



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

NORTH & EAST PLANS PANEL

Date: 21st November 2024

Subject: PREAPP/23/00291 – Formation of new railway station, car parking, pedestrian access and associated works at land south of Manston Lane, Thorpe Park, LS15

APPLICANT	DATE VALID	TARGET DATE
Network Rail	19/10/2023	N/A

Electoral Wards Affected:

Crossgates & Whinmoor
Temple Newsam

Yes Ward Members notified
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Panel for information and comment. The applicant will be asked to present details of the emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals at this stage.

INTRODUCTION:

- The work-in-progress proposals are being presented to Members by Network Rail to inform the Plans Panel of the emerging development, allowing Members to comment on the evolving scheme, and highlight any issues prior to the intended submission of a full planning application.

PROPOSAL:

- The pre-application relates to the construction of a two-platform train station at land to the south of Manston Lane, Thorpe Park. Each platform would be 150m in length, allowing for future 6-car trains. The proposals would also consist of an uncovered bridge crossing the railway with access via lifts on either side as well as steps. Two waiting shelters are also indicated on the plans along with ticket machines and customer information screens.

3. The intended design would take into account the potential for a four-track line on the route should this be required in the future, ensuring that the station would be 'future proofed' for an evolving network.
4. Vehicular access to the station would be via Manston Lane (on the northern side of the railway) with the junction around 30m away from the roundabout with William Parkin Way. The indicative layout shows a clockwise road with around 465 car parking spaces on either side. The car park would also provide disabled parking and EV Charging spaces.
5. Bus interchange will be provided using the existing bus stops on Manston Lane with a new direct footpath provided to the station. Rail replacement buses will also use the Manston Lane stops are required.
6. To the south of the railway, it is proposed to create a second entrance to the station allowing for easy and direct access to the wider Thorpe Park development, The Springs retail park and housing. This second access will also have a drop off/pick up point for cars.
7. At this stage, no details of the design of the station have been provided however, information provided by the applicant indicates that the design will be similar to those recently constructed at Low Moor (Bradford) and Kirkstall Forge.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

8. The application site is a vacant piece of land off Manston Lane and is roughly rectangular in shape. The land itself is relatively flat however, as Manston Lane rises to meet the roundabout and the A6120, a steep embankment is formed along its northern and eastern edges. The land where the second access is proposed sits to the south of the railway and is also currently vacant. The railway line itself sits within a cutting.
9. The surrounding area has been subject to significant developments over the past several years which include 'The Springs' retail park which sits to the south, a recently constructed housing development off Barrington Way which lies directly to the south of the railway line and north of the retail park, 'Green Park' will be located to the southwest (behind The Springs) as well as other commercial and office developments within the wider Thorpe Park area. To the north of the railway line, a new housing development known as 'Radial Park' is being constructed and the southern quadrant of the East Leeds Extension will be located directly to the north.
10. The application site is close to a Scheduled Monument (Barnbow) as well as a Grade II Listed Building (Lazencroft Farmhouse). The site itself is allocated as part of the East Leeds Extension (HG1-288) which covers a vast area of land with a capacity of around 4446 dwellings.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

11. None relevant

HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

12. The pre-application has been amended from a station with a larger park & ride car park (around 1000 capacity) which would have included land to the east beyond William Parkin Way. This, however, has been amended to these current proposals which will include around a 465 capacity car park.
13. The applicant considered that there were a number of constraints with delivering the car park on that land including its Green Belt location, the need to form a pedestrian tunnel under William Parkin Way, safety concerns with the tunnel and the significant cost increase of providing this.
14. The applicant presented the proposals to the East Leeds Extension Consultative Forum in February 2024 with positive feedback overall (subject to a detailed design).

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

15. Flood Risk Management – any formal planning application will need to be accompanied with a SUDS based Drainage Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment.
16. Contaminated Land - Potentially contaminative historical and/or current land uses have been identified on and close to the site including shallow coal mining. Should the development proposal be submitted as a full planning application it is expected that a phase 1 desk study report is submitted as a minimum. Depending on the outcome of the Phase 1 Desk Study, a Phase 2 (Site Investigation) Report and Remediation Strategy may also be required.
17. Landscaping – Need to avoid large expanses of tarmac as this would be very bland and uninspiring. Buffer planting will be required to soft the edges & a tree survey/Arboricultural Impact Assessment will be required. May want to consider the Stourton Park & Ride facility as a good practice case study.
18. Highways – Provision of a new railway station would improve connectivity by public transport however, the information submitted to date is limited. Further details required

PLANNING POLICIES:

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

The Development Plan

19. As required by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 this application has to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan currently comprises the adopted Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2019), those policies saved from the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006), the Site Allocations Plan (2019, as amended 2024), the Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (2013, as amended 2015), the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (2017).
20. The following policies from the Core Strategy are considered to be of most relevance to this development proposal:

Spatial Policy 1 Location and scale of development.
 Spatial Policy 8 Economic development priorities

Spatial Policy 11 Transport infrastructure investment priorities such as pedestrian improvements
Policy P10 Design
Policy P11 Heritage
Policy P12 Landscape
Policy T1 Transport Management
Policy T2 Accessibility Requirements and New Development
Policy EN1 Carbon Dioxide Reduction
Policy EN2 Sustainable Design and Construction
Policy EN5 Managing Flood Risk
Policy G1 Extending and enhancing green infrastructure
Policy G9 Biodiversity Improvements

21. The following saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan are considered to be of most relevance to this development proposal:

Relevant Saved Policies include:

Policy GP5 all planning considerations
Policy BD2 design and siting of new buildings
Policy BD5 residential amenity
Policy LD1 landscaping

22. The following policies from the Natural Resources and Waste Local DPD are considered to be of most relevance to this development proposal:

Land 1 contaminated land
Land 2 development and trees
Minerals 3 coal safeguarding

Relevant Local Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

23. The most relevant local supplementary planning guidance (SPG), supplementary planning documents (SPD) are outlined below:

SPD Building for Tomorrow Today: Sustainable Design and Construction
SPD Transport
SPD Accessible Leeds

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework

24. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
25. The following sections of the NPPF are most relevant for the purposes of determining this application:

Achieving Sustainable Development
Building a strong, competitive economy
Promoting healthy and safe communities
Promoting sustainable transport

Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance

26. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides commentary on the application of policies within the NPPF. The PPG also provides guidance in relation to the imposition of planning conditions. It sets out that 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.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY:

27. The Council declared a climate emergency on the 27th March 2019 in response to the UN's report on Climate Change.
28. The Planning Act 2008, alongside the Climate Change Act 2008, sets out that climate mitigation and adaptation are central principles of plan-making. The NPPF makes clear that the planning system should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in line with the objectives of the Climate Change Act 2008.
29. As part of the Council's Best City Ambition, the Council seeks to deliver a low-carbon and affordable transport network, as well as protecting nature and enhancing habitats for wildlife. The Council's Development Plan includes a number of planning policies which seek to meet this aim, as does the NPPF. These are material planning considerations in determining planning applications.
30. [insert commentary on where these issues are picked up in the report alongside a brief summary]

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY:

31. The Equality Act 2010 requires local authorities to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Taking into account all known factors and considerations, the requirement to consider, and have due regard to, the needs of diverse groups to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and access, and foster good relations between different groups in the community has been fully taken into account in the consideration of the planning application including making access provision for those users with mobility difficulties.

KEY ISSUES:

Members are asked to comment on the proposals and to consider the following matters.

Principle of the proposed use

32. The application site forms part of a much wider allocation for housing known as the 'East Leeds Extension (HG1-288)' with capacity for around 4446 dwellings. This land, however, is separated from the main allocation by Manston Lane which connects into the A6120 meaning it is somewhat remote from the wider allocation. Consideration of alternative uses could be considered acceptable in principle, provided that it wouldn't

compromise the Council's delivery of housing numbers or the wider allocation in general.

33. When taking the allocation as a whole, officers consider that the use of this land for purposes other than housing would not compromise the delivery of the required housing numbers of the wider allocation due to the small-scale nature of the site together with constraints (including the railway and Manston Lane) which would reduce the overall developable area.
34. Whilst the use of the land for a rail station would not strictly accord with the site's wider housing allocation, the proposal would have strong links with the housing provision and is very much seen as a complimentary use. Additionally, East Leeds Extension requires supporting uses and this is recognised in site allocation requirements and includes ~ (under heading No. 6) the provision of local, community and education facilities.
35. Taking the above into account officers consider that the principle of a rail station and associated parking would be acceptable and in general accordance with the need to provide supporting uses for the East Leeds Extension.

Do Members agree that the principle of development is acceptable in this location?

Design and Appearance

36. At this stage, no detailed designs have been provided for the development however, it is envisaged that the station will have a simple construction form, consisting of a lift and stairs on each platform, connected by an open bridge. It is likely to have a similar appearance to those recently constructed at Kirkstall Forge and Low Moor (Bradford) with images of these below.





37. Where those examples differ to this proposal at Thorpe Park is that there would be two entrances to the station and therefore two interfaces which will need to be considered when working through design details. Furthermore, the relationship with the station and the wider Thorpe Park will need to be considered as will any potential heritage impacts of the development with the Grade II Listed Lazencroft Farm and the Scheduled Monument of Barnbow.
38. Overall, officers raise no concerns, in principle, with the initial design ideas indicated however, this will clearly be subject to further consideration as the designs evolve.

Do Members consider that the initial design ideas are acceptable to continue to explore – subject to more detailed discussion?

Highway and pedestrian safety

39. As with the design, a detailed proposal has not yet been finalised therefore, the scheme is subject to further discussion and changes however, the main vehicular access will be taken from Manston Lane to the north with a secondary ‘drop-off’ access to the south of the line. Footpaths will also provide a dedicated route for pedestrians allowing for connectivity to and from the surrounding uses (including residential and commercial) to the station.
40. The proposed car park will provide spaces for around 465 cars with a number of disabled spaces and EV Charging Points. A number of cycle spaces are also to be provided at both entrances though the specific number and locations are to be determined.
41. A Transport Assessment (TA) and Travel Plan will likely be required with any application, the TA will need to explore the traffic impact and pedestrian and cycle links to the station. It is important that direct, high quality, exemplar cycling, walking and public transport infrastructure is provided on site and via connections to the existing network.

42. The proposed vehicle access from Manston Lane would need to be designed in conjunction with the access arrangements approved under application 21/08379/OT for the southern access points to the ELE Middle Quadrant site.
43. Drop off areas, disabled parking and cycle parking should be convenient to both platforms. The car park should be designed to a high standard, the recent Stourton Park and Ride provides a good example of best practice.
44. Further work and assessment is required to ensure the proposals are acceptable with regard to highway & pedestrian safety and officers will continue to work with the applicants to ensure the proposals would comply with the relevant policies.

Landscaping and Biodiversity

45. At this stage, limited information has been provided with regard to landscaping with a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment required in order to assess potential impacts on existing landscape features. It is also noted that landscaping within the site will be required in order to soften the expanse of hardstanding and parking. As the proposals evolve, the scheme will need to carefully consider the pedestrian experience which could involve enhanced planting along the footpath routes. Interfaces between the public routes and roads will also need to be carefully considered to ensure a positive experience for all users.
46. Buffer planting will be required to the site boundaries in order to integrate the development with its surroundings with the car park softened by internal tree planting and planting beds. It is considered that the Stourton Park & Ride is a good practice case study with regard to landscaping and officers will continue to work with the applicants to address these matters.
47. In addition, & in accordance with Legislation, the application will need to demonstrate a 10% net gain in Biodiversity. As the scheme progresses and further reports are submitted officers will assess the proposals to ensure that the development would provide the required enhancements to nature conservation.

Safety and Security

48. Core Strategy policy P10(v) identifies that developments should create safe and secure environments that reduce the opportunities for crime and the NPPF states that developments should be safe and accessible so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life.
49. West Yorkshire Police will be consulted on the emerging proposals (once a more detailed design is produced) and will provide comments relating to design, internal arrangements and security of buildings and public realm.

CONCLUSION:

50. The emerging proposals offer a significant potential to provide a new transport hub within Thorpe Park with links to housing, commercial and retail. The scheme, whilst at an early stage, will seek to provide pedestrian connectivity to the north and south as well as parking for around 465 cars. The scheme also offers potential to provide landscaping opportunities and biodiversity improvements.

51. Members are asked to note the contents of the report and the presentation, and are invited to provide feedback, in particular, in response to the key questions asked in the report above and as follows:

Do Members agree that the principle of development is acceptable in this location?

Do Members consider that the initial design ideas are acceptable to continue to explore – subject to more detailed discussion?

Do Members have any other comments to make regarding the emerging proposals?

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Application file reference: PREAPP/23/00291