedestrian access measuring approximately 3 metres wide, with a gravelled surface. The applicant is also proposing to close the existing level crossing on safety grounds and construct a new footbridge to accommodate this Public Right of Way. Footpath NJ-524 would also be realigned running along the southern part of the site to provide a safe pedestrian route minimising the interface with car parking areas and internal site roads.

189. The amenity of footpath users is currently affected by the proximity to the existing railway lines, the Crucible Business Park and the busy B4084. Consequently, it is considered that the proposed adjustments to the existing Public Rights of Way would generally result in improvements to the routes both in terms of safety and accessibility. However, requests have been made by the Ramblers Association and Sustrans that Footpath NJ-523 is too narrow and should be 4 metres wide rather than 3 metres wide to accommodate cycling and walking and that this path is tarmac rather than gravel. With regards to the width of the footpath, the applicant states the requested 4 metre footpath/cycleway is not supported by the demand model. The proposed 3 metre wide footpath/cycleway would be able to carry about 250 movements per hour, it is anticipated that it would be used by approximately 3 cyclists and 20 people per day. Furthermore, a proposed buffer of 0.5 metres is proposed each side of the footpath/cycleway providing a 4 metre wide corridor, but with only 3 metres of it surfaced.

190. The Planning Development Control Manager notes the applicant's response and also acknowledges that the County Footpath Officer and County Highways Officer both made no adverse comments in respect of this matter. Consequently it is considered that the width of the proposed upgraded combined

footpath/cycleway is acceptable, however, this route should be surfaced in tarmac or a similar surface to encourage the uptake of further cycling along this route, and it is recommended that a condition is imposed requiring the surface of this route to be agreed by the County Planning Authority.

191. With regards to the proposed footbridge, it is considered that whilst this would be accessed on both sides by means of stairs only, it is considered that this would provide substantial health and safety benefits compared to the existing level crossing and together with the improved Public Rights of Way, would improve accessibility compared to the existing situation. Notwithstanding this, the Planning Development Control Manager is disappointed that direct access is not available to the railway station from Footpath NJ-523, as in the opinion of the Planning Development Control Manager this would have further encouraged the use of this route for cycling. Sustrans raise similar concerns, however, whilst this is considered to be a missed opportunity, it is not to be so significant as to justify the refusal of planning permission.

192. The Open Space Society and the County Footpath Officer both raise no objections to the proposal. The Ramblers Association also has no objections in principle, and considers that whilst this proposal would have a significant impact upon the Public Rights of Way they consider the proposal is beneficial to walkers' ability to enjoy the countryside.

193. With regards to glass shards being deposited on Woodbury Lane by vehicles servicing the existing Material Recycling Facility (EnviroSort). This was considered in a recent planning application for the site (Reference 14/000050/CM, Minute 902 refers) by this Committee at its meeting 24 March 2015, which confirmed a protocol is in place for frequent clearance of Woodbury Lane and the company are investigating other measures to reduce any deposit of glass on the public highway.

194. Overall, it is considered that the proposal would provide significant and considerable benefits to the transport network, in that a new railway station would be provided giving direct access to both the Cotswold line and the Birmingham and Bristol line, facilitating long-distance travel by rail and intercepting trips that would otherwise have been made by car only, reducing flows on the Strategic Road Network and Primary Road Network.

195. The Planning Development Control Manager considers that subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, including requiring the applicant to enter into an appropriate legal agreement under Section 6 of the Highways Act 1980 to provide a detailed road signage strategy on the M5 Motorway and Junction 7 of the M5 Motorway, the proposed development would be acceptable on traffic and highway

safety grounds and would cater for the existing Public Rights of Way enabling a safe crossing over the Birmingham and Bristol railway line.

Ecology and biodiversity

196. Consideration of ecology and biodiversity issues is of particular relevance to this proposal, due to the scheme's location in close proximity to the Cooksholme Meadow SSSI and the presence of protected species on the site. The application was accompanied by an Environment Statement, which addressed Ecology and Nature Conservation matters. Objections have been raised by local residents regarding the loss of habitat.

197. No bat roosts have been identified within the application site, but the hedgerow lined unnamed ordinary watercourse and the wooded Cotswold railway line embankment have been identified as important features for foraging and commuting bats. Twelve species of bats were identified. Two Great Crested Newt breeding ponds were recorded within 350 metres of the application site. A low Great Crested Newt population was estimated for both ponds. Three species of reptiles: slow-worm, common lizard and grass snake are present within the application site. The site supports common breeding birds, summer and winter migrants, with a total of 45 species of birds recorded. An active badger sett is located within the Cotswold railway line embankment. Evidence of badger foraging and commuting has been identified throughout the site.

198. The ecological interest of habitats found within the site has been assessed as being of between 'site' and 'local' nature conservation value. The overall site includes areas of no significant ecological value, such as agricultural land and areas of relatively higher ecological value, such as broadleaved woodland, running water and hedgerows. Protected and notable species within the site such as breeding birds, badgers, foraging and commuting bats, reptiles and amphibians are assessed as having between 'site' to 'county' nature conservation value.

199. Impacts are considered to relate to the potential loss and fragmentation of habitats and possible harm or disturbance to protected species both during construction and operational phases. Construction activities are proposed to be controlled by the implementation of a CEMP which would include measures to avoid accidental damage to retained habitats, minimise light impacts, surface water run-off and dust, including a Great Crested Newt Risk Avoidance Method Statement and a Reptile Mitigation Strategy which would prevent damage to protected species and retained habitats whilst conserving species in-situ. The scheme design includes mitigation for habitats and species where possible such as; hibernacula creation, compensatory replanting of hedgerow and grassland and scrub creation.

200. Proposed mitigation for protected species includes

appropriate construction and operational lighting for bats; reptile and amphibian habitat creation and enhancement; and habitat compensation and enhancement measures for breeding and wintering birds. By these means potential significant adverse impact to valuable resources, such as protected species and habitats, would be avoided. No net loss for biodiversity is predicted and the design proposals include positive biodiversity enhancements for a range of wildlife throughout the site. A detailed Environmental Management Plan for the scheme would specify detailed mitigation measures, habitat enhancement and creation and the placement of bat and bird boxes including monitoring. Site interpretation boards are proposed which would contain information on species and habitats present. Furthermore, lizard silhouette footprints features are proposed to be included within footpaths, which would provide a fun educational awareness resource for visitors.

201. Temporary and other potential impacts have been identified on Great Crested Newts and several species of bats, all of which are European Protected Species. There is a reasonable likelihood that these species may be affected in some way by the development.

202. Given the presence of European Protected Species on site, in order to discharge its Regulation 9(5) duty of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the County Planning Authority must consider in relation to a planning application: whether any criminal offence is likely to be committed; and if so the Council must be satisfied that the three Habitats Directive "derogation tests" are met. Only if the County Planning Authority is satisfied that all three tests are met may planning permission be granted.

203. The court judgment (R (Woolley) v Cheshire East Borough Council, 2009) has determined that local planning authorities, as part of their general duty under the Habitats Regulations must (prior to determination of a planning application) consider all three "derogation tests" where impact to European Protected Species interests is anticipated. Namely does:-

1. *the proposal preserve public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment*
2. *that there is no satisfactory alternative, and*
3. *that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.*

204. With regard to the first test, it is considered that the

evidence presented in the application submission that the proposal would provide direct access for residents and businesses to long distance Inter City cross-country rail services; improve access to and interchange between rail journeys on the Cotswold line and the Birmingham and Bristol line, releasing suppressed demand from rail travel, thereby encouraging a modal shift to rail and reducing car dependency; and increase accessibility to markets and employments, encourage inward investment and economic growth in Worcestershire, resulting in considerable economic development benefits for Worcestershire, demonstrates that Test 1 (overriding public interest) would be met.

205. With regards to the second test in relation to Great Crested Newts, it is considered that the applicant has demonstrated sufficient avoidance measures so that no European Protected Species derogation licence is likely to be required. In order for the proposal to demonstrate compliance with this test, the County Ecologist recommends the implementation of the Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement is imposed as a condition.

206. With regards to the second test in relation to bats. The results of daytime tree inspections for bat roosting potential confirm that, in its current form, it is not anticipated that the proposal would cause any direct impact to a bat roost.

207. The question of legal protection of commuting/foraging bats with regards to the potential for severance/fragmentation has been tested by *Morge (FC) v Hampshire County Council* [2010]. This case highlighted that the level of significance of any likely impact resulting from the proposal upon the population's continuing ecological function (e.g. ability to hibernate or breed) must be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

208. Based on survey data available, the County Ecologist considers that the proposal is likely to comply with the second test, in so far as light fall on the principle commuting route across the site has been proportionately minimised. However, light fall on these receptors could realistically be further minimised, and the applicant has agreed to continue investigations into the significant, but highly seasonal bat activity on site with a view to further modifying (if required) the lighting proposals to ensure they remain proportional and appropriate to the value of the site for bat species, particularly lesser horseshoe bats.

209. With regards to the third test in relation to Great Crested Newts, it is the County Ecologist's view that this development if implemented as described by the applicant would conserve and have potential to enhance the local populations present.

210. With regards to the third test in relation to bats species, the proposals as they currently stand indicate the favourable conservation status test could be complied with. However,

the County Ecologist considers that in order to achieve this, the applicant must engage in a meaningful way to undertake pre-construction seasonal survey efforts for commuting bats, and must also ensure that the lighting design process is capable of (and is committed to) being updated in response to additional findings, if any arise.

211. Natural England and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust have been consulted due to the proximity of the proposal to the Cooksholme Meadows SSSI and LWS's, respectively. Natural England is satisfied that the proposal being carried out in accordance with the application submission would not damage or destroy the interest features for which the sites have been notified. Worcestershire Wildlife Trust also has no objections, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions. The County Ecologist also has no objections, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

212. In view of the above matters, the Planning Development Control Manager considers that the "derogation tests" in the Habitats Directive can be met, and that the proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on ecology and biodiversity at the site or on the surrounding area, including the nearby Cooksholme Meadow SSSI, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, as recommended in the submitted Environmental Statement, and by the County Ecologist and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.

Landscape Character, Visual Impact and Residential Amenity

213. The application was accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impacts Assessment. It considers that the primary landscape effect would arise from the loss of rural landscape features including a hedgerow and fields, which would be replaced by a new railway station building, bridge structures, car parking, lighting and platforms which would all be permanent urban features in the landscape and change its character. It considers that this would have a moderate adverse effect. However, this impact would be reduced overtime as proposed mitigation planting matures. In addition, the impacts of the proposal on landscape character is seen in the context of and is offset partly by the proximity of the Crucible Business Park, as the proposal would be seen as an extension of this urban character.

214. It is considered that the railway line embankments and the Crucible Business Park limit views of the site in the wider landscape. The main visual effects would be from users of the Public Rights of Ways on and within the vicinity of the site; from the residential receptors of the Follies and Norton Fields Farm; and views from the north of the site, where the landscape is more open.

215. The proposed location, design and general layout arrangements have been heavily influenced by the functional requirements of the railway station and the need to address

ecological and drainage matters within the site. The proposed development of the site would be contained to the north of the unnamed ordinary watercourse to minimise the scale of the built form on site. The field to the south of the unnamed ordinary watercourse would be retained to maintain a rural character, limiting damage to loss of field pattern. A shallow depression would be created within this field to act as a flood attenuation feature. The proposed car park would contain trees and be bound by a hedgerow, which would break up the expanse of car parking. The proposed station building would have living green roofs on the two single storey buildings and the building materials would reflect the local vernacular, combined with sensitive use of more modern materials. The station forecourt would be landscaped with planting beds to break up this large area and soften views of the railway station building. A 30 metre wide buffer area is proposed between the Birmingham and Bristol line and the car park, this would protect and enhance reptile habitat.

216. The proposal would require a number of hedgerows to be removed; this includes the hedgerow running along the northern side of the unnamed ordinary watercourse, the hedgerows on the eastern and western sides of the B4084, and two hedgerows in the vicinity of the proposed car park. The hedgerows on both sides of the B4084 are considered to be the most significant as they provide screening of the road and the movement of vehicles from views. They are also important to the local landscape character contributing to the hedgerow field boundaries. The applicant has confirmed that it is not possible to retain these hedgerows due to the location of the proposed roundabout, however, replacement hedgerows and tree planting is proposed. Once established this would help to soften the appearance of the proposal in views from the north and east.

217. A bridge is proposed over the Birmingham and Bristol line to accommodate the Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-523) and to replace the existing level crossing. The applicant states that budgetary constraints have meant that the shape and form of the footbridge would be a standard Network Rail design. It is considered that the appearance of this functional footbridge would appear incongruous in the landscape, particularly located against the aesthetic proposed railway station interchange bridge and railway station. Notwithstanding this, due to the location of this functional Public Right of Way bridge between the existing railway bridge and the proposed railway station interchange bridge it is considered that it would be largely screened by these features, reducing its visual impact. It is recommended that should planning permission be granted that the detailed design of this footbridge is imposed as a condition.

218. Objections have been received from a local resident raising concerns regarding the loss of privacy. The nearest residential property is that of the Follies, located adjacent to the northern boundary of the application site. This property

would be adjacent to the proposed car park, but a landscaped buffer area is proposed around the perimeter of the property, and landscape planting is proposed around the car park to help soften the appearance of the built form. In addition a row of existing leylandii trees located along the south-western boundary of the property help to partly screen the site. Norton Fields Farm is located about 130 metres north-east of the proposal and is elevated above the site. Views of the proposal would be seen at a distance and the design of the site and mitigation measures such as the containment of the built form, replacement hedgerow planting and additional hedgerow planting around the car parking area would help to soften views of the proposal from this property, however, it would not be screened in its entirety. Consequently, it is considered critical that careful detailed consideration is given to treatment of boundaries, landscaping and the impact of lighting upon these properties. In view of this, appropriate conditions are recommended to this effect. It is considered that views from the residential properties at Woodbury Park and Sanghoi would be screened by the intervening buildings of the Crucible Business Park.

219. The County Landscape Officer has been consulted and has raised no objections subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions. Wychavon District Council and Worcester City Council support the proposal, subject to the imposition of conditions. One of which is the setting up of a liaison group for the construction phase and for a two year period post completion of the development. The Planning Development Control Manager notes their comments, but refers to paragraph 206 of the NPPF which states "*planning conditions should only be imposed where they are necessary; relevant to planning and; to the development to be permitted; enforceable; precise and; reasonable in all other respects*". In this respect, it is considered it would not be necessary for this scheme, as conditions should only be imposed where there are definite planning reasons for them, for example to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It is considered that whilst liaison groups are commonly set up for the life of operational developments such as waste management facilities and minerals developments, it is considered that this built development is distinctly different to these operations, and public engagement/updates could be appropriately provided outside of the planning permission requirements.

220. The Planning Development Control Manager compliments the applicant on the design of the proposed station building, which is considered to be of a high quality, providing an inspiring compact station building, using contemporary materials, whilst respecting the context of the site.

221. The Planning Development Control Manager considers that subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the impact upon the character and appearance of the local area

and upon the amenity of local residents in terms of overlooking or overbearing implications would be acceptable due to its design, size, and location.

222. Concerns have been raised by a local resident that their house price would be adversely affected by the proposal. The Planning Development Control Manager notes their concerns, but advises Members that property values are not a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Noise and Vibration

223. An assessment has been undertaken to consider the potential for construction and operational impacts to arise as a result of noise and vibration generated by the proposal. A baseline noise survey has been undertaken in order to establish existing noise conditions, and also to identify typical pass-by noise of trains on each of the adjacent railway lines, of cars on the B4084 and to establish whether the use of the proposed car park would unduly increase noise at nearby dwellings.

224. The closest noise sensitive receptors are identified as the residential properties to the north of the proposal, which includes the Follies, situated immediately to the north of the application site and Norton Fields Farm located about 130 metres north-east of the proposal. The residential property of Woodbury Holding is also located about 380 metres south-west of the proposal. Objections have been raised by the closest local residents on the grounds of noise.

225. The Noise and Vibration Chapter of the Environmental Statement predicts that during the construction phase activities such as the construction of the proposed car park would be audible above the background noise level at the Follies, and whilst these activities are temporary there would still be a minor adverse impact. Furthermore, it is considered likely that some activities would need to be undertaken during the night when the railway lines are not in use by passenger trains.

226. Due to the predicted increase in noise levels to the Follies during the construction phase, the Environmental Statement recommends that the contractor undertakes a full noise assessment when specific detailed information regarding likely construction activities and plant usage become available. This will enable any specific requirements for noise and vibration mitigation for the construction phase to be incorporated into a CEMP.

227. With regards to operational impacts, it notes that the impact of trains stopping at the station, and the railway station Public Announcement (PA) system would not be significant to noise sensitive receptors. It is also predicted that daytime noise levels would not increase at the Follies or other sensitive receptors as a result of the use of the proposed car park and the impact of potential changes in

road traffic on the surrounding road network are also considered not to be significant.

228. Worcestershire Regulatory Services have commented in respect of noise and vibration impacts. They have raised no objections subject to the imposition of a condition requiring a CEMP.

229. In view of the above matters, the Planning Development Control Manager is satisfied that the proposed development would be acceptable on noise and vibration grounds, subject to the imposition of appropriate and robust planning conditions to ensure noise mitigation measures for the duration of the construction phase are implemented to minimise noise on the nearest noise sensitive properties.

Air Quality

230. Objections are raised by local residents regarding the impact on the proposal on air quality and dust impacts. The submitted Environmental Statement considers Air Quality. It is considered that the construction activities are likely to generate dust which has the potential to generate a nuisance at nearby properties if uncontrolled. However, with the adoption of mitigation measures such as dampening down haul routes; hard surfacing haul roads; sheeting lorries; limiting speed limits within the site; and covering stockpiles these issues are likely to be temporary, infrequent, and short-term and would not persist beyond the construction phase. Therefore, with the implementation of dust mitigation measures to ensure that Best Practice Measures are being employed any adverse impacts would be minimised.

231. The Environmental Statement considers that the air quality impacts of the operational phase are expected to be insignificant. Considered over a wider area, the proposed scheme should lead to the modal shift of commuters from road to rail transport, which normally leads to lower emissions per passenger kilometre. Modal shift from road to rail travel would have the potential to decrease vehicular emissions (Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter), offsetting environmental impacts of travel growth.

232. Worcestershire Regulatory Services has no subject to the imposition of a condition requiring a CEMP; provision of secure cycle parking; and installation of electric car charging points. Public Health England wishes to make no comments on the proposal.

Contaminated Land

233. A desk based assessment and on site ground investigations have been undertaken to determine the potential environmental impacts of the proposal on the geology and soils of the area; any foreseeable impacts to construction workers, site users, surface water, groundwater and building foundations from the presence of existing contamination.

234. It identifies that the primary sources of potential contamination are from the railway lines which form the site's western and southern boundaries. There is also some potential for contamination from the site being used as agricultural land; and from off-site sources, such as the Crucible Business Park and a historic landfill site, known as the 'Morganite Victorian refuse tip' located immediately to the west of the Birmingham and Bristol railway line.

235. The Environmental Statement concludes that there are low concentrations of contaminants in the soils and groundwater, and it is unlikely that the site would pose a significant risk to human health, controlled waters, buildings or structures. Worcestershire Regulatory Services has raised no objections, subject to the imposition of conditions relating to contaminated land and a CEMP.

236. The proposal would involve significant earthworks to achieve the required site levels. The applicant states that where suitable these soils would be re-used on site and recommends that a Materials Management Plan and Soil Resource Plan are prepared. However, the applicant anticipates that approximately 8,400 cubic metres of soils would need to be disposed of off-site. Noting that materials should be sent for off-site reuse in the improvement of agricultural land or for conservation or forestry use, subject to the necessary planning permissions being in place to allow such use elsewhere. Disposal at landfill should only be considered if there are no other appropriate options available, and should be considered in a Site Waste Management Plan. They also note that all excess excavated materials without an identified use on site would be registered on the Contaminated Land: Applications in Real Environments (CL:AIRE) materials register. CL:AIRE keeps a register of materials and services which aims to link material holders with service providers or organisations requiring materials. It is also noted that about 15,350 cubic metres of additional materials would need to be imported to achieve the required site levels.

237. The County Planning Authority, as the Waste Planning Authority welcomes the consideration given to the management of soils and materials balance of the site, but would have welcomed the submission of a Materials Management Plan, Soils Resource Plan and Site Waste Management Plan to have accompanied the application to inform a holistic approach to the development of the site. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that these matters could be adequately addressed through the imposition of appropriate conditions.

Water environment

238. The Environment Agency's Indicative Flood Risk Map indicates that the application site is not located within the flood plain; however, this Map only shows flooding from main rivers. As an unnamed ordinary watercourse crosses the site a more detailed flood modelling has been undertaken by the

applicant, which identifies that the site is in Flood Zone 3 (high probability). This zone comprises land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%).

239. The proposed development is classed as 'Essential Infrastructure', as identified by Table 2: 'Flood risk vulnerability classification' of the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Table 3: 'Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone 'compatibility' of the PPG identified that for essential infrastructure located within Flood Zone 3 is required to pass an Exception Test.

240. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF states that for the Exception Test to be passed:-

241. "It must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment where one has been prepared; and a site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall. Both elements of the test will have to be passed for development to be allocated or permitted"

242. With regards to the wider sustainability benefits the applicant states that *"the proposal would benefit the local community, because at present there is no junction between these two main railway lines. With this development commuters' journeys could be reduced in both time and distance, and a shorter distance travelled is more environmentally friendly. Furthermore as there are no other locations where these two railway line cross this is the only suitable location. Also, at present, Worcester is not served by the cross-country rail service along the Bristol and Birmingham railway line, so the proposed development would provide improved access to the country to the local community. The proposal is also situated close to the centre of Worcester and the M5 Motorway, allowing easy access by both car and bus"*.

243. A Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment accompanied the application. This states that as the site is located within Flood Zone 3, flood protection mitigation measures are required. The flood risk to the site is proposed be minimised through the creation of a flood compensation area built on land enclosed by the watercourse, the Cotswold line and the B4084. This area would be designed to preferentially flood and store water during flood events. Within the development area, the site ground levels would be raised to 0.6 metres above the 100 year flood level (plus climate change).

244. The County Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and a Flood Risk

Assessment has been submitted, which demonstrates that the development would be safe for its lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, consequently the application passes the Exception Test.

245. The proposed surface water drainage forms four distinct elements: the station building and forecourt; platforms and pedestrian access routes; the car park; and the highway.

Station building and forecourt

246. The station building would have a living green roof and utilise water harvesting. The forecourt would be porous allowing any rainfall to percolate into the proposed underground storage tank.

Platforms and pedestrian access routes

247. The platforms would be drained via a system of channel drains discharging to a swale or filter trench as appropriate. The pedestrian access routes in the vicinity of the platforms would be drained to the swales/filter trenches serving the platforms. The upgraded Public Right of Way to the west of the Birmingham and Bristol railway line would be drained to a land drainage system as at present..

Car Park

248. The car park would be designed as a porous car park structure, with permeable parking bays and impermeable trafficked areas. The car park would discharge surface water into a proposed attenuation pond at a controlled rate.

Highways

249. Three attenuation ponds are proposed within the application site. The highways associated with the development access roads, main access; and around the station building would discharge into the two attenuation ponds within the triangle of land formed by railway lines and B4084. The roundabout junction on the B4084 would be drained to a separate attenuation pond sited on the east side of the B4084.

250. The applicant states that Severn Trent Water Limited has confirmed that there are no public or private foul water sewers within the vicinity of the site. As such it is deemed more cost effective to provide an in-house sewage treatment plant, which would also discharge into the watercourse, subject to the approval of the Environment Agency. Objectors have sought clarification regarding the impact of the proposal on the Crucible Business Park's water treatment infrastructure. The applicant has confirmed there would be no impact upon this infrastructure.

251. The Lead Local Flood Authority has been consulted and has raised no objections, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions to secure the construction, management and maintenance of Sustainable Drainage features and flood mitigation measure. Severn Trent Water

Limited has no objections, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring details of foul and surface water drainage.

252. Concerns are raised by Wychavon District Council and Norton Juxta Kempsey Parish Council, and local residents regarding the flooding of Woodbury Lane restricting access to the proposed railway station. The applicant has confirmed that they are currently undertaking surveys to assess the scope of works required to alleviate the flooding of this section of Woodbury Lane. Once the scope of this works is known these works will be included in the Capital Programme for 2015/16.

253. The Planning Development Control Manager considers that subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions relating to surface water, that there would be no adverse effects on the water environment and considers that the planning application accords with Policies ENV17 and ENV19 of the Wychavon District Local Plan, relating to flooding and the protection of the water environment.

Other matters

Historic Environment

254. There are no known heritage assets in the immediate locality of the application site. Wychavon District Council has raised no objections and the County Archaeologist has no objections, stating the application site has been subject to a number of archaeological assessments to determine the nature of any remains or deposits of significance present within the development area. To date this fieldwork has concluded that no such remains occur and that the impact on the historic environment caused by this proposal is low.

Cumulative Effects

255. Cumulative effects result from combined impacts of multiple developments that individually may be insignificant, but when considered together, could amount to a significant cumulative impact; and the inter-relationships between impacts – combined effects of different types of impacts, for example noise, air quality and visual impacts on a particular receptor.

256. The applicant, in their Environmental Statement, examined these impacts. The applicant concludes that there were no other developments within 2 kilometres of the scheme which were considered to be of a significant scale to have potential cumulative effects. With regards to the inter-relationships between impacts, the applicant concludes that sensitive receptors and impacts identified through the Environmental Impact Assessment process for the proposal have been considered and the nature and significance of any potential cumulative impacts likely to arise on these receptors has been examined. The assessment concluded that no significant cumulative effects would arise.

257. It is noted that the applicant included within their assessments the background level of trips for committed

developments up to 2016. This includes the South Worcestershire Development Plan Phase 2 developments, and associated infrastructure schemes, which included the South Worcester Urban Extension; and the Worcester Six Technology Park.

Human Rights

258. One letter of representation has been received objecting to the proposed development on the grounds it would infringe on their Human Rights, referring to Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 that the right to a private family life should be respected.

259. Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended) states that everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life. A public authority cannot interfere with the exercise of this right except where it is in accordance with the law and is necessary (amongst other reasons) for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. Article 1 of Protocol 1 of the Act entitles every natural and legal person to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions.

260. The law provides a right to deny planning permission where the reason for doing so is related to the public interest. Alternatively, having given due consideration to the rights of others, the local planning authority can grant planning permission in accordance with adopted policies in the development plan.

261. All material planning issues raised through the consultation exercise have been considered and it is concluded that by determining this application the County Planning Authority would not detrimentally infringe the human rights of an individual or individuals.

Loss of Agricultural Land

262. The proposed development would result in the loss of approximately 6.5 hectares of agricultural land.

263. Paragraph 112 of the NPPF states that *"local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality"*.

264. The NPPF defines best and most versatile agricultural land as Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification. This is land that is most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and which can best deliver future crops for food and non-food uses, such as biomass, fibres and pharmaceuticals. The agricultural land within the application site has been assessed as Grade 3b (moderate quality agricultural land), and is part of an Entry Level Stewardship scheme presently used for arable crops and are ploughed on rotation. In light of this agricultural land

classification there is considered to be no conflict with paragraph 112 of the NPPF.

Impact upon existing waste management facilities

265. Two permitted waste management facilities are located within 250 metres of the application site, situated immediately to the west of the proposal on the Crucible Business Park (EnviroSort – Materials Recycling Facility and Arrow Gypsum Recycling Limited – physical treatment of gypsum). At the time of writing this Report the Arrow Gypsum Recycling Limited site has been vacated.

266. Policy WCS 16 of the Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy relates to safeguarding existing waste management facilities from non-waste related uses. Both waste management facilities are contained within a building, are akin to industrial development and are separated from the proposed railway station building, car park and flood mitigation areas by the intervening Birmingham and Bristol railway lines. Whilst the proposal would likely lead to the increase in cyclists and pedestrians travelling along Woodbury Lane and the upgraded cycle/pedestrian access from Woodbury Lane, it is considered that this is an existing Public Right of Way (Footpath NJ-523), and public highway with adequate footways at this point. Furthermore, the County Highways Officer has made no adverse comments in respect to HGV traffic and cycle/pedestrian conflict, therefore, the Planning Development Control Manager considers that the proposal would not prevent, hinder or unreasonably restrict the operations of these waste management facilities.

Integrity of the railway line

267. The application site would be located in close proximity to the Cotswold Line and Birmingham and Bristol railway lines. Network Rail have been consulted on the proposal and have raised no objections, subject to the imposition of conditions requesting a method statement should vibro-compaction/displacement piling plant be used in the construction of the proposal, or temporary site compounds be constructed adjacent to the railway line; full details of excavations and earthworks to be carried out near the railway line; any scaffold must not over-sail the railway line; proposed lighting must not interfere with the operation of the railway; the erection of suitable trespass fencing; details and location of proposed tree planting; and buildings being located at least 2 metres from this boundary fence. Conditions are recommended to this effect.

268. The Planning Development Control Manager considers that there would be no adverse impact on the safe operation of the railway, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

Network Rail Operational Land

269. The applicant has submitted Drawing 08-EN-DR-0251, S3 Revision P1 which demarcates the proposed Network Rail's operational land. The Planning Development Control

Manager considers that whilst this drawing is useful for planning purposes as an indicative indication of the proposed operational land, it is not for the planning application to determine Network Rail's operational land, as should planning permission be granted the development may never be implemented and indeed it is understood a Compulsory Purchase Order application has to be made. For these reasons, it is recommended that Drawing 08-EN-DR-0251, S3 Revision P1 it not referenced in the approved list of drawing should planning permission be granted.

Sustainable Development

270. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through decision-taking. Paragraphs 18 to 219 of the NPPF, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. The NPPF emphasises that infrastructure is crucial to supporting economic development and building a strong, responsive and competitive economy.

271. It is considered that the proposal would provide direct access for residents and businesses to long distance Inter City cross-country rail services; improve access to and interchange between rail journeys on the Cotswold line and the Birmingham and Bristol line, releasing suppressed demand from rail travel, thereby encouraging a modal shift to rail and reducing car dependency; and increase accessibility to markets and employments, encourage inward investment and economic growth in Worcestershire.

272. In view of this, and the assessment of the proposal in the preceding sections of this report, it is considered that the proposal is a sustainable development, which accords with the NPPF in relation to its presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Conclusion

273. The Planning Development Control Manager considers that the principle of the proposed development in this location is acceptable and accords with adopted and emerging planning policy; and it is considered that there is a compelling need for the proposal.

274. Given that the premise of the development is a strategic interchange facility between the Birmingham and Bristol lines and the Cotswold line, which is unique at this location within the County, and as the site is allocated within the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan, it is considered that the approach taken to consideration of alternatives is acceptable.

275. The Planning Development Control Manager acknowledges that the NPPF affords significant weight to

sustainable economic growth and considers that the proposal would provide considerable economic development benefits in accordance with the NPPF.

276. The proposal would not significantly reduce the demand for the existing Worcestershire railway stations, which would continue to be viable. The applicant anticipates that car parking spaces and seats on trains released by passengers transferring to the proposed Worcestershire Parkway railway station would be taken up by new rail passengers to the network, who are currently unable to access their nearest railway station by car because the car parks are at capacity.

277. Based on the advice of Worcestershire Regulatory Services it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the air quality and contaminated land subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

278. The Planning Development Control Manager is satisfied that the proposed development would be acceptable on noise and vibration grounds, subject to the imposition of appropriate and robust planning conditions to ensure noise mitigation measures for the duration of the construction phase are implemented to minimise noise impacts on the Follies, the nearest noise sensitive property.

279. The Planning Development Control Manager considers that based on the advice of Highways England, County Highways Officer, County Council Transport Project Officer and County Footpath Officer and subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, including requiring the applicant to enter into an appropriate legal agreement under Section 6 of the Highways Act 1980 to provide a detailed road signage strategy on the M5 Motorway and Junction 7 of the M5 Motorway, the proposed development would be acceptable on traffic and highway safety grounds and would cater for the existing Public Rights of Way enabling a safe crossing over the Birmingham and Bristol railway line.

280. The Planning Development Control Manager compliments the applicant on the design of the proposed station building, which is considered to be of a high quality, providing an inspiring compact station building, using contemporary materials, whilst respecting the context of the site.

281. The Planning Development Control Manager considers that subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the impact upon the character and appearance of the local area and upon the amenity of local residents in terms of overlooking or overbearing implications would be acceptable due to its design, size, and location.

282. Based on the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water Limited, it is considered that subject to the imposition of appropriate

conditions, there would be no adverse effects on the water environment.

283. Based on the advice of Natural England, the County Ecologist and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust it is considered that subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the proposed development would not have any adverse impacts on ecology and biodiversity at the site or on the surrounding area.

284. In view of this, it is considered that the proposal is a sustainable development, which accords with the NPPF in relation to its presumption in favour of sustainable development.

285. Taking into account the provisions of the Development Plan and in particular Policies WCS 16 and WCS 17 of the adopted Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy and Saved Policies GD1, GD2, GD3, SR5, SR6, ENV1, ENV4, ENV5, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8, ENV17, ENV19, SUR1, SUR2, SUR3 and ECON1 of the adopted Wychavon District Local Plan, it is considered the proposal would not cause demonstrable harm to the interests intended to be protected by these policies or highway safety.

Recommendation

286. The Planning Development Control Manager recommends that, having taken the environmental information into account planning permission be granted for a proposed development of a new rail station and associated infrastructure. The application comprises of new platforms on the Birmingham - Bristol railway line and one platform on the Cotswold railway line, a new station building, a public right of way footbridge over the Birmingham - Bristol railway line, car parking, flood attenuation and a new roundabout on the B4084 on Land to the east and south of The Crucible Business Park, Norton, Worcester, Worcestershire, subject to the following conditions:

Commencement

- a) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission;
- b) The development enures for the benefit of Worcestershire County Council only;
- c) The developer shall notify the County Planning Authority of the start date of commencement of the development in writing at least 5 working days prior to the commencement of development;

Approved Plans

- d) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following

documents and drawings, except where otherwise stipulated by conditions attached to this permission:-

Documents:-

- **Worcestershire Parkway Planning Statement, dated February 2015;**
- **Worcestershire Parkway Design and Access Statement, dated February 2015;**
- **Worcestershire Parkway Environmental Statement, dated February 2015;**
- **Worcestershire Parkway Flood Risk Assessment & drainage Strategy, dated February 2015;**
- **Worcestershire Parkway Transport Assessment, dated February 2015; and**
- **Worcestershire Parkway Travel Plan, dated February 2015;**

Drawings:-

- **00-C-GA-0029, Rev P10 – Roundabout General Arrangement;**
- **06-C-DR-0012, Rev P4 – Overall Drainage Strategy (Rail & Non Rail);**
- **00-C-DR-0064, Rev P1 – B4084 Northbound Cross Sections;**
- **00-C-DR-0065, Rev P1 – B4084 Northbound Cross Sections;**
- **00-C-DR-0066, Rev P1 – B4084 Northbound Cross Sections;**
- **00-C-DR-0067, Rev P1 – B4084 Northbound Cross Sections;**
- **00-C-DR-0080, Rev P1 – B4084 Southbound Cross Sections;**
- **00-C-DR-0081, Rev P1 – B4084 Southbound Cross Sections;**
- **08-C-CS-0221, Rev P1 – Site Cross Sections;**
- **08-C-CS-0222, Rev P1 – Site Cross Sections;**
- **08-C-CS-0223, Rev P1 – Site Cross Sections;**
- **08-C-CS-0224, Rev P1 – Site Cross Sections;**
- **00-C-DR-0077, rev P3 – Footpath NJ-523 Footbridge General Arrangement for AIP;**
- **08-C-DR-0166, Rev P6 – Land Ownership and Access Rights WCC/NR;**
- **08-C-DR-0186, Rev P5 – Drainage WCC Ownership;**
- **08-C-DR-0188, Rev P2 – Proposed Site Levels;**
- **08-C-DR-0250, Rev P1 – Construction Plan;**
- **08-EN-DR-0008, Rev P4 – Figure 2.1 Location Plan;**
- **08-EN-DR-0009, Rev P4 – Figure 2.2 Red Line Boundary;**
- **08-LA-DR-0128, Rev P2 – Landscape and Ecological Masterplan;**

- 08-EN-DR-0197, Rev P1 – Environmental Statement Masterplan Figure ES2.3;
- 08-EN-DR-0252, Rev P1 – Existing Site Plan;
- 08-LA-DR-0233, Rev P2 – Planting Plan;
- 00-C-DR-0082, Rev P3 – Proposed Right of Way and Cycle Route;
- 00-C-LS-0034, Rev P2 – General Arrangement Longitudinal Sections;
- 00-SL-DR-0031, Rev P2 – Non Rail Lighting Layout;
- 02-00-AP-2000, Rev P2 – Ground Floor and Mezzanine Level Plan;
- 02-02-AP-2100, Rev P2 – First Floor Plan;
- 02-00-AP-2200, Rev P2 – Roof Level Plan;
- 02-09-AP-2500, Rev P2 – Station Front Elevation and Cross Section;
- 02-09-AP-2520, Rev P2 – Station Building and Circulation Atrium Side Elevations;
- 02-09-AP-2530, Rev P2 – Circulation Atrium and Interchange Bridge Rear Elevation; and
- 02-09-AP-2540, Rev P2 – Station Building Long Sections;

Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP)

- e) Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development hereby approved shall commence, including demolition, ground works and vegetation clearance until a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), in accordance with Worcestershire Regulatory Services "*Code of Best Practice for Demolition and Construction Sites*" has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The approved CEMP shall be implemented for the duration of the construction phase. The CEMP shall address the following issues:

Hours of Working

- i. A scheme providing the days and hours of construction operations;

Highways

- ii. Measures to ensure that vehicles leaving the site do not deposit mud or other detritus on the public highway;
- iii. Details of site operative parking areas, material storage areas and the location of site operatives facilities;

Dust

- iv. **A scheme to minimise and mitigate the impacts of dust emissions;**

Noise and Vibration

- v. **A scheme to minimise and mitigate the impacts of noise and vibration;**

Water Environment

- vi. **Measures to be undertaken to ensure that any pollution and silt generated by the construction works shall not adversely affect groundwater and the ordinary watercourse running through the site;**
- vii. **A method statement for the protection of sustainable drainage system (SuDS) features and associated Green Infrastructure during each phase of construction to ensure that 'soft SuDS' are adequately established prior to bringing them into beneficial use;**
- viii. **Phasing arrangements to ensure that flows along the ordinary watercourse and Stoulton Brook do not increase until the flood mitigation and SuDS features are completed in accordance with the scheme approved under Condition k) of this permission and operational;**

Ecology

- ix. **Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;**
- x. **A plan to identify all existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows to be retained and details of their protection; and identification and appropriate fencing, exclusion barriers and signage of biodiversity protection zones;**
- xi. **The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features, including hedgerows;**
- xii. **The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works;**
- xiii. **Responsible persons and lines of communication;**
- xiv. **The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works or similarly competent or key specialist personnel;**
- xv. **Maintenance of a daily 'works biodiversity log' to record any observations of wildlife and the status of the site and its protective features (including integrity of any exclusion fencing) and to list any remedial actions required and the named operatives tasked with undertaking those actions;**
- xvi. **A procedure to ensure that during the construction phase all trenches/excavations/pipes**

- are closed off overnight, or if unavailable, are fitted with wood or earth escape ramps to allow trapped wildlife to escape;
- xvii. A procedure to address the clearance of vegetation on site outside the bird breeding season, which generally extends between March and August inclusive. If this is not possible then any vegetation that is to be removed or disturbed should be checked by an experienced ecologist for nesting birds immediately prior to works commencing. If birds are found to be nesting any works which may affect them would have to be delayed until the young have fledged and the nest has been abandoned naturally;
- xviii. A Great Crested Newt Reasonable Avoidance Measures document (or similar);
- xix. A pre-construction and construction phase Ecological Monitoring Strategy, which shall have the purpose of identifying any recent occupation of features on site by highly mobile species, and to update the status of features used transiently by protected species which may subsequently be subject to construction / operational impacts, shall include the following:-
- Aims and objectives of monitoring to match the stated purpose;
 - Identification of adequate baseline conditions prior to the start of development;
 - Appropriate success criteria, thresholds, triggers and targets against which the effectiveness of the various conservation measures being monitored can be judged;
 - Methods for data gathering and analysis;
 - Location of monitoring;
 - Timing and duration of monitoring;
 - Responsible persons and lines of communication;
 - Review, and where appropriate, publication of results and outcomes;
- xx. A report describing the results of the pre-construction and construction phase ecological monitoring shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority at intervals identified in the pre-construction and construction phase Ecological Monitoring Strategy as required by Condition e) xix. above. Where the results from ecological monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives will not be met, the report shall set out how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed with the County Planning Authority, and then implemented so that the development delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the approved scheme;
- xxi. A biosecurity protocol detailing measures to minimize or remove the risk of introducing non-

native species into a particular area during the construction, operational or decommissioning phases of a project;

xxii. Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, a Reptile Mitigation Strategy shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The Reptile Mitigation Strategy shall detail the proposed capture and exclusion methods, including:-

- Mechanisms for protection of reptile receptor sites;
- Key personnel and proposed translocation effort timing;
- Constraints: weather, seasonal constraints, maximum capture number parameters;
- Habitat manipulation approach: extent/height and timing of creation/management operations, both prior to and during construction phases;
- Approach to capture and animal welfare provision;
- Proposed approach to reptile 'watching brief';
- Any contingencies; and
- Timing and protection of compensation measures;

Lighting

f) Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to the development being brought into use, a lighting scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the height of all lighting, the intensity of lighting (specified in Lux levels), spread of light, including approximate light spillage levels (in metres), light colour, the times when the lighting would be illuminated, any measures proposed to mitigate impact of the lighting or disturbance through glare (such as making use of cowls and hoods) and it shall clearly identify features used by bats and ensure measures are taken to minimise any impacts on any existing flight lines and commuting routes identified by the precautionary pre-works bat activity survey as required by Condition g) below. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Ecology and Landscape

g) Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, updated (pre-works) bat activity monitoring shall be undertaken by a suitably

qualified ecologist during the appropriate season (April to September inclusive) to ensure refinements to the detailed lighting scheme required by condition f) above are informed by and reflect an up-to-date understanding of site usage by commuting and foraging bats. The monitoring information shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority;

h) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, an Ecological Management Plan (EMP) for a period of at least five years from the date the development hereby approved commences, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The EMP shall include the following:

- i. Description and evaluation of features to be managed;**
- ii. Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;**
- iii. Aims and objectives of management;**
- iv. Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives;**
- v. Prescriptions for management actions;**
- vi. Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period);**
- vii. Details of the body or organization responsible for implementation of the plan;**
- viii. Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures;**
- ix. Details of any legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the EMP will be secured by the applicant with the management bodies responsible for its delivery;**
- x. A planting scheme to include native species of local provenance, locations, numbers, densities, spacing and planting sizes for the development hereby approved. The scheme shall be implemented within the first available planting season (the period between 31 October in any one year and 31 March in the following year) on completion of the development. Any new trees or shrubs, which within a period of five years from the completion of the planting die, are removed, or become damaged or diseased, shall be replaced on an annual basis, in the next planting season with others of a similar size and the same species;**
- xi. Specifications for any watercourse profile**

- changes, pond creation, and pond enhancement measures shall be detailed, including new pond profiles, planting, detailed outfall designs and timetables of works;
- xii. A Reptile Mitigation Strategy which shall include measures appropriate for the favourable management of key reptile habitats, including: timing and height of grass cut regimes; size, height and exact location of any conservation margins and/or planting; installation and upkeep of any educational resources/interpretation panels and the management/upkeep and location of any reptile hibernacula for a period of no less than 5 years. It shall also identify key roles and contractors identified to undertake the specified management prescriptions to a specified timetable;
- xiii. Favourable management of vegetation across the site for breeding birds and bats;
- xiv. Installation and upkeep of public interpretation features such as signage/information boards which outline the value of features including: Sustainable Drainage systems, flood alleviation spaces, key habitats of biodiversity or Green Infrastructure value and operations undertaken to promote the conservation value of these
- xv. Details of at least twelve bat boxes which are capable of supporting the diversity of bats identified on site and eight bird boxes which shall be installed on site, including the location and specifications. Once installed, bat and bird boxes shall be maintained for a period of at least five years;
- xvi. Details of the mammal ledges to be installed within the culvert under the B4084 and under the Cotswold railway line embankment;
- xvii. A post construction and operational phase Ecological Monitoring Strategy to include appraisal of impacts and mitigation effectiveness for reptiles, bats, great crested newt and birds for a period of at least five years from the date of this permission. The Ecological Monitoring Strategy shall:
- Identify a timetable of survey effort for individual target species. This should include survey methodologies and reporting format;
 - The period of survey monitoring and the parties responsible for undertaking

- monitoring;
- Objectives for evaluating the success or otherwise of mitigation strategies, and should inform subsequent stakeholder reviews and any operational modifications (if required) to the remaining period of the Ecological Management Plan; and
 - Survey reports shall be compliant with current Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management best practice guidance and provided to the County Planning Authority and the Worcestershire Biological Record Centre;
- i) If the development hereby approved does not commence or, having commenced, is suspended for more than 12 months the approved ecological measures secured by conditions shall be reviewed and, where necessary, amended and updated. The review shall be informed by further ecological surveys commissioned to establish if there have been any changes in the presence and/or abundance of habitats and species and identify any likely new ecological impacts that might arise from any changes. Where the survey results indicate that changes have occurred that will result in ecological impacts not previously addressed in the approved scheme, the original approved ecological measures shall be revised and new or amended measures, and a timetable for their implementation, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;
- j) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Recommendations set out in Section 4.0 'Conclusion', in the submitted 'Worcestershire Parkway - Addendum to Bat Survey Report', prepared by CSa Environmental Planning, dated May 2015, Report No. CSa/2201/02;

Water Environment

- k) No development shall take place, until a detailed design and associated management and maintenance plan of surface water drainage for the site and the building hereby approved, using sustainable drainage methods (SuDS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme shall include a detailed design for the flood mitigation area and SuDS features. It shall detail the range of SuDS components to be used at source, site and

regional control levels for each part of the development and shall be in accordance with best practice as laid out in the CIRIA Guidance manuals and any adopted National and Local SuDS Standards, with consideration given in the first instance to utilising water management through soft features and at ground level. The maintenance and management plan shall include details of the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and/or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime; and easements to enable maintenance to be shown on the general arrangement drawings. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the development being brought into use, and shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved management and maintenance plan throughout the lifetime of the development. The detailed drainage design shall be informed by the following general arrangement drawings included within the approved Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy:

- Drawing: 06-C-DR-0012, Rev P4 – Overall Drainage Strategy (Rail & Non Rail);
- Drawing: 06-DR-C-0009, Rev P1 – Northern Site Proposed Development;
- Drawing: 06-DR-C-0011, Rev P1 – Surface Water Attenuation & Schematic Drainage Layout;
- Drawing: 08-C-DR-0166, Rev P6 – Land Ownership and Access Rights WCC/NR;

- l) Notwithstanding the submitted details, the development hereby approved shall not commence until drainage plans for the disposal of foul water have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first brought into use;
- m) Prior to the development hereby approved being brought into use, details of the measures to protect the culverts with the application site from blockages shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Design

- n) Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development of the Public Right of Way Bridge shall take place until the detailed design and a

schedule and/or samples of the materials, colours and finishes for the Public Right of Way Bridge have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

- o) Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development of the railway station building and interchange bridge shall take place until the detailed design and a schedule and/or samples of the materials and finishes for the railway station building and interchange bridge have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;
- p) Notwithstanding the submitted details, within 6 months of the date of this permission, details of all surfacing materials including the Public Rights of Way within the application site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;
- q) Notwithstanding the submitted details, within 6 months of the date of this permission, details of all walls, fences and other means of enclosure, including the provision of permanent trespass fencing adjacent to Network Rail's land shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Highways

- r) The development authorised by this permission shall not be brought into use until the applicant has entered into an agreement with Highways England pursuant to Section 6 of the Highways Act 1980 providing for a detailed signage strategy which shall include local network directional signage and directional signage from the M5 Motorway. The detailed design of all highway signage on the M5 Motorway and M5 Junction 7 shall comply with the requirements of the Design Manual for Road and Bridges;
- s) Prior to commencement of development hereby approved, a Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in consultation with Highways England. The approved scheme shall be adhered to for the duration of the

construction period;

- t) Before the development hereby approved is brought into use the layout of the car parking spaces shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter the scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved detail;
- u) The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the access, turning area and parking facilities shown on the approved drawings have been properly consolidated, surfaced, drained and otherwise constructed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing to the County Planning Authority and these areas shall thereafter be retained and kept available for those users at all times;
- v) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, the engineering details and specification of the proposed roads and highway drains shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;
- w) The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the road works necessary to provide access from the B4084, including the roundabout have been completed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority;
- x) Notwithstanding the submitted details, within 9 months of the date of this permission, the approved Travel Plan shall be updated to include a measure to promote the development hereby approved to employers in the area; and shall include real time information for passengers within the bus stops on site, and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in consultation with Worcestershire County Council's Travel Plan Co-ordinator. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

- y) Electric charging points shall be installed in 25 of the allocated parking spaces for the opening of the development hereby approved, and an additional 25 made ready for charging point installation at a future date. The charging points must comply with BS7671. The socket shall

comply with BS1363, and must be provided with a locking weatherproof cover;

Cycle Parking Facilities

- z) Notwithstanding the submitted details, full details of the cycle parking facilities, including locations, type of rack, spacing, numbers, method of installation, access to cycle parking and schedule of the materials and finishes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority prior to the development hereby approved being brought into use. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Materials Management

- aa) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a Site Waste Management Plan, Materials Management Plan and Soils Resource Plan, including all areas to be used for temporary soil storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Contaminated Land

- bb) Following the completion of the measures identified in the remediation scheme (areas of clean cover) a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority;
- cc) In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the development hereby approved that was not previously identified, it must be reported in writing immediately to the County Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, and these shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Following the completion of any measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a validation report must be prepared and submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority prior to the development hereby approved being brought into use;

CCTV

- dd) Details and locations of all external CCTV cameras shall be submitted to and approved in writing by

the County Planning Authority prior to the development being brought into use. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Protection of Railway Lines and Embankments

ee) Prior to commencement of the development hereby approved, should any excavations, earthworks or temporary site compounds be proposed adjacent to the railway line, or should vibro-compaction or displacement piling plant be used in the construction of the development hereby approved, a Method Statement detailing how the structural integrity of the railway embankment, retaining walls and bridges shall be maintained, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in consultation with Network Rail. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

ff) Any scaffold which is to be constructed adjacent to the railway must be erected in such a manner that at no time will any poles or cranes over-sail or fall onto the railway. All plant and scaffolding must be positioned that in the event of a failure it will not fall onto Network Rail's land; and

Artwork

gg) Details of the proposed public artwork within the station forecourt hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in consultation with Wychavon District Council. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Contact Points

Specific Contact Points for this Report

Case Officer Steven Aldridge, Principal Planner:
01905 728507 saldridge@worcestershire.gov.uk

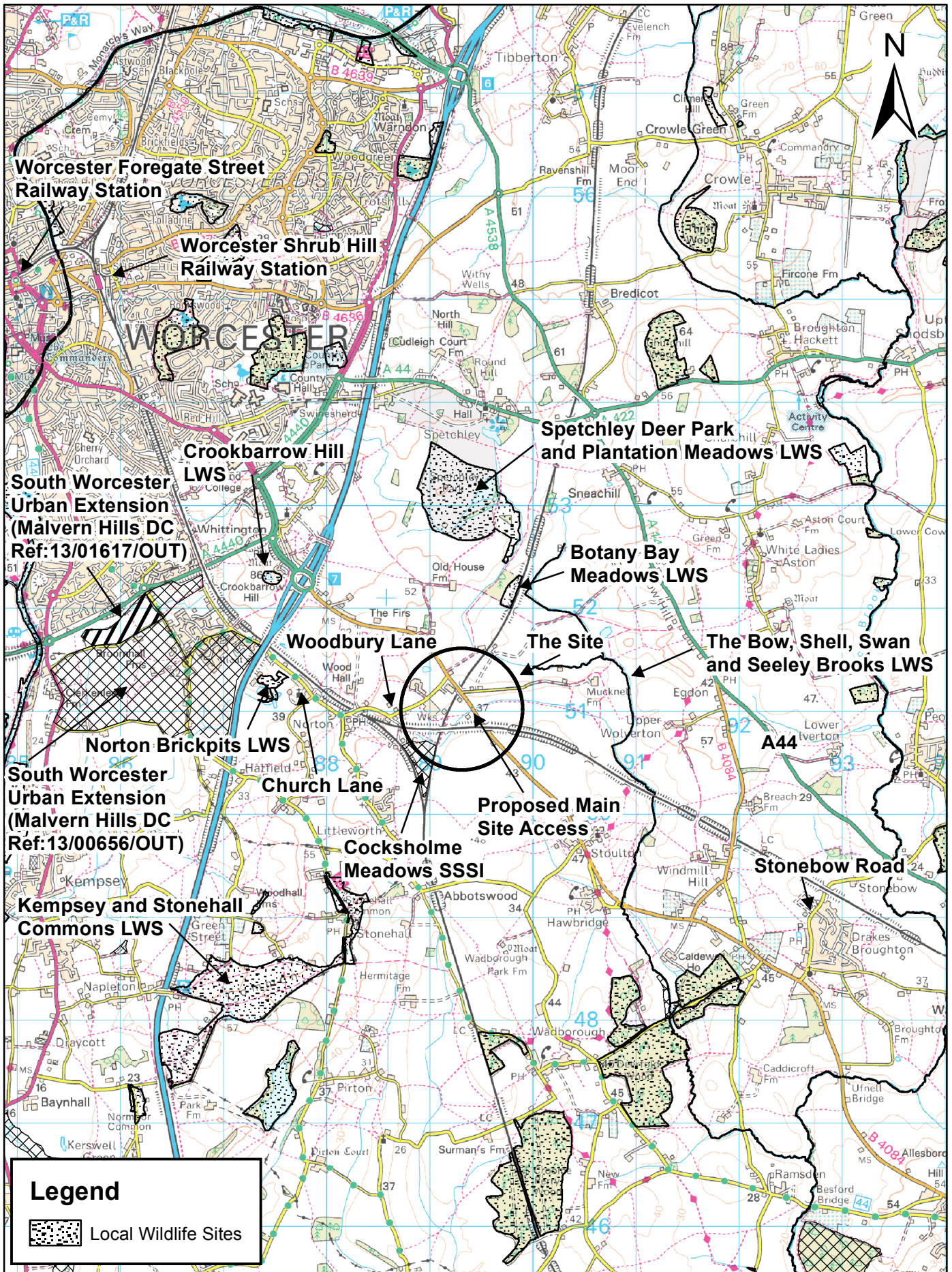
Mark Bishop, Planning Development Control Manager:
01905 766709 mbishop@worcestershire.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer ((in this case the Planning Development Control Manager) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this item:

The application, plans and consultation replies in file reference 15/000007/REG3.

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Legend

 Local Wildlife Sites



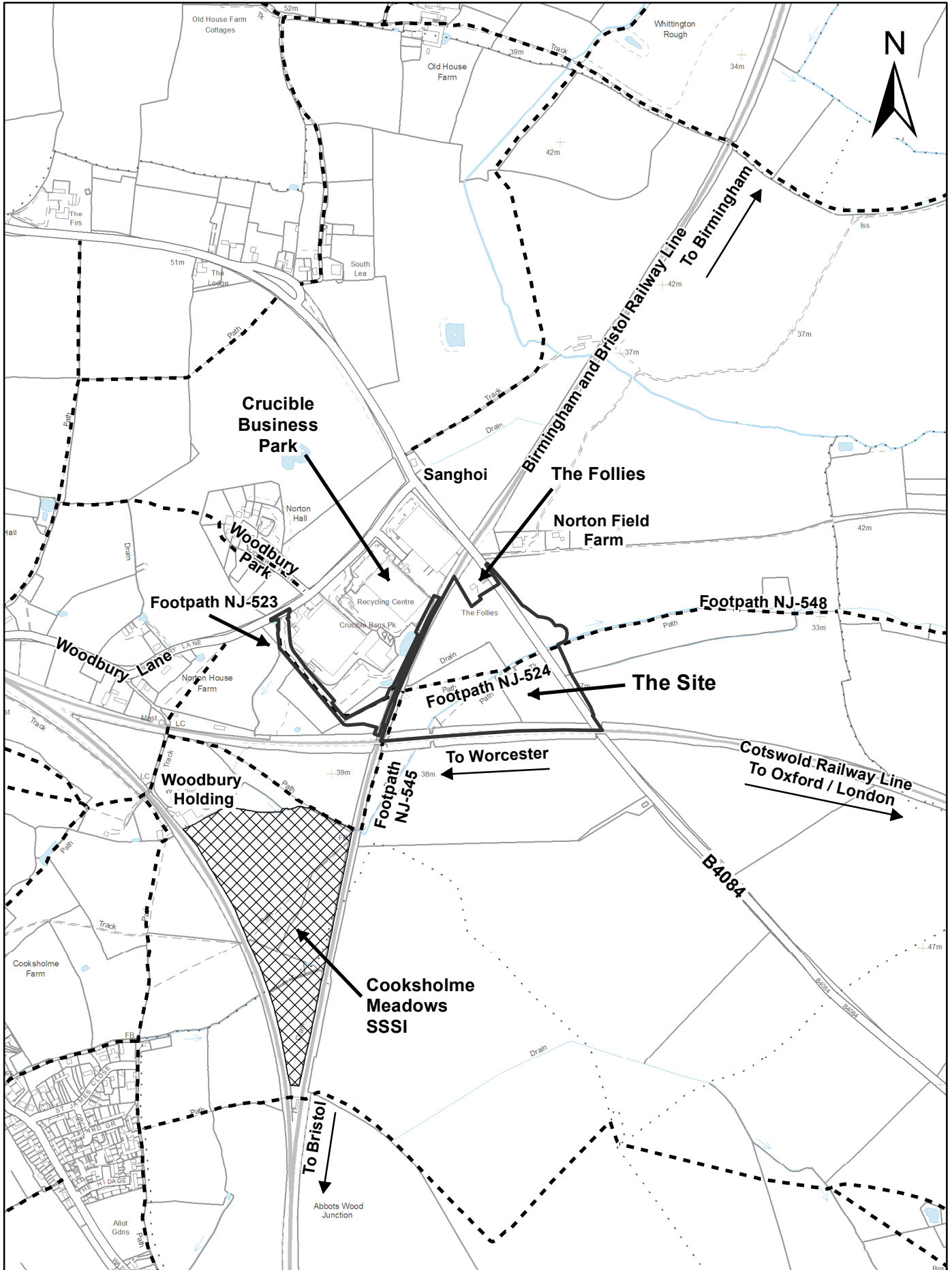
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1:50,000


County Hall,
Spetchley Road,
Worcester
WR5 2NP

Proposed development of a new rail station and associated infrastructure. The application comprises of new platforms on the Birmingham - Bristol railway line and one platform on the Cotswold railway line, a new station building, a public right of way footbridge over the Birmingham - Bristol railway line, car parking, flood attenuation and a new roundabout on the B4084 at land to the east and south of The Crucible Business Park, Norton, Worcester. Ref: 15/000007/REG3

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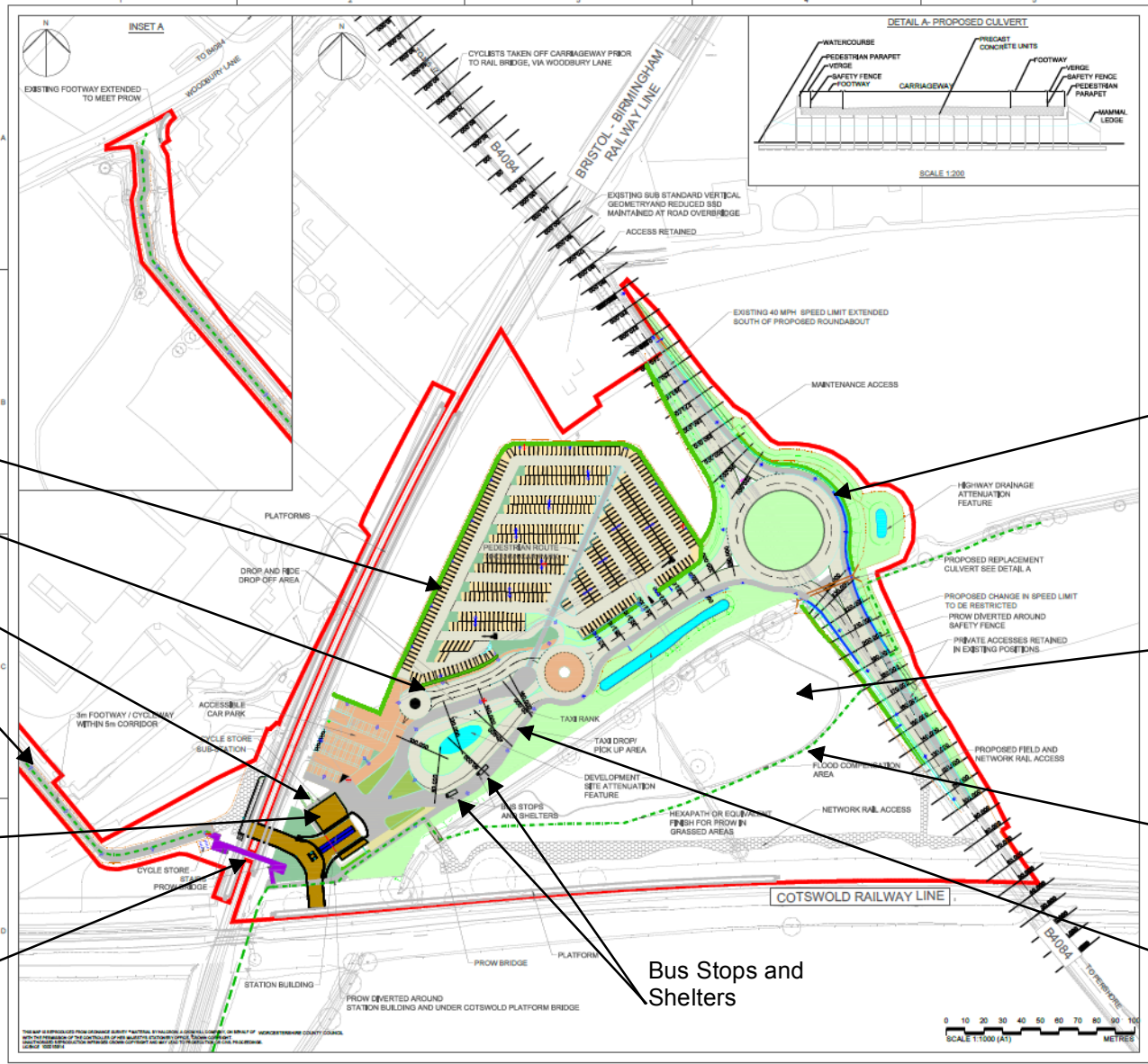
 <p>worcestershire county council</p>	<p>Scale: 1:10,000</p>	
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County Hall,
Spetchley Road,
Worcester
WR5 2NP

Proposed development of a new rail station and associated infrastructure.
The application comprises of new platforms on the Birmingham - Bristol railway line and one platform on the Cotswold railway line, a new station building, a public right of way footbridge over the Birmingham - Bristol railway line, car parking, flood attenuation and a new roundabout on the B4084 at land to the east and south of The Crucible Business Park, Norton, Worcester
Ref: 15/000007/REG3

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Car Park

Drop Off Area

Cycle Storage

Combined Footway/
Cycleway

Railway Station
Building

Public Right of
Way
Footbridge

Roundabout
Junction

Flood
Compensation
Area

Re-aligned
Public Right
of Way

Taxi Rank

Bus Stops and
Shelters



Scale: NTS

County Hall,
Spetchley Road,
Worcester
WR5 2NP

A full planning application for the development of a new rail station and associated infrastructure. The application comprises of new platforms on the Birmingham - Bristol railway line and one platform on the Cotswold railway line, a new station building, a public right of way footbridge over the Birmingham - Bristol railway line, car parking, flood attenuation and a new roundabout on the B4084 at land to the east and south of The Crucible Business Park, Norton, Worcester
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