

Appendix A8: RBC & WBC Scoping Opinion



Sarah Matthews
Peter Brett Associates LLP
Caversham Bridge House
Waterman Place
Reading
RG1 8DN

Giorgio Framalicco
Director of Planning, Development and
Regulatory Services

Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 937 3787

Our Ref: 181542/SCO
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎ 0118 937 4530
e-mail: Kiaran.Roughan@reading.gov.uk

15 October 2018

Your contact is: Kiaran Roughan, Planning

Dear Ms Matthews,

Planning reference 181542/SCO
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England)
Regulations 2017
Request for a Scoping Opinion from the Local Planning Authority under
Regulation 16 for a redevelopment consisting of:
Construction of a segregated fast-track public transport, pedestrian and cycle
bridge and viaduct, comprising concrete bridge structure with a river span of
59.5m and a land span of 316m, supported by concrete columns, steel beams
and reinforced soil embankment, together with new footpath links and existing
footpath alterations, replacement supermarket car parking provision, junction
improvements and landscaping.
Land between Thames Valley Business Park", Napier Road, Reading

I refer to the above request and respond as follows, with my apologies for the delay.

You intend to submit an ES voluntarily for the above development, which is a revised version of application 171108/REG3 (currently pending consideration, following a Resolution to grant planning permission); for a Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) bus route, which would straddle the boundaries of Reading and Wokingham Boroughs.

You have submitted the following document in relation to this request:
'East reading Mass Rapid Transit Scheme, EIA Scoping Report by pba, ref. 28791, Rev. 2 dated August 2018. This response will refer to that document.

It is the formal Opinion of the Local Planning Authority the issues and recommendations set out in this letter should be adhered to in the production of the ES for the forthcoming planning application.

Consultation responses have been received from the following and these are appended to this letter:

- Berkshire Archaeology
- RBC Environmental Protection
- RBC Transport Strategy
- RBC Natural Environment Team - Ecologist
- RBC Emergency Planning Officer
- Network Rail
- Natural England

Consultation responses are awaited from the following and will be separately forwarded if received:

- Environment Agency
- Crossrail
- Sse
- RBC Natural Environment Team - Tree Officer

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1.1 The ES should be clear that the Highway Authority is independent of the applicant (who is Reading BC Highways Department).

1.1.2 to 1.1.5: The new Reading Local Plan Inquiry has now ended and the Inspector's report is awaited.

Chapter 2: Site Description

For the avoidance of doubt, the geographical scope of the ES should include the Wokingham Park and Ride site.

2.2.6 Update re: new local plan advised.

2.3.4 Meaning lost in the middle of this paragraph.

2.3.8 As with the previous Scoping Report, this appears to be missing mention of the TPO.

Chapter 3: Proposed development

No comments. Revised sections noted.

Chapter 4: Planning Policy Context

Relevant updates in respect of new local plan as above.

Chapter 5: EIA Process

No comments.

Chapter 6: Proposed Scope of the EIA

6.4.1 and 6.4.13 Cumulative effects: please contact the LPA to discuss any possible developments which may be relevant. RBC officers are not aware of significant developments since the previous Scoping Opinion was issued to advise of.

Please note that in relation to baseline conditions, the comments below on transport and traffic generation are relevant.

Chapter 7: Socio-Economics

No comments.

Chapter 8: Health

Note inclusion of this new chapter. This will be an important new area of the ES. No specific comments at this stage.

Chapter 9: Transport and Access

RBC Transport Strategy (the highway Authority) has assessed Chapter 9 and is content with it. I have no further comments.

Chapter 10: Air Quality

The Council's Environmental Protection (EP) Team advises that the methodology proposed is acceptable, but the ES should take into account updated guidance on air quality, which has been issued since the previous ES (ref. 161515/SCO) for this project. See the EP (air quality) response appended to this letter. As there have been changes to technical data and guidance since the previous environmental statement, the impact of the development on air quality should be reassessed.

Chapter 11: Hydrology

No comments.

Chapter 12 Ground conditions

Regarding ground conditions and contamination, the Council's EP Team is satisfied with the proposed methodology for the contaminated land assessment proposed.

Chapter 13: Landscape and visual

This section of the ES should include an update in terms of the redesign/additional mitigating landscaping.

Whilst not technically required, good-quality rendered views would be advisable for inclusion in the ES.

Chapter 14: Ecology and biodiversity

I attach below the detailed comments from the Council's retained Ecologist.

Chapter 15: Topics not included in the EIA

Noise and Vibration:

The EP Team has confirmed that they are content for noise to be excluded from the ES on the basis of the information in the scoping report and I confirm this, providing that any impacts on wildlife are covered in Chapter 14.

Archaeology and cultural heritage:

Regarding archaeology, Berkshire Archaeology has no objections to the methodology proposed within the scoping report and that archaeology can be scoped out. See response at the end of this letter.

Regarding cultural heritage, the statement at 15.3.9 that the settings of the Listed Bridges will not be affected is not accepted and accordingly, this should be assessed in the ES.

Waste:

It is agreed that this is not a significant environmental effect and can be scoped out of the ES.

Climate change:

It is agreed that these effects would be minor or positive and can be scoped out, but coverage/discussion should be included in other chapters.

The Risk of Accidents and/or disasters:

Agreed that although there are risks, these are not a significant environmental aspect of the scheme and can be scoped out.

Chapter 16: Summary and next steps

No comments.

Concluding remarks

1. The ES is now required to be prepared on the basis of this Opinion, in accordance with the 2017 Regulations.
2. This Opinion has been issued on condition of the information presented in the proposed development only and you are advised to consult with the Local Planning Authority over any changes to the subsequent planning application which may differ from the proposal presented for this Opinion.
3. No specific monitoring requirements are identified at this time, but it is anticipated that the ES proposes to cover such matters within each chapter.
4. It is agreed that pba (for the applicant) is competent in producing the ES and I can confirm that the LPA has the necessary expertise in reviewing this EIA Development.
5. Please consider commentary supplied in relation supplied in the previous scoping opinion (161515/SCO) and adjust as necessary, but if you have any queries, please get in touch.
6. In accordance with Regulation 30, this decision shall be made publicly available.

The above is the Opinion of the Local Planning Authority. I trust the above and enclosures is of use and I once again apologise for the delay in supplying this written letter. If you require any further assistance with regard to the issues herein, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kiaran Roughan', written in a cursive style.

Kiaran Roughan
Planning Manager

Encs.: responses from consultees

Responses received from consultees:

Berkshire Archaeology

Many thanks for consulting us on this scoping opinion. I have been through all the documentation and can confirm **we are satisfied with archaeology being scoped out** of the current EIA. The desk-based assessment previously provided - and subsequently updated - as well as further more detailed discussions on site conditions, and the completion of a small fieldwork exercise at the east end of the site (previously noted as being necessary) have meant sufficient information has been provided on archaeological implications at this time. We are therefore in agreement with the conclusion of the scoping report that any further archaeological issues can be dealt with by condition.

RBC Environmental Protection (contaminated land and noise)

Application Number: 181542

Premises Address: Napier Road Reading

Application For: request for an EIA scoping opinion

Environmental Protection concerns

- **Air Quality - commented on separately by AQ Officer Ross Jarvis.**
- **Contaminated Land**
- **Noise**

I am satisfied with the proposed methodology for the contaminated land assessment within the EIA and happy for noise to be excluded on the basis of the information in the scoping report.

If you have any queries please contact me.

RBC Environmental Protection (air quality)

As there have been changes to technical data and guidance since the previous environmental statement, the impact of the development on air quality should be reassessed.

I have no objections to the methodology proposed within the scoping report.

The main guidance document for assessing the significance of the impact is: IAQM and Environment Protection UK (EPUK) criteria in their document: *Land-use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality* (January 2017).

The below have also changed:

- Revised Emissions Inventory published by DEFRA
- Revised Background Concentration data published by DEFRA; and
- New monitoring data.

RBC Transport Strategy

No objections to the approach set out for Chapter 9 [Transport and Access]

RBC Natural Environment Team - Ecologist

Re: Consultation on an Application 181542 - MRT Bus Route - Scoping Opinion

The scoping document appears have scoped out numerous potential impacts at an early stage and is appears to be playing down what will be a very damaging scheme. I feel an updated report should be submitted that clearly sets out the likely scope of the environmental impacts of the scheme. Two key bullet points are provided below:

- • No breeding bird surveys have been undertaken despite previous requests
- • The statement that there will be no adverse impact on Habitats of Principal Importance (Table 14.3 summary of residual effects) is untrue. The proposals will result in the loss of a large area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland which is a “Habitats of Principal Importance”.

RBC Emergency Planning Manager

I had no real concerns if it wasn't going to displace floodwater, If it does displace floodwater then appropriate compensation needs to be identified to store water elsewhere. I did however have a few concerns RE someone being able to access the underside of the structure RE terrorism. This of course wouldn't be any more of an issue than any other bridge structure in existence, but if access can be restricted then this would help other issues such as Anti-Social Behaviour, rough sleeping and Graffiti.

Network Rail

Proposal: Request for an EIA scoping Opinion

Land between Thames Valley Business Park Napier Road Reading

Thank you for your email dated 11 September, together with the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Network Rail has a statutory obligation of ensure the availability of safe train paths and as such we are required to take an active interest in any development adjacent to our infrastructure that potentially could affect the safe operation of the railway.

When you formally consult Network Rail we need to be satisfied that there will be no adverse safety issues arising as a result of the proposed development to users of the railway. Can we therefore suggest a section be added in the environmental statement to demonstrate that the railway infrastructure will not be compromised and be adequately protected.

We would also submit the following comments for consideration:

- . Wayfinding etc in and around the station

- . Improved walkways, pedestrian access etc from Northern Entrance of the Station to Vastern Bridge- Napier Road
- . As the revised proposal now shows it starting/ finishing at end of Napier Road, have they considered how people move from Napier Road to the Station/ City Centre , i.e. walking route or if shuttle buses are moving people towards the station from Napier Road

Any works on this land will need to be undertaken following engagement with Asset Protection to determine the interface with Network Rail assets, buried or otherwise and by entering into a BAPA agreement, if required, with a minimum of 3months notice before works start. Email: assetprotectionwestern@networkrail.co.uk.

Network Rail will need to be consulted on any planning application submitted as our primary concern is the safety of the adjacent railway.

Please feel free to get in contact if you have any questions.

Natural England

Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Consultation (Regulation 15 (4) of the Town & Country Planning EIA Regulations 2017): East Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Scheme.

Location: Land between Thames Valley Business Park and Napier Road, Reading.

Thank you for the above consultation received by Natural England on 11th September 2018. Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

The scoping request is for a proposal that does not appear, from the information provided, to affect any nationally designated geological or ecological sites (Ramsar, SPA, SAC, SSSI, NNR) or landscapes (National Parks, AONBs, Heritage Coasts, National Trails), or have significant impacts on the protection of soils (particularly of sites over 20 ha of best or most versatile land), nor is the development for a mineral or waste site over 5 ha.

At present therefore it is not a priority for Natural England to advise on the detail of this EIA. We would, however, like to draw your attention to some key points of advice, presented in annex to this letter, and we would expect the final Environmental Statement (ES) to include all necessary information as outlined in Part 4 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

If you believe that the development does affect one of the features listed in paragraph 3 above, please contact Natural England at consultations@naturalengland.org.uk and we may be able to provide further information.

Tel: (0118) 974 6531 (Direct Line)
Email: Katie.herrington@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 15/10/2018
My ref: 182448
Your ref:



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Jenny Hughes
Peter Brett Associates LLP
Caversham Bridge House
Waterman Place
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 8DN

Environment
Development Management Team
P.O. Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 1WR
Tel: (0118) 974 6000
DX: 33506 - Wokingham

Dear Jenny,

Application Number: 182448

Site Address: Land between Napier Road (Reading) and Broken Bow roundabout, Thames Valley Park, Reading

Proposal: Scoping Opinion application to determine the content of an Environmental Impact Assessment for the East Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Scheme

I refer to your request for a scoping opinion in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (The EIA Regulations) for received on 29th August 2018. The proposal is for a mass rapid transit (MRT) bus route between Reading and Wokingham and therefore crosses the boundary between these boroughs.

The following document has been submitted 'East Reading Mass Rapid Transit Scheme: EIA Scoping Report' ref. 28791 rev 2 dated August 2018. It is acknowledged that the applicant (Reading Borough Council) intends to voluntarily undertake an EIA and supply an Environmental Statement (ES) with the planning application.

A scoping opinion has been sent to both Reading and Wokingham Borough Councils. This is an updated scoping opinion to assess the likely significant effects in relation to the amended scheme design. This follows the approval of the Full Planning Application that included an Environmental Statement by Reading Borough Council (171108), but the refusal of such full planning application with Environmental Statement by Wokingham Council (172048).

Whilst Reading have not yet issued their response, I have reviewed a draft that provides comprehensive review of the submitted document. This includes general issues with the document as well as points relating to specific paragraphs. I confirm that Wokingham Borough Council agree with the assessment made by Reading Borough Council with regards to the shortfalls of the document.

It should be noted that a S.73 application (182496) varying Park and Ride (161596) was approved on the 11th October 2018 following approval by the planning committee. The

application seeks to 'alter ground levels/ retaining walls, and the layout and number of parking spaces, bus stop and bus turning area'. The ES should take into account such application accordingly.

In terms of site specific impacts relating to Wokingham Borough, I confirm the following consultation responses have been received. For information, a comment has been received from ACER, and a local resident that are noted.

WBC Highways: No objection has been raised with regards to the information contained within the EIA Scoping Report in relation to Highways.

WBC Drainage and Flooding: No objection is raised to the information contained within the EIA Scoping Report in relation to the Drainage and Flooding topic.

WBC Tree and Landscape: Comments as below;

The Landscape and Visual section of the EIA Scoping Report makes reference to a number of views in Table 13.2 that will be scoped out as part of the revised visual impact assessment. It would have been really helpful to have the viewpoints provided as an appendix to the Scoping Report. I understand why certain views will be scoped out especially as there was no view of the proposal due to intervening built development or vegetation, however I would still prefer for Views VP1 & VP7 retained as part of the new assessment.

Paragraph 13.4.6 (and Section 1.1) refers to a design review to consider other options for the structure. This is welcomed, as the design of the viaduct in relation to the surrounding landscape is a fundamental issue that will need to be explored and request that further thought is given to including extensive planting as part of the bridge structure. The use of planters on the bridge could possibly work only if they are substantial in size, otherwise they will have little effect. Green pigment in the concrete is like to be more visual prominent rather than less, and suggest that as part of the redesign of the bridge, other materials could be incorporated to reduce the amount of concrete visible from the Thames side of the structure.

I trust this advice is of assistance. Please be aware that it is given without prejudice to any future decision that the Council may take. If you wish to discuss any matters relating to this please contact me on the direct dial number above. However, any significant changes to the scheme would likely require a new scoping opinion to be made.

Yours sincerely,

JT

Justin Turvey Development Management Lead Officer