

East Reading Mass Rapid Transit Scheme

Utilities Statement

On behalf of **Reading Borough Council**



Project Ref: 28791/001 | Rev: 0 | Date: 9th June 2017



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1 Introduction

1.1 Proposed Development

- 1.1.1 The East Reading Mass Rapid Transit (East MRT) scheme is a segregated fast track public transport, pedestrian and cycle route that will support enhanced accessibility and continued sustainable growth in Reading, Wokingham Borough and the wider area. The purpose of the East MRT is to improve the attractiveness of travelling more sustainably, therefore reducing private car trips, easing forecast congestion and air quality along the existing highway network, particularly on the A4 corridor. The scheme is located within land between Thames Valley Business Park and Napier Road, Reading, to the south of the River Thames and north of the Great Western Main Line Railway. The route of the MRT scheme itself is proposed to link the A3290 at Thames Valley Park, adjacent to a proposed new Park & Ride facility (being provided by others), to Napier Road, Reading town centre and the railway station

The scheme will seek to achieve the following key aims:

- Provide a sustainable alternative solution to accommodate future travel demand on the London Road corridor;
 - Increase capacity for movement of people thereby reducing journey times and forecast congestion, as well as improving reliability of journeys along the corridor;
 - Support economic development in Reading Town Centre, east Reading, Wokingham and within the Thames Valley;
 - Develop a high quality, sustainable system which provides a sustainable alternative to the private car;
 - Facilitate a future MRT network for Reading and the Thames Valley;
 - Allow access for mobility impaired and pushchairs.
- 1.1.2 This Utilities Statement supports a full Planning Application for 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.
- 1.1.3 The project is being promoted by Reading Borough Council (RBC), working with Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), and Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP). The public-sector led project has been allocated funding by TVB LEP from the Local Growth Fund.
- 1.1.4 The following report identifies and evaluates the likely impact of the scheme on existing utilities services, including the identification of:
- existing utilities within the proposed development area.
 - proposed utility diversions.
 - proposed utilities required for the scheme.

1.2 Planning Policy

National Policy

- 1.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) confirms that there should be a presumption in favour of development where it can be demonstrated that the proposals are sustainable. When making plans for development NPPF states:

[para 163] 'Local planning authorities should work with other authorities and providers to: Assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for transport, water supply, wastewater and its treatment, energy (including heat), telecommunications, utilities, waste, health, social care, education, flood risk and coastal change management, and its ability to meet forecast demands; and

Take account of the need for strategic infrastructure including nationally significant infrastructure within their areas.'

Local Policy

- 1.2.2 The development is covered by the Reading Borough Council (RBC) Core Strategy adopted January 2008 with an alteration adopted 27th January 2015. In terms of utilities the following policy applies:

- 1.2.3 Policy CS9: Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities states that:

"Proposals for development will not be permitted unless the local planning authority is satisfied that infrastructure, services, resources, amenities or other assets lost or impacted upon as a result of the development or made necessary by the development will be provided or re-provided at the appropriate time, in order to ensure that the development is both sustainable and contributes to the proper planning of an area in accordance with relevant planning policies. Such contributions may be pooled, in order to allow necessary infrastructure to be secured in a fair and equitable way. The local planning authority will require planning obligations entered into by agreement or other means to secure the replacement and enhancement of additional physical and social infrastructure, services, resources, amenities or other assets".

- 1.2.4 The development is also covered by the Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Core Strategy adopted January 2010. In terms of utilities the following policy applies:

- 1.2.5 Policy CP4: Infrastructure Requirements states that:

"Planning Permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure, services, community and other facilities required for the development taking account of the cumulative impact of schemes are agreed".

- 1.2.6 Other associated planning policies are included in the Planning Statement supporting the application.

2 Existing Utilities

2.1 Utility Records Search

- 2.1.1 Information on existing utilities and services was obtained through consultation with the relevant Statutory Undertakers, during the preliminary design phase to determine which utility assets presently exist. Statutory Undertaker asset plans were obtained showing the approximate locations of all utilities within the proposed development area. These asset plans are contained within Appendix A.
- 2.1.2 Due to the constrained application site, several major utility routes were identified to be directly within the path of the route. The following companies have been highlighted as having assets that could be potentially affected by this development:
- Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) – Assets in the area include wooden pole mounted 33 kV overhead electricity cables, steel tower mounted 33kV overhead electricity cables, buried oil filled 33kV electricity cables and buried oil filled 132kV electricity cables.
 - Southern Gas Networks (SGN) – Assets in the area include high / medium pressure gas mains and associated valves.
 - Thames Water – Assets in the area include a foul water rising main which follows the line of the tow path on the eastern side of the River Kennet mouth to the River Thames.
- 2.1.3 These utilities will need to be relocated on a temporary or permanent basis, protected during the construction phase, and/or will require special working measures during the construction phase in accordance with Statutory Undertaker requirements.

3 Identified Utility Diversions

- 3.1.1 From a review of the asset plans received, it was identified that the proposed works will require the diversion of both 132kV and 33kV electricity cables, high / medium pressure gas mains and associated gas valves.
- 3.1.2 Meetings were held with affected utility companies (Southern Gas Networks and Scottish and Southern Energy) to determine the impact of the scheme, proposed diversion routes, timescales and to obtain budget estimates for diversions.
- 3.1.3 Proposed utility diversions are shown on drawing number 28791/2009/CIV/009. The diversions shown are based on proposed diversion plans obtained from Statutory Undertakers contained within Appendix B. Where possible, electricity diversions will be incorporated within the East MRT route alignment via a series of ducts. This will create available areas directly adjacent to the route to incorporate SGN diversions and to provide a greater opportunity for planting / landscaping.
- 3.1.4 As stated above, the works will require the diversion of a high-pressure gas main and associated valves. To incorporate these works into the scheme, the intention is to construct the western end of the scheme in two phases. The main Planning Application phase incorporates a reduction of the East MRT route alignment to one lane (signal controlled) at approx. Ch 800m to avoid the SGN gas valves (refer to drawing number 28791/2009/CIV/004). These valves are proposed to be diverted in a future phase of the works, to convert the proposed East MRT route a two-way alignment as shown on drawing number 28791/2009/CIV/005.
- 3.1.5 All proposed diversion works will be carefully planned (in accordance with the Manual of Contract Documents for Highway Works SA 10/05 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 – Diversionary Works) during the detailed design / construction phase to minimise the least amount of disruption to the utility supply network and temporary supplies will be incorporated if required.

4 Proposed Utilities

- 4.1.1 The proposed East MRT route will incorporate both street lighting and traffic signals, requiring a low voltage electricity supply, which will be progressed during the detailed design phase.

5 Summary

5.1 Planning Policy

- 5.1.1 In terms of utilities, it is considered that the proposed development accords with both local and national policy as this report has considered the existing and proposed utilities infrastructure.
- 5.1.2 In accordance with both RBC's Adopted Core Strategy (Jan. '08), policy CS9 and WBC's Adopted Core Strategy (Jan '10), policy CP4, this strategy report demonstrates that the proposed development has considered key utility infrastructure.
- 5.1.3 This report has provided an indication of existing utilities within the proposed development area, proposed diversions and new utilities required for the scheme. Following the outcome of the Planning Application, if successful, further liaison will take place with affected companies through the detailed design phase of the scheme. This will allow diversion works to be programmed and undertaken in the most cost effective way.