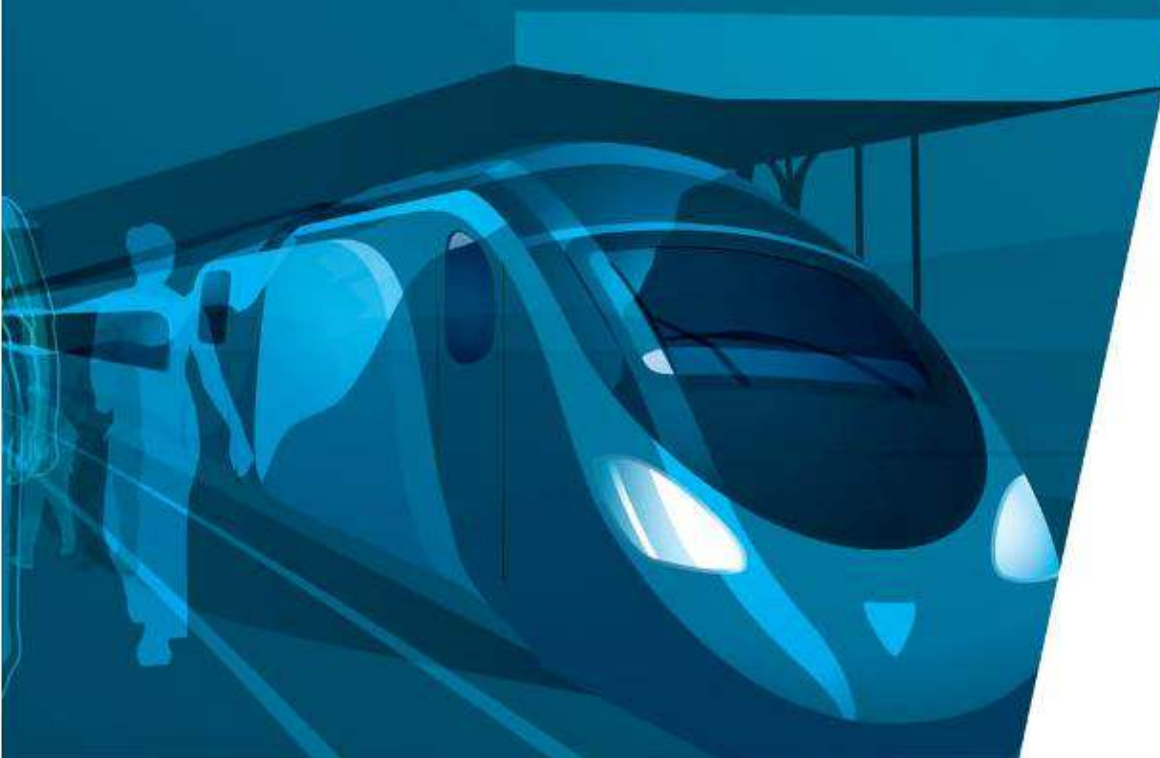


Reading Upper Triangle Depot

*Extension and refurbishment of existing
train shed and other works*

*Application for Prior Approval – Supporting Planning
and Design and Access Statement*

Date: August 2021



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Appendix A: Notification of Intention to Demolish the Railway Maintenance Building Covering Letter

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Supporting Statement has been prepared in order to support an application for Prior Approval in relation to the extension and refurbishment of existing train shed and other works at Reading Upper Triangle, Holybrook Court, Cow Lane, Reading, RG1 8NA.
- 1.2 The development comprises:
- “Extension and refurbishment of existing train shed to provide train maintenance facilities and development of maintenance shed, workshop, washdown area and two servicing roads”.
- 1.3 This application for Prior Approval is submitted under Schedule 2, Part 18, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended.
- 1.4 This Statement incorporates context regarding the proposed project, outline the proposed works, and assesses the proposal against relevant planning policy and other relevant material considerations. It is divided into the following sections:
- Site description and background;
 - Proposed development;
 - Planning policy framework;
 - Planning assessment; and
 - Conclusion.
- 1.5 The information contained within this planning statement should be reviewed in conjunction with the following plans and supporting material that have been submitted as part of the application:
- Appendix A: Notification of Intention to Demolish the Railway Maintenance Building Covering Letter

2 Site Description and Background

Site Description

- 2.1 The application site comprises Reading Upper Triangle Depot which is situated approximately 1.5km west of Reading Station. The site is located within the administrative boundary of Reading Borough Council.
- 2.2 The existing site comprises approximately 14 sidings and a former Great Western Railway refuelling shed at Reading Upper Triangle Depot. The site is located to the west of Reading Station on the Western Mainline (MLN1) to the South West. The closest lines to the site include:
- Reading Triangle DMU Sidings (RTR1) at 36 miles and 54 chains – to the north;
 - Basingstoke Branch (BKE) at 36 miles and 54 chains – to the south; and
 - Reading Feeder Relief Line (RFR) at 36 miles and 66 chains – to the west.

Figure 1: Aerial View of Reading Upper Triangle



- 2.3 The site includes sidings and an existing train maintenance and refuelling shed. The accommodation/maintenance building (still shown in Figure 1) has been recently demolished (May 2020) due to the building being beyond economic repair. This proposal seeks to replace the facilities that were provided within this building (a copy of the notification to demolish covering letter is provided at Appendix B).

- 2.4 The site has been used as a depot since the 1960s and was refurbished in the 1980s. The site has been underutilised since refuelling activities ceased around 2007. Since then, the site has been used intermittently by the Supply Chain Operators (SCO) fleet for stabling, but not for dedicated exam maintenance activities. The existing shed is not regularly used.
- 2.5 The existing train maintenance and refuelling shed is a single storey building with 2no. integral rail maintenance tracks running the full length of the building. The roof is of a profiled metal cladding and there is vertical cladding and brickwork on the external elevations.
- 2.6 Access to the site is provided in the north west corner via road which leads back to the main entrance of the larger Reading site. Access to the overall Reading site from the main highway is from Cow Lane.

Background

- 2.7 The Reading Upper Triangle site is being upgraded to serve as a regional depot for stabling and light maintenance of the SCO fleet. The upgraded depot will provide improved working conditions and facilities, for contemporary welfare standards, for the fleet maintenance staff. The facility will be used to securely stable, inspect, maintain, refuel, replenish and operate the maintenance fleet, and to create and maintain stock in stores.
- 2.8 On completion, the depot will be handed over to the Route Asset Managers, who will introduce and implement a structured inspection and maintenance strategy.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 2.9 The site is less than 1ha in size and therefore falls below the limits confirmed in Schedule 2 of the 'EIA Regs'.

3 Proposed Development

- 3.1 This application seeks Prior Approval for the extension and refurbishment of existing train shed and other works at Reading Upper Triangle, Holybrook Court, Cow Lane, Reading.
- 3.2 The proposals aim to provide a refurbishment of the existing maintenance and refuelling shed to become the Running Shed, a new build Maintenance Shed, and located between the two; a new build facility accommodating staff welfare, workshops and stores, completing the built form.
- 3.3 A proposed Service Yard will be made up of two servicing roads and one wash down road.
- 3.4 This Prior Approval is for the following development:

“Extension and refurbishment of existing train shed to provide train maintenance facilities and development of maintenance shed, workshop, washdown area and two servicing roads”.

- 3.5 The existing site is currently underutilised, and it is proposed that the site is upgraded to serve as a regional depot for stabling and light maintenance of the SCO fleet. The upgraded depot will provide improved working conditions and facilities, to contemporary welfare standards, for the fleet maintenance staff. The facility will be used to securely stable, inspect, maintain, refuel, replenish and operate the maintenance fleet, and to create and maintain stock in stores.
- 3.6 In summary the proposals consist of:
- Maintain the structure of the existing GWR refuelling shed and refurbish to create a new ‘running shed’;
 - Maintain existing sidings;
 - Development of maintenance shed (to the west of existing refuelling shed), approximately 95m long, housing two pits for underframe access;
 - Development of workshop, offices/welfare facilities; and
 - New wash down road and two servicing roads.
- 3.7 The site of the existing maintenance shed will now become the ‘Running Shed’ as part of these works. The Running Shed will remain the same form as the ‘current’ building, it is approximately 80.5m long, 14.9m wide and 9m high. It is orientated in an approximate north east-south west direction along its length axis.
- 3.8 The scope of works for the refurbishment of the existing train shed comprise the removal and replacement of the cladding to the walls and the removal and renewal of the roof. The concrete substructure and pit arrangement of the existing shed will remain as is. A new high-level access platform will be provided between the two tracks in the running shed to allow vehicle roof inspection. The running shed building, including the existing pits, will be provide with new services

and lighting.

- 3.9 The new Maintenance Shed, has a new structural frame and grid and runs to line with the sidings that form the servicing yard. It is orientated in an approximate north east to south west direction along its running length axis. The rectangular form runs some 95.5m long and 18.52m wide.
- 3.10 The shed is to host two new maintenance roads, provided for inspections/examinations and the removal and exchange of equipment.
- 3.11 On the north west corner of the Maintenance Shed, it is currently proposed to include a section of Green wall to the north west elevation.
- 3.12 The staff welfare, stores and workshop is formed between the key buildings, which has an 'in use' practicality, while minimising the impact on the environment and adjacent land occupiers and surrounding communities.
- 3.13 The external washdown road is to be provided for the use of hot washing lances to clean the fleet. This area will be provided with new screens to protect the surrounding areas from spray. The wash down road, will be directly accessed on exiting the Maintenance Shed on the north elevation through cut outs in the spray screen.

Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 This section provides a summary of the relevant national planning guidance and local planning policy relevant to the proposed development. The proposal is submitted under Schedule 2, Part 18 Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (GDPO) (as amended) as permitted development and therefore deemed to not require full planning permission. Notwithstanding this, Network Rail would like to take this opportunity to indicate how this proposal would be in accordance with planning policy.
- 4.2 The application site falls within the administrative area of Reading Borough Council. The 'Development Plan' currently comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan.
- 4.3 Other relevant policy documents include:
- General Permitted Development Order; and
 - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

General Permitted Development Order

- 4.4 This proposal is submitted under Schedule 2, Part 18, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (GPDO) (as amended) as permitted development. It does not require planning permission, but the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must give its approval prior to implementation of the scheme.
- 4.5 Part 18 of the GPDO is applicable to developments which were initially authorised by an Act of Parliament which designates specifically the nature of development authorised and the land upon which it may be carried out.
- 4.6 This section of the railway was originally authorised by two Acts as the land is between the BKE and RWC lines which were authorised by a combination of The Berks and Hants Railway Act 1845 and The Great Western Railway Act 1845. Both these Acts incorporate the provisions of Section 16 of the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act 1845, which permits the original railway company and its successors in title (now Network Rail) to undertake future works, not limited to the construction of the railway, but including powers to 'alter, repair, or discontinue' works and 'do all acts necessary for making, maintaining, altering or repairing and using the railway'.
- 4.7 This Act constitutes the 'other enactment' Network Rail is reliant upon for the purposes of demonstrating the demolition works proposed constitute excluded demolition, as the demolition works represent the discontinuation of existing infrastructure, necessary for maintaining, altering or repairing and using the railway.
- 4.8 The LPA may consider only the design, materials, or siting of the works to ensure that the development proposed '*would not injure the amenity of the neighbourhood*' and be satisfied that it could not be '*reasonably carried out elsewhere*'.
-

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.9 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The relevant paragraphs within the NPPF are set out below.
- 4.10 Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 provides three overarching objectives which should be pursued in mutually supportive ways which are an economic objective, social objective and environmental objective.

Achieving well-designed places

- 4.11 The NPPF at Section 12 sets out the importance attached to the good design of the built environment. Paragraph 124 states that 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.
- 4.12 It advises at Paragraph 127 that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments meet a number of design characteristics and ensure developments:
- 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;
 - 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); and
 - 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.

Local Planning Policy

Development Plan

- 4.13 As set out above, the ‘Development Plan’ comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan, adopted in November 2019. The policies contained within the local planning policy documents of relevance are set out below.
- 4.14 Policy CC2 requires new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.
- 4.15 Policy CC7 requires development to be of a high design quality and maintains and enhances the appearance of the area.
-

5 Planning Assessment

- 6.1 The following section considers how the proposal is acceptable in terms of the planning policy framework and other relevant matters. Although not required for the submission of a prior approval application, this section also summarises the relevant technical reports that have been undertaken to support the development on this site.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 The proposals relate to the extension and refurbishment of the existing train shed and other works. The aim is to provide an upgrade to the existing site to serve as a regional depot for stabling and light maintenance of the SCO fleet. The upgraded depot will provide improved working conditions and facilities, to contemporary welfare standards, for the fleet maintenance staff.
- 6.3 Although the proposal does not require full planning permission as it has deemed consent through Schedule 2, Part 18, Class A of the GPDO 2015, as amended, Network Rail believes that the proposal is in accordance with both national and local planning policy.
- 6.4 The prior approval relates to a proposal of development on Network Rail owned land that is to provide an upgraded maintenance building and an upgrade to the welfare facilities (building previously demolished in May 2020 due to being beyond economic repair), therefore the principle of development is considered acceptable.

Design Considerations

- 6.5 As described above, the site is an existing sidings and refuelling shed. It is proposed that the existing train shed will be extended and refurbished to provide train maintenance facilities and the development of a maintenance shed, workshop, washdown area and two servicing roads. The main design matters are summarised below:

Use

- 6.6 The application relates to existing sidings and refuelling shed to be refurbished. An extension to build a maintenance shed and between the two, a new build facility accommodating staff welfare, workshops and stores, to replace the previously demolished building in May 2020. The overall use of the site will therefore not alter.

Layout

- 6.7 The layout of the site will not be significantly altered as a result of these works. The proposed works will include the extension of the existing refuelling shed to provide a new Maintenance Shed which will run to line with the sidings that forms the servicing yard. The welfare facilities will be located between the two buildings, to complete the built form. The overall layout of the sidings and the rest of the site will not be altered. The overall layout of the existing sidings and the existing site will not be altered.

Amount and Scale

- 6.8 The amount and scale of the proposals are described in Section 3. It is considered that the amount and scale of the development proposed is appropriate for its purpose.

Appearance and Context

- 6.9 The works contained within this prior approval will include the refurbishment and extension of the refuelling shed, the current cladding and roof of the shed has reached the end of its design life and is to be replaced. This gives the opportunity to increase the acoustic properties of the cladding and roof to mitigate maintenance noise generated within the shed, as well as increased thermal performance of the fabric in line with current standards.
- 6.10 The roofing material is proposed as speed deck or similar Trapezoidal Profile Sheet roof with approximately 250mm of insulation.
- 6.11 The cladding system for the lower 3.5m of the external walls is proposed as outer face 100mm Kingspan (KS600-1000 AWP Micro rib Insulated) Cladding Panel supported on 150mm Structural Framing System (SFS). The upper portion of the walls are to continue externally, clad in 100mm Kingspan (KS600-1000 AWP Micro rib) fixed to the 150mm SFS. This is the same cladding for the running shed and maintenance shed.
- 6.12 The workshop, offices/welfare facilities between the two buildings, on the ground floor, is proposed to have an outer facing brick with inner SFS system and painted plasterboard finish. The upper floors is proposed to have vertical timber fins, supported with a horizontal backing frame, against a weatherboard insulation.
- 6.13 On the north west corner of the building, it is proposed to include a section of 'Green wall', which will help soften the visual appearance of the building, whilst also adding a level of biodiversity improvements to the site.

Siting

- 6.14 The application relates to alterations to the existing sidings on the site. In order to limit the impacts on the existing trackwork and sidings alignment, the proposal allows for the upgrade of the underutilised site without causing disruption to the existing layout of the sidings. Therefore, an alternative location for these works simply isn't possible or appropriate.

Access

- 6.15 It is proposed that the vehicle access is direct to the workshop from the forecourt via the vehicle loading bay. Parking is located south on this site for 30 staff with access on the grounds to a smoking shed and cycle shed.

Flooding

- 6.16 Mott MacDonald have been retained by Network Rail to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) of the site. The FRA is enclosed with this submission for the Councils reference (document ref: 407502-MMD-00-ZZ-REP-EDR-000002).

6.17 The FRA concludes the following:

- The design of the development minimises any increase to flood risk.
- Any potential for increased risk of flooding from surface water or foul water as a result of the scheme is considered to be manageable with appropriate mitigation.
- Overall, the scheme is deemed to not increase flood risk to third parties.

Noise

6.18 A noise assessment of the proposed operation of the Depot has been conducted which considers noise emitted by fixed mechanical plant associated with the sheds, workshops, welfare facilities and offices and the rail related activities which occur in the sheds and on the sidings.

6.19 Although a noise assessment is not required for the prior approval application, it is appropriate to consider and determine the background noise level.

6.20 A noise survey was conducted between 9th and 22nd September 2020, as the noise assessment was conducted during a period of disruption caused by Covid-19 restrictions, reference was made to the Extrium/Defra noise mapping rail noise.

6.21 The operational noise levels from rail related noise sources has been calculated using acoustic modelling software CadnaA [DataKustik GmbH, 2014]. The Defra noise contours have been used to calibrate the computer model of the proposed site for the 'do nothing' scenario. The 'do scheme' scenario has been modelled using sound power levels for rail vehicles derived from upper limits given in TSIs and frequency spectra derived from previous measurements. Other noise sources have been assigned sound power levels from previous measurements.

6.22 The change in noise level has been assessed in terms of noise level change provided by IEMA Guidelines for Environmental Noise Assessment [IEMA, 2014]. Idling rail vehicles can produce significant levels of low frequency noise which can be particularly annoying to residents and can present specific challenges in terms of attenuation. Therefore, absolute noise levels have also been assessed in terms of their low frequency content using Defra Report 'Procedure for the assessment of low frequency noise complaints December 2011 Contract no NANR45'.

Contaminated Land

6.23 An intrusive ground investigation was undertaken by Bridgeway Consulting Ltd between 20th August and 1st September 2020. The aim was to determine the ground conditions beneath the site, undertake in-situ testing and obtain samples for geotechnical and geo-environmental testing.

6.24 In summary the Report found the following:

- Human health from exposure to soil bound contaminants – one minor exceedance of dibenz(a,h)anthracene within Made Ground. Due to the minimal exceedance and the

proposed end use the risk to the end user was discounted as it is unlikely any new pathways would be introduced between the end user and the identified contaminant source.

- Ground Gas and Radon – the risk to construction workers was assessed to be moderate/low, as recorded concentrations of carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide during monitoring visits exceeded WELs.
- Controlled Waters – results of the soil testing identified several exceedances of metals, sulphate and ammoniacal nitrogen within six exploratory locations. Results of the groundwater samples indicated similar exceedances of inorganic compounds within monitoring wells BH01, BH02A and WS02. It is considered likely that these contaminants are restricted to the Made Ground. The risk of introducing new pathways through engineered piled foundations and earth excavations into the underlying Secondary A and Principal aquifers is considered to be significant at this stage. Excavations for the inspection pits, underground tanks and services will likely encounter shallow soils contaminated with hydrocarbons. Consideration will therefore be given to the risk of introducing new pathways through the underlying sediments into the Secondary A and Principal aquifers from piled foundations.
- Asbestos – Not detected
- Services – certain compounds encountered during the ground investigation exceed the required thresholds to utilise certain pipe materials, such as polyethylene. Other services, such as telecoms, may be negatively impacted by the contaminants within the ground. A risk assessment is recommended to determine any risks to services.
- Waste Disposal – the development of the site will comprise the construction of new above and below ground structures. These features will require excavation of soils on site to depths of several metres. Based on the soil testing carried out, it is considered likely that soils contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons will be encountered during these excavations. Notably, any soils with concentrations >1000mg/kg of total petroleum hydrocarbon would be classed as a hazardous waste but would also fail the hazardous waste WAC limit. These soils may be suited for treatment to reduce concentrations, either on site or at a permitted treatment facility prior to disposal/reuse elsewhere.

Air Quality

- 6.25 The site is located within the Reading Borough Council Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) which has been designated for exceeding the recommended levels of Nitrogen dioxide in 2009. Air quality in the vicinity of the depot is expected to be good, with NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations within the relevant air quality objectives.
- 6.26 Construction and operational traffic from the proposals are not anticipated to exceed the criteria for further assessment, as such air quality impacts will likely be negligible. Following the
-

appropriate implementation of the mitigation measures and best practice measures in accordance with IAQM guidelines, the impacts associated with construction dust are predicted not to be significant.

- 6.27 There are no on-site emissions from energy plant and therefore this does not require further assessment. Additional rail movements from the proposals will be nominal, with a maximum of 18 daily movements expected. Combined with low existing background NO₂ concentrations, the rail emissions do not require further assessment.
- 6.28 The emissions from the depot are expected to result in, at worst, small air quality impacts and the effect is likely too not be significant. The proposals seek to control and limit emissions to the atmosphere through identifying potential sources of emission and applying appropriate best practice control techniques. The CEMP will outline suitable mitigation measures.

Biodiversity

- 6.29 An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) was undertaken as part of this project. The EcIA identified collates information acquired from the following surveys:
- Desk Study in accordance with CIEEM Guidelines;
 - Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, undertaken on 23rd June 2020;
 - Preliminary Ground Level Roost Assessment for Bats, undertaken on 23rd June 2020; and
 - Presence/Absence Surveys for Bats, undertaken on 11th August 2020.
- 6.30 The key outcomes of the EcIA are the following:
- Cow Lane Depot Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is to the north of the site, no vegetation of the LWS is anticipated to be affected by the project, either directly or indirectly; and
 - There would be some temporary loss of habitats along the west side of the building and sidings which are used for bats for commuting or foraging. Increased construction traffic and lighting during construction could have an impact if works were to be carried out at night.
- 6.31 The recommendations and mitigation measure that are set out in the EcIA are the following:
- Ecological toolbox talks to be given to contractors prior to works commencing to raise awareness of the legislation afforded to protected species and the working practices implemented to minimise impacts on the sensitive habitats;
 - A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be prepared and implemented;
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- Good practice guidelines for minimising dust and noise will be applied across the construction site;
- Pre-clearance checks for nesting birds and reptiles to be conducted by an experienced ecologist prior to vegetation clearance, in a two-phased approach;
- Construction activities to take place during daylight hours (avoiding the need for lighting and minimising disturbance to nesting birds and bats);
- All excavations to be covered at night to avoid mammals falling in. If this is not possible, a mammal ladder should be installed inside the excavation overnight and checked in the morning prior to restarting work; and
- Where possible, additional vegetation should be encouraged to grow within designated areas of the site boundary to provide further habitats for invertebrates, foraging birds and bats. Incorporation of a green wall into the design.

6.32 Due to the nature of the existing site, it is not anticipated for there to be any notable loss of biodiversity. The proposals aim to identify opportunities for habitat enhancements i.e. green wall, bird and bat boxes to provide biodiversity net gain.

Historic Environment

6.33 A Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment was produced to assess the potential impact the project would have on the historic environment. In summary, the findings of this assessment were:

- There are no heritage assets within the site boundary;
- Within 250m of the site boundary, there are four non-designated heritage assets;
- Within 500m of the site boundary, there are sixteen grade II listed buildings, one conservation area, and a 'significant view' identified in local policy.

6.34 It is predicted that the heritage assets would have no impact on both designated and non-designated heritage assets within the study area; therefore, it is recommended that there is no need for further assessment or mitigation in relation to the historic environment.

Summary

6.35 The design solution of the proposals includes the re-use of the existing running shed structure and will be of a steel profiled cladding. The other buildings proposed including the maintenance shed, workshop and offices/welfare facilities will be of a similar material to the running shed. The benefits of the proposals include improvements to this underused site for the maintenance of the SCO fleet. It will upgrade the depot and improve the overall working conditions.

6.36 It is considered that the works proposed are in accordance with the relevant local and national

policies. We therefore trust that the enclosed information is sufficient to issue the relevant approval.

Conclusion

- 6.1 Network Rail is seeking Prior Approval for the extension and refurbishment of existing train shed to provide train maintenance facilities and development of maintenance shed, workshop, washdown area and two servicing roads at Reading Upper Triangle, Holybrook Court, Cow Lane, Reading.
- 6.2 The proposal does not require full planning permission as it has deemed consent through Schedule 2, Part 18, Class A of the GPDO 2015, as amended. However, the LPA's prior approval of the scheme is required before works can commence. When undertaking prior approval considerations, the LPA must be satisfied that the scheme will not 'injure the amenities of the neighbourhood' or could not be implemented somewhere else on the land – as set out in paragraph A.2 of Part 18.
- 6.3 Overall, Network Rail consider that the information contained within this Prior Approval application is sufficient and look forward to receiving written confirmation that Reading Borough Council is satisfied with the proposed works, and that prior approval has been granted.

Appendix A – Notification of Intention to Demolish the Railway Maintenance Building Covering Letter

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