

***PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF
PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF NEW STATION AT HEAD BOLT
LANE, KIRKBY***

August 2021



Introduction

This document is intended to outline the programme of works proposed to be undertaken at the application site, which is located to the south of Headbolt Lane, Kirkby, Knowsley. The scheme proposals involve the proposed construction of a new railway station, car park and associated works.

The Headbolt Lane project will deliver a new station at the site adjacent to Headbolt Lane in east Kirkby, extending the current Merseyrail operation beyond the current terminus at Kirkby Station, also being the terminus for Northern services to Wigan/Manchester. Headbolt Lane will become the new interchange between Northern and Merseyrail services, with all passengers boarding or alighting at the new station. Headbolt Lane would be served by extensions of all the existing four MEL trains per hour to Kirkby and by the approximately hourly, Northern service between Headbolt Lane and Wigan.

The new station has been a long-held aspiration for the Liverpool City Region, with need identified in the Local Transport Plan Rail Strategy from 2006, and Liverpool City Region Long Term Rail Strategy publication in 2014. The project also seeks to deliver on some of the key strategic objectives identified in Knowsley's Local Plan published in 2016, as the new station promotes sustainable economic and employment growth and providing more sustainable transport to the wider Kirkby area. The project is intended to improve direct rail connectivity within the Kirkby area, particularly improving connectivity to the central Liverpool economic area, with the over-arching endeavour of increasing opportunities for Kirkby residents, easing deprivation, and encouraging investment in the Kirkby area.

Planning Policy

Relevant National and Local planning policy is outlined below:

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF sets out the Government's vision for planning to help achieve sustainable development. Central to this is that economic, social and environmental gains should be sought through the planning system.

NPPF Chapter 6 (Building a strong, competitive economy) states (paragraph 81):

Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

NPPF Chapter 9 sets out the government's vision for how the planning system should promote sustainable transport. Paragraph 104 states that '*Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:*

- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
- b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
- c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
- d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and*
- e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.*

Paragraph 110/111 goes on to provide guidance for considering development proposals relating to transportation:

Paragraph 110: In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;*
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;*
- c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code 46; and*
- d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.*

Paragraph 111: Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Turning to the need for good design, NPPF Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places) states:

Paragraph 126: The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 130. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Chapter 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change) states at Paragraph 152:

The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Chapter 16 address the requirements for ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’.

Paragraph 194 provides detailed guidance for the determination of ‘proposals affecting heritage assets’, stating ‘*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance*’.

Paragraph 203 states: ‘*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets. applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy adopted January 2016

The following policies from the Core Strategy are of relevance to the determination of the application:

Policy CS1 - Spatial Strategy for Knowsley: Knowsley's Spatial Development Priorities

Priorities for the development of Knowsley to 2028 will be to:

e) Maintain and enhance networks for passenger and freight transportation, prioritising the use of sustainable modes of travel.

Policy CS4 - Economy and Employment

Overall Employment Development Strategy

d) Improve accessibility to an appropriate range of jobs, for example by encouraging mixed use employment/residential schemes where appropriate and improving transport linkages between housing and employment areas;

Policy CS7 - Transport Networks

1) Planning powers and other interventions will be used to support a sustainable and integrated transport system that will:

a) Support the economy by facilitating efficient movement of people and goods within the borough and linking to Liverpool City Centre, the Port of Liverpool, Liverpool John Lennon Airport and other destinations in the surrounding area;

b) Help meet the development needs of the borough through to 2028;

c) Ensure people can get to where they need to by a choice of walking, cycling and public transport;

d) Enhance road safety;

e) Seek to reduce carbon emissions; and

f) Improve the health and wellbeing of local people.

3) The Council will work with national, regional and sub-regional partners to deliver schemes which support Local Transport Plan priorities including:

b) Improvements to the rail network including: electrification of existing lines; enhancements to stations and passenger interchange facilities; provision of Park and Ride facilities; and expansion and/or improvement of the Knowsley Rail Freight Terminal;

Policy CS12 – Principal Regeneration Area – Tower Hill

1) Comprehensive redevelopment and improvement of the Tower Hill Principal Regeneration Area, will be facilitated, including (in no order of priority):

- a) New housing development, to provide a wider choice of housing accommodation to meet local housing needs;*
- b) Enhanced design quality and site layout providing improved integration with surrounding areas and Kirkby Town Centre;*
- c) Small scale enhancements to retail, employment, leisure, education, health and community facilities, appropriate to the scale and function of a local centre to complement that of Kirkby Town Centre;*
- d) Public realm enhancements as a key feature of Green Infrastructure focused upon significant improvements to quality, accessibility and integration with new development;*
- e) Infrastructure improvements, including enhanced public transport provision and maximising opportunities for walking and cycling to create accessible linkages in Tower Hill and linking to surrounding areas; and*
- f) Flexibility to integrate and safeguard the potential delivery of a new transport interchange, including a new rail station and Park and Ride to the south of Headbolt Lane.*

Local Plan paragraph 6.19 states, inter alia:

The area priorities listed below reflect the opportunities related to this area which are addressed by the policies within the Core Strategy.

Kirkby

- ☒ *To improve the quality, choice and affordability of housing to meet local needs, with priority being given to comprehensive housing-led regeneration in Tower Hill (in accordance with Policy CS12: Principal Regeneration Area – Tower Hill), and further targeted provision appropriate to needs and opportunities in Northwood, Westvale and Southdene to provide a diverse range of affordable and market sector housing;*
- ☒ *To enhance transport links between residential neighbourhoods and Kirkby Town Centre and Knowsley Industrial Park, and between Kirkby and other places in the Liverpool City Region. This may (subject to funding) include construction of a rail interchange/park and ride at Headbolt Lane;*
- ☒ *To recognise the role and character of the area's heritage value through protection and enhancement of heritage assets; and*
- ☒ *To improve the quality and accessibility of Kirkby's local greenspaces and improve other areas of environmental importance, whilst strengthening the role and value of the strategic Green Infrastructure network, including the Valley Corridor green link, to provide a range of well-used multi-functional areas incorporating attractive walking and cycling provision linking different parts of Kirkby*

Policy CS19 -Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

1) To enhance the local distinctiveness, identity and accessibility of places, new development within Knowsley will be expected to:

- a) Respond to and integrate positive characteristics of immediate surroundings, including local materials, scale, mass, form, layout, alignment and density of the existing built environment;
- b) Complement and enhance (where possible), existing landscape, topography, Green Infrastructure; and features of local importance and historic interest;
- c) Consider provision of landmark buildings and additional detailing at and adjacent to main gateways, movement corridors, town centres and strategic regeneration opportunities;
- d) Create spaces and places as a focal point, accommodating social interaction and active lifestyles, including provision and integration of high quality public realm and open spaces, public art (as appropriate); and landscaping which promotes biodiversity and integrates existing local habitats;
- e) Provide safe, secure and convenient routes for movement (including signage), with priority for walking, cycling and public transport, to meet the access needs of all users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists, less mobile people and the elderly;
- f) Integrate effectively with existing development and link to existing shopping and service provision; and
- g) Demonstrate community engagement during the design phase of major development proposals.

2) To maintain a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings, development proposals will be required to:

- a) Avoid unacceptable impacts on existing residents, business occupiers, and future occupiers;
- b) Minimise crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, including good levels of natural surveillance and security; and
- c) Accommodate future maintenance and long term management requirements.

Policy CS20 - Managing the Borough's Historic Environment

1) Development proposals in Knowsley should preserve or enhance the borough's historic and architectural assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and archaeological remains, together with other local areas, buildings and structures of historic importance.

Policy CS21 - Greenspaces and Trees

1) In supporting the wider Green Infrastructure functions of urban greenspace in accordance with Policy CS8, the Council will provide and maintain quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards for different types of public open space.

2) New development which would result in the loss of urban greenspace, will not be permitted unless at least one of the following criteria are met:

a) A surplus of provision for all types of greenspace would be maintained relative to local standards;

b) The land is considered unsuitable in terms of size, location or character to prevent or address individual deficiencies of different types of greenspace relative to local standards;

c) Appropriate mitigation is provided through replacement facilities of at least an equal quantity, quality and accessibility;

d) The development is required to improve greenspace provision or for ancillary facilities to support sport or recreation; or

e) Where the proposal relates to the loss of indoor or outdoor sports provision, and there is no evidence of future or continuing need for sports use, or alternatively only land incapable of forming a playing pitch or sporting facility is affected and its release accords with either clause 2)a) or 2)b).

3) Irrespective of whether criteria in 2) are met, unless the benefits of a proposal clearly outweigh the loss of urban greenspace, development will be resisted where it would significantly harm any existing or potential special qualities of greenspace in the area in terms of:

a) Visual amenity;

b) Residential amenity;

c) Biodiversity and environmental benefits;

d) Historical, cultural or community value;

e) Recreational benefits; or

f) Physical and/or visual linkages between adjoining urban greenspaces.

Policy CS24 - Managing Flood Risk

1) New development that may cause an unacceptable risk of flooding on the site or elsewhere will not be permitted.

Supplementary Planning Document: Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area

The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Tower Hill was adopted by Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council in April 2007, forming part of the Knowsley Local Development Framework and guiding future development in the Tower Hill action area between Shevington's, Pingwood, Headbolt and Bank Lanes.

The Tower Hill SPD has several objectives including:

- Community Cohesion to “create an attractive, safe, and well-designed series of neighbourhoods that are well connected to both the centre and to each other”.
- Sustainable Transport to “promote sustainable transport options by providing an integrated, well connected structure of roads, paths, cycleways, and public transport facilities that ensure a high degree of permeability and accessibility within the estate and to and from adjoining neighbourhoods”.
- Environmental Quality to “*retain, enhance, nurture and create distinctive elements of the physical and natural environment*”.

Scheme Details and Assessment of Scheme Proposals

The project will involve the following scope of works:

- New station located on land at Headbolt Lane;
- New 300 space car park and associated structures (signage, waiting shelters and car park lighting) and to service the new station;
- Bulk supply point and substation to accommodate electrification of rail corridor upgrades and for the new station;
- New vehicular and pedestrian access including two footbridges over Kirkby Brook and a road bridge to access each section of the car park and associated landscaping.
- Works to the railway corridor comprises the following:
 - railway line upgrade to a twin track and associated infrastructure to extend the Merseyrail electrification to the proposed station (including the extension of the existing third line electrification network and a new substation);
 - decommissioning works to the existing Kirkby Station.
 - Installation of 1.8m palisade fencing to the operational rail boundary.

There will be significant public benefits delivered by the construction of the proposed station. The primary benefits arising from the scheme will include:-

For residents

- Improved access to rail services by all transport modes
- A park and ride capacity to avoid potential for parking on local residential roads

For pedestrians

- Safer walking routes to the station
- Improved accessibility to facilities and landscaping of green spaces

For cyclists:

- Connected, safer and cycle route into the station
- Secure cycle parking
- Improved accessibility to employment, education, retail and leisure facilities by cycle

For rail users:

- New rail station facility
- Four trains per hour from Headbolt Lane to Liverpool
- Hourly Northern Trains services from Headbolt Lane direct to Wigan, Manchester Victoria and terminating at Blackburn.

For bus users:

- New bus interchange with 2 bus stops and 2 shelters
- Designed for future development with capacity to serve up to 10 bus services per hour.

Headbolt Lane Station shall predominately serve east Kirkby neighbourhoods, including Tower Hill, Simonswood and Northwood, and is likely to draw demand from a much wider catchment. Provision is being made for adequate car parking capacity, based on expected demand, and provision of other modal operation such as Bus, Taxis, cyclists and pedestrian usage. The car park area will also have provision for electric charging points to allow for the growth in electric vehicles, and integrating walking and cycling routes aligned with the aspirations in the Knowsley Local Plan 2016 for promoting Health and wellbeing, as well as offering more sustainable transport provision for the area.

The new station at Headbolt Lane is key in addressing a number of socio-economic challenges and opportunities: The Office of National Statistics (ONS) anticipates population growth in the wider Knowsley area of 11.5 % up to 2043, which is above anticipated growth across the North West and the UK as a whole. A sustainable transport provision is therefore important to promote and enhance economic opportunities, and ensure local residents and business providers have adequate access to services.

It is also recognised that the immediate catchment areas of Tower Hill, Simonswood and Northwood have a large percentage of the population who are economically active within ages 20-65, so providing access to education, employment and training opportunities is also vitally important, and is supported by the Headbolt Lane station project. Unemployment is a key area

of concern, which is particularly high for Northwood and the wider Knowsley area, and the strategic case of this project seeks to support with enabling employment opportunities for local residents.

As noted in the Tower Hill SPD, the Tower Hill neighbourhood is currently around 1km from the existing Kirkby Station, therefore further than the 800m walking radius for sustainable development. A station at Headbolt Lane would bring the whole area to within 800m of a station and remove the severance effect of the A506. Some of the weakest aspects of the Tower Hill area are accessibility and connectivity; however, the SPD looks to improve this through several options for further development, with new bus routes through the Tower Hill residential area, a railway station at Headbolt Lane and enhanced pedestrian and cycle infrastructure to other areas amongst those listed.

The development of a new station at Headbolt Lane is therefore clearly in accordance with the development and regeneration aspirations set out in both the Tower Hill SPD and Local Plan Policy CS12: The provision of a new station achieves these planning policy aspirations and will contribute towards economic and employment growth within Knowsley, an area of high deprivation, providing an efficient means of access to jobs and opportunities within Liverpool City Centre and across the wider Liverpool City Region. The scheme will also promote the use of sustainable transport to the station which will contribute to improved health and wellbeing of residents through improved opportunities for walking and cycling to the station.

The strategic case also notes the significant areas of employment within the Knowsley and Kirkby areas themselves, with nearby by Knowsley Industrial Park, and local Manufacturing and Wholesale and Retail Trade sectors accounting for a significant portion of all employment in the Kirkby area. The new station at Headbolt Lane will support local businesses and employers by providing better transport connectivity to the area, and in making Kirkby a more attractive area for greater investment by businesses.

Alongside this, ONS statistics from the 2011 census indicate that 37 % of Knowsley residents do not have access to a car (national average is much lower at 25 %). This is often aligned to greater deprivation, and the offering of greater sustainable transport provision for the Kirkby area is important to improve access to opportunities and reducing economic deprivation within the immediate catchment area. The provision of better transport links is also important as part of the Liverpool City Region's and Knowsley's wider endeavours to increase usage of sustainable transport, aligned to reducing carbon due to vehicular usage, and reduce congestion on roads around Kirkby and towards Liverpool City Centre.

The provision of the new station is in clear alignment with Local Plan Policy CS4's desire to *'improve accessibility to an appropriate range of jobs ... and improving transport linkages between housing and employment areas'*. This also sits well with the desire to enhance Transport Networks set out in Policy CS7, which makes specific reference to seeking

‘improvements to the rail network including: electrification of existing lines; enhancements to stations and passenger interchange facilities; provision of Park and Ride facilities’.

The station development will thus be in accordance with the spirit of Local Plan Policy CS1, which states a broader desire for new development to *‘maintain and enhance networks for passenger and freight transportation, prioritising the use of sustainable modes of travel’* as one of the Spatial Development Priorities for the entire borough.

There is clear public benefit arising from the scheme, and there is strong policy support to the principle of this form of development in the location proposed. The delivery of strong economic, social and environmental benefits is clearly in accordance with the policy context set out in the NPPF. The investment at Headbolt Lane aligns with NPPF Chapter 6’s desire for planning decisions to *‘help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt’*. The opportunities the scheme presents to support economic growth should be viewed in the context of NPPF paragraph 81’s requirement that *‘significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development’*.

Design Development

One of the key areas of the project’s design focus was that of the new station building. In order to fast-track the design development, it was agreed that the recently completed station building at Maghull North would be used as the starting point for the design development. However, it was soon recognised in reviews with the train operator Merseyrail Electrics that a larger facility would be required and in additional train crew facilities would be required as the station was a terminus for the two train services. The other area of concern was that the public space at Maghull North is very limited leaving little room for passenger waiting or circulation.

As the scheme developed the ticket sales area was enlarged from a single ticket sales window to two, along with a larger station staff area. The decision was also taken to enlarge the public booking hall area, increasing not only the footprint area but also increasing the roof height, creating a much more welcoming and spacious area flooded with natural light from new glazed roof panels.

The station has been subject to a review by the Network Rail Built Environment Access Panel which ensured that the design met latest regulations of disabled access. The station design includes for walking route, cycling along with 100 space cycle storage. Consideration to be given to ensuring that the cycle parking include for electric bike charging and no-standard cycles. The design has also been developed to ensure the integration with bus services and the provision of 2 new bus stops adjacent to the station. The design has provision for 300 car parking spaces

and within this there are 15 spaces that will be blue badge spaces, sited closest to the station building. This meets with the rail industry guidance of 5 % spaces being blue badge.

One of the fundamental design decisions has been to retain the separation between the two Merseytravel platforms and the Northern trains Platform. This separation by buffer stops has allowed provision of a level walkway access between the Merseyrail platforms, avoiding the requirement for stairs and lifts to access between the platforms. In addition, new Class 777 Merseyrail trains utilise sliding step technology which means that access from platform onto the train is step free and without the need for station staff or guards to deploy ramps – ensuring ease of access for all onto the Merseyrail services.

in relation to the external finish proposed for the station building, it is proposed to use a palette of materials to provide a high-quality brick and render finish. This is considered to be:

- (a) In keeping with local housing, both in terms of scale and form
- (b) Robust with long life
- (c) Easy for future maintenance & repair
- (d) Vandal resistant
- (e) Secure in terms of resisting break-in. Cladding can be prised off exposing structural weaknesses, e.g., at window penetrations etc.

The brick and render materials proposed respond well to the context the architectural vernacular of the neighbourhood surrounding the station site. This is clearly demonstrated through the images below, which are from the recently-constructed Mulberry Park development.





Finally, the scheme includes an extensive programme of landscaping to mitigate against the loss of green space through the development of the station. In addition, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority is funding a package of enabling works valued at £2.75M to upgrade landscaping in areas adjacent to the station to further mitigate against the loss of green space and will include funding to extend cycle lane into the station and connection with the existing Kirkby cycle network (see attached map of cycle routes).

The station building, car park and associated developments will be designed and constructed to high standards required under Local Plan Policy CS19. In particular, the station will respond positively to and integrate with the context of the site's immediate surroundings. The station adheres to CS19's requirement for development to *'create spaces and places as a focal point [and] provide safe, secure and convenient routes for movement with priority for walking, cycling and public transport'*. Public safety is a central element to the design ethos, with the scheme's layout ensuring that there will be adherence to CS19's desire for development to *'Minimise crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, including good levels of natural surveillance and security'*.

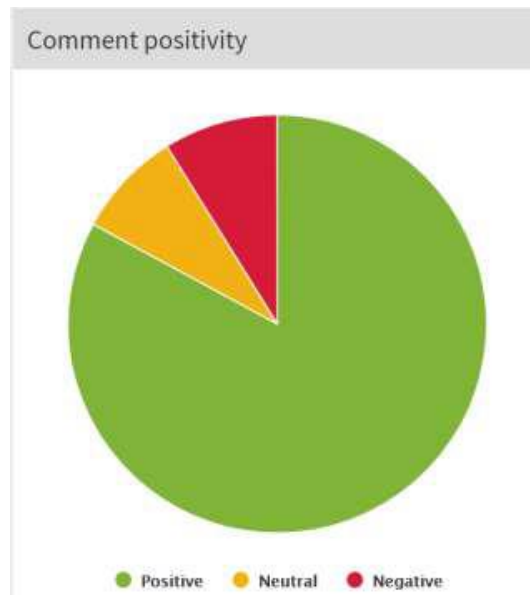
The focus on quality design will ensure that the scheme sits well in the context of NPPF Chapter 12. This will ensure compliance with the specific design quality requirements set out in NPPF Paragraph 130, which states *inter alia*: *'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping*

Community Engagement

A central aspect underpinning the design development was a desire to undertake meaningful engagement with the local community. A Statement of Community Involvement has been produced and is submitted with this application. The key summary points from the project's community involvement exercise are that:

- Sentiment from the Commonplace website-of the 363 respondents who confirmed their email address, over four-fifths (83 %, 301) expressed positive feelings for the station scheme. Less than a tenth (8 %, 30) were neutral and a similar number (9 %, 32) were negative.
- The sentiment from the postcards' engagement, found three-quarters of respondents (74.7 %, 314) expressed positive feelings about the proposal of the new scheme. A fifth (21.7 %, 91) were neutral and a small number of respondents (3.6 %, 15) were negative about the proposal.



Heritage Assets

As explained in detail in the Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment document submitted with the application as part of the scheme's Environmental Statement, the proposals would result in the following impacts on heritage assets:

- Alteration to existing railway structures which are original to the railway line (1840s) and possess heritage interest
- Removal of previously unrecorded archaeological remains, if present, during the construction of the substation, new station and associated car park, drainage and access.
- Removal of buried remains associated with Tanpit House and Mercer's Delf quarry during the construction of the proposed station car park and associated drainage and access.

However, a package of mitigation works is proposed to appropriately manage the scheme's relationship with heritage assets. The Desk-Based Assessment recommends that the following mitigation is put in place:

- Photographic building recording of Underbridge 55 and 56 prior to the start of work.

- Archaeological evaluation carried out across the Headbolt Lane site to test the presence, nature, extent and significance of remains of Tanpit House and any other previously unrecorded archaeological remains, as well as inform any further mitigation required. The scoping opinion indicated that, if a Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation is not submitted alongside the planning application, these works would be secured by condition.

It is considered that, with the incorporation of adequate mitigation described above, the scheme will not conflict with Local Plan Policy CS20 (Managing the Borough's Historic Environment). Upon consideration of the application's relationship with the NPPF's Historic Environment policies, it is clear that adequate information has been provided via the submitted Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment to understand the significance of the heritage assets affected by the scheme, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 194. Upon making a balanced judgement regarding the impact of the scheme on the non-designated heritage assets in question, it is clear that the public benefits to be delivered from the scheme will, with adequate mitigation suggested in the Desk-Based Assessment, outweigh any harm arising from the proposed scheme.

Greenspaces and Trees

A high quality landscaping scheme, as detailed in the submitted Landscape and Ecological Management Plan and associated drawings, will be delivered as part of the scheme proposals. The key design objectives underpinning this were:

- Objective 1: Integrate the development into its surroundings, increase site biodiversity and complement the existing site vegetation.
- Objective 2: To prescribe all necessary management and maintenance principles and tasks to enable successful establishment, ensuring the continued maturing of the soft landscape.
- Objective 3: To maximise the nature conservation value of all plantings and wildlife habitat on site.

Although the scheme does result in the loss of a portion of green space, when the scheme is considered in light of Part 3 of Local Plan policy CS21 it is considered that the scheme benefits do clearly outweigh the loss of greenspace. The allocation of the site for station development has been a long-standing objective in Knowsley's planning policy and it would not be possible to deliver this scheme without the loss of the land allocated as Urban Greenspace. The high-quality planting and management plan proposed will ensure that the scheme adheres to the principles of NPPF Chapter 12.

Water Management

A detailed Flood Risk Assessment for the scheme proposals has been carried out, with the detail set out in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment report. As confirmed in the report, EA Flood Map for Planning data indicates that the site is predominantly in Flood Zone 1. The report found that the risk of fluvial flooding from Kirkby Brook is considered to be very low. All buildings and railway infrastructure are to be significantly higher than the maximum predicted flood level, with the risk of flooding from other sources to be negligible.

Bridges and surface water drainage system designs should be undertaken in accordance with EA and LLFA requirements to ensure flood risk is not increased, both on and off-site. An outline drainage strategy has been presented which demonstrates how surface water can be attenuated and infiltrated (if possible) to achieve the allowable discharge rates agreed with KMBC. This strategy can be modified if required to include a connection from the track drainage system. Highway drainage systems shall be designed as a separate S278/38 package in agreement with KMBC.

The report concluded that the residual risks associated with fluvial and pluvial flooding can be mitigated through effective and ongoing maintenance of the drainage systems and bridges. In light of this, the scheme is considered to be in accordance with the general thrust of Local Plan policy CS24 and also NPPF Chapter 14's requirements for Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding.

Conclusion

It has been demonstrated through the commentary and analysis above that there is extremely strong policy support for the proposed station scheme, both at the local and NPPF scale. The proposals will enhance the local economy in the vicinity of the site, as well as giving rise to both environmental and social benefits. The scheme will deliver a high-quality station design, of significant benefit to the communities in the vicinity of the site. On this basis, it is requested that planning permission is granted for the scheme.

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