

CABINET

27 OCTOBER 2022

REDDITCH RAILWAY STATION

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)

CMR for Economy and Infrastructure: Cllr Marc Bayliss

Relevant Chief Officer

Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure

Local Member(s)

Councillor Marshall and Councillor Fry (Arrow Valley West)
Councillor Akbar and Councillor Clayton (Redditch North)

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills recommends that Cabinet:

- (a) Notes the progress to date and supports the redevelopment of Redditch Railway Station;**
- (b) Acknowledges the outcome of an options appraisal for Redditch Railway Station (Appendix 1);**
- (c) Acknowledges estimates for the construction of Redditch Railway Station and related external works (Appendix 2);**
- (d) Notes the allocation of £10m funding for delivering Redditch Railway Station which exists within the Capital Programme as set out in the Finance section of the report;**
- (e) Authorises the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure to obtain tenders for the works;**
- (f) Authorises the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure in consultation with the CMR for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills to enter into contracts for the construction of the works;**
- (g) Authorises the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure to enter into an agreement with Redditch Borough Council regarding the redevelopment of their land for public realm as part of the station redevelopment; and**
- (h) Authorises the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure to enter into an Asset Protection Agreement with Network Rail and any other agreements with the rail industry as required in the construction of the station and related works on their land.**

Why is this decision important?

The decision to allocate £10m Rail Investment Capital Funding for Redditch Railway Station is being sought now, prior to entering into any contracts for the construction of the works and associated land acquisition. This reflects the commitments made in the Corporate Plan to invest in Redditch Railway Quarter in order to unlock growth and support our Open for Business ambitions.

Background

1. At its meeting on 18 March 2021 Cabinet confirmed support for the redevelopment of the 'Railway Quarter' (Redditch Railway Station and surrounding area) as a Gamechanger 2 site and endorsed the acquisition of land required to deliver the Railway Quarter proposals. The delegations relating to any land purchase to deliver the station scheme have therefore already been approved, with funding from the Council's Capital Programme for additional Rail Station Developments, including Gamechanger 2 Sites, subject to a financial assessment as set out in the 18 March 2021 Cabinet report.
2. Cabinet had previously delegated authority in November 2020 to the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure for acquiring land adjacent to key rail nodes for the delivery of further "gateway" schemes in Worcestershire (Gamechanger 2 Sites).
3. The Capital Programme 2022-25 approved on 3 February 2022, allocated £11m towards Rail Investment to support and progress the Redditch Rail Quarter Programme and bring forward further car parking and rail investments.
4. A multi-disciplinary team was assembled to develop the Preferred Option design of a transport interchange to replace the existing Redditch Railway Station. The project team have engaged with stakeholders comprising West Midlands Rail Executive, Network Rail, West Midlands Trains and Redditch Borough Council in the development of the Preferred Option.
5. The Station was included within the Redditch Town Investment Plan and Redditch Borough Council's bid for Towns Fund Grant in January 2021, as reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 18 March 2021. Redditch Borough Council were not allocated sufficient grant funding to support all of the projects within the Town Investment Plan. Redditch Town Deal Board reviewed and reprioritised the projects that would be in receipt of the grant. Whilst the Board wanted to see the railway station project progress, no Towns Fund grant was awarded to the project.

Redditch Railway Station Objectives

6. The Redditch Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus acknowledges that the current Railway Station is an important gateway into Redditch Town Centre. However, in its current state it provides a poor first impression of Redditch for anyone arriving by train.

7. The redevelopment of the Railway Quarter as a strategic Gateway development will be designed to preserve and enhance the character of the surrounding area and provide better integration between the Station and the Town Centre.
8. Investment in the Redditch Railway Quarter is essential if Redditch is to be able to compete effectively with nearby towns for economic activity and growth, and to attract more residents and visitors into Redditch Town Centre.
9. The redevelopment of Redditch Railway Quarter aims to create an integrated multi-modal transport interchange as a modern attractive gateway to Redditch and maximising the town's position as the final destination on the Cross-City railway from Birmingham. The project has the following objectives:
 - a. Create a modern attractive gateway and customer experience for commuters and visitors;
 - b. Create a multi-modal interchange with accessibility for all users;
 - c. Enhance station amenities and accessibility sufficient to meet Redditch's 1.1 million trips p.a. and allow for 8-22% passenger growth between 2020 and 2035;
 - d. Greater connection between Redditch town centre and the Railway Quarter for all;
 - e. Create safe and secure environment for all users public and staff;
 - f. Create a sustainable and green environment and reduce carbon consumption;
 - g. Support the regeneration and future development of land within the Redditch Railway Quarter.
10. It is anticipated that the overall objectives cannot be achieved in a single phase and that the redevelopment of the Railway Quarter will be phased.
11. An Options Appraisal for the first phase, Redditch Railway Station, was undertaken by the Design Team and the Preferred Option visualisations for the station are shown in Appendix 1.
12. The Preferred Option for Redditch Railway Station will deliver the following:
 - a. an attractive and accessible first impression to visitors to Redditch;
 - b. Improve integration for rail users between the station, Kingfisher Centre, bus station and the Town Centre for onward journeys with improved opportunities for active travel and sustainable transport options
 - c. a new attractive two-storey station building with modern, fit for purpose facilities such as passenger seating area, a retail/café unit and passenger toilets;
 - d. enhanced station amenities and improved accessibility to meet modern standards and future passenger growth forecasts;
 - e. Direct to Unicorn Hill and public realm at the upper level and lower-level access to platform and car parking;
 - f. cycle storage areas to promote active travel to and from the station for cyclists;
 - g. Improved drop off and pick-up facilities within the car park;
 - h. Creation of new attractive Public Realm area in front of station as a green and leisure environment connecting to the Redditch Town Centre Town's Fund Public Realm scheme;

- i. Consideration and treatment of adjoining landholdings as part of the overall scheme;
- j. Highways modifications across Unicorn Hill, creating an upgraded crossing and access to the existing bus interchange and the Kingfisher Centre, improving safety;
- k. Providing greater connectivity with the bus station by using smart technology for better real-time digital information to help people use sustainable transport for their journeys;
- l. opportunity in a future development phase to evaluate deploying a mobility hub and digital real-time information to aid sustainable travel options;

Land and Legal

- 13. The Cabinet delegation of 18 March 2021 endorses the proposal to acquire the land required to deliver the Railway Quarter proposals by means of private treaty in the first instance and if necessary, through the making of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) subject to agreement with the Cabinet Member for Responsible for Economy and Infrastructure.
- 14. On the basis that the Council will invoke section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the purpose of exercising its compulsory purchase powers, the confirming authority will be the Secretary of State for Homes and Communities.
- 15. Redditch Borough Council (RBC) own a plot of land within Phase 1, which enables pedestrian access to the existing and proposed station building from the public highway. There is no intention to acquire the RBC land and the development and future maintenance of the Public Realm land will be the subject of a multi-party agreement between Worcestershire County Council, Redditch Borough Council and Network Rail Infrastructure Limited.
- 16. Network Rail owned land will be subject to a Third-Party Asset Protection Agreement between Worcestershire County Council and Network Rail which is required to permit work on their assets and ensure safeguarding of railway infrastructure.

Planning and Policy

- 17. Further to consultation with Planning Officers at Redditch Borough Council and Worcestershire County Council, it has been confirmed that the determining Local Planning Authority for the application will be Worcestershire County Council under Regulation 3 of Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.
- 18. In the interests of stakeholder engagement, officers will continue to hold joint pre-application discussions with both authorities going forward.
- 19. The development of a strategic Gateway into Redditch through the Redditch Railway Station is aligned to the County Council's Corporate plan priority of Being Open for Business by attracting more residents and visitors into the town to support continued economic growth. The Redditch Transport Interchange and Railway Quarter is a key town centre revitalisation project in the WLEP's Worcestershire's Plan for Growth

2020 – 2040 by ensure Redditch continues to meet the needs of the local communities it serves.

20. The redevelopment of Redditch Railway Station will provide better transport connections between the station, the bus station and active travel options such as walking and cycling. This is aligned to the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and County Council's Corporate plan priority of Being Open for Business by better connecting our places, our people and our businesses across Worcestershire.
21. The redevelopment of Redditch Railway Station is detailed as a key output of the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy 2 (WRIS) 2022-2050, presently under consultation. This Strategy updates the original WRIS adopted in 2017, reflecting the changes in the industry, ongoing recovery from covid, review of local plans and achievements to date. It sets out the priorities for rail investment in the county, recognising the need for partnership across the rail industry to ensure delivery.
22. The County Council's Corporate plan priority of Protecting The Environment is supported with the investment in Redditch Railway Station to enhance and increase cycle parking at the station with improved pedestrian access for active travel and onward connection to bus services. With this brings the benefit of reducing emissions whilst also contributing to healthier, active lifestyles and improved sustainable travel options.

Procurement Strategy

23. Based on current market conditions, the County Council proposes to proceed on the basis of a two stage Design and Build contract (post Outline Design) based on NEC 4 terms and conditions. The incumbent Design Team will produce the Outline Design and gain Network Rail approval in principle (AIP).
24. The procurement programme includes early soft market testing. This strategic approach will be reviewed after the market engagement to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and to mitigate risks.

Funding

25. Getting Building Fund (GBF) has provided £1m investment for the development of the Business Case for the Preferred Option.
26. The WCC Capital Programme 2022-25 which was approved on 3 February 2022, allocated £11m to Rail Investment.
27. The total estimated cost of the capital works to deliver the station scheme is £10m. As seen in Appendix 2
28. The Redditch Transport Interchange has a proposed investment of £10m from the total £11m Capital Programme for Rail Investments.

Programme Phase 1

29. The following programme for the delivery of Phase 1 is based upon all required land assembly being in place:

- a. Market engagement for 2 stage Design and Build contract by Q3 2022/23
- b. Tender process and award for 2 stage design and build contract by Q1 2023/24
- c. Outline design approval by Q3 2023/24
- d. Full planning consent by Q4 2023/24
- e. **Land acquired by Private Treaty** Q3 2023/24
- f. Site works commencement Q2 2024/25
- g. Completion of Phase 1 for Q4 2025/26

30. If Compulsory Purchase is required, then the following programme applies:

- h. **Land acquired by CPO** Q4 2024/25
- i. Site works commencement Q4 2024/25
- j. Completion of Phase 1 for Q3 2026/27

Financial comments

31. The Capital Programme has identified and set aside £11 million within the Capital Programme for the Rail Investment Strategy including development of the Redditch Railway Quarter. The estimated revenue cost of this borrowing is £0.500 million and will be sought from savings within the medium-term financial plan.

32. The Cabinet report supporting approval of the initial allocation noted that developments would be taken following “consideration of a full and robust business case”. A business case for Redditch is in progress and at this stage the Chief Financial Officer is satisfied that the funding envelope is sufficient to undertake a development of the rail site. Should the costs be greater than the funds available or reflect poor value for money the project will need to be brought back to Cabinet for further consideration and identification of funds if appropriate.

Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments

33. The screening for Equality and Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed which resulted in the requirement for a full Equality and Public Health and Sustainability Impact Assessment to be carried out. These have been submitted and signed off by WCC.

34. The project is also obliged to adhere to Network Rail's Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) process which requires submission of the assessment to Network Rail's Built Environment Access Panel for review. This process is comparable to the Council's Equality Relevance Screening process.

Risk Implications

35. Continued rising inflation in the UK economy will increase the capital costs. The rate of inflation of 16.15% has been used in the cost estimates.

36. Continued market conditions with issues around supply and escalating prices in materials will affect the programme and budget. The procurement of a 2 stage Design and Build contract will benefit from early market engagement to mitigate those risks where possible.

37. If any land interests are required, then a CPO may delay the programme unless agreements can be met in a timely manner to purchase them through private treaty.

38. Design development may identify additional costs which may need to be mitigated through value engineering and descopeing within the scheme.

39. Ground surveys may reveal ground conditions, contaminated land and remediation measures. Surveys to be undertaken at the next phase.

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 - Scheme Visualisations
- Appendix 2 – Cost estimates
- Appendix 3 – Location Plan of the proposed site
- Appendix 4 – Joint Impact Assessments

Contact Points

Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Economy & Infrastructure) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.