

## PART A

Report of: **Development Management Section Head**

Date of Committee	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014</b>
Site address:	<b>Croxley Rail Link - Cassiobridge Station, Ascot Road</b>
Reference Number :	<b>14/00097/DISCON</b>
Description of Development:	<b>Croxley Rail Link - Details submitted for Condition 12 (Detailed design approval for Cassiobridge Station) pursuant to the planning permission for the development provided for in the Croxley Rail Link Order 2013.</b>
Applicant	<b>Hertfordshire County Council</b>
Date Received:	<b>21st January 2014</b>
8 week date (minor):	<b>18th March 2014</b>
Ward:	<b>HOLYWELL</b>

### **SUMMARY**

This application seeks approval for the design of the Cassiobridge Station which is to be constructed as part of the Croxley Rail Link project on land adjacent to the bridge over the existing disused railway line. These details are required by Condition 12 of the Croxley Rail Link Order 2013 which states the following:

*No development for the stations, the viaduct, the Ascot Road bridge works, the Cardiff Road bridge works, the parapet works or the substation shall commence in each case until written details of the layout, scale and external appearance, including facing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details or any*

*subsequent revisions that have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.*

The detailed design of the Vicarage Road station, viaduct, substation, Ascot Road bridge works, Cardiff Road bridge works and the parapet works are to be considered under separate applications.

Due to the nature of its use, the proposed station incorporates a fairly functional design approach. However, the details submitted with this application show that innovative modern design incorporating high quality materials to be used for the exterior of the building including brickwork, reglit glass system and metal trellis sections to support planting. The use of materials would break up the mass of the building and provide an acceptable appearance. The exposed brick works on side elevation will be covered by metal trellis to support planting at ground floor to help soften the appearance of the building. The station will be elevated above the street level. However, given its modern design and use of lightweight materials it will have a positive impact upon the character of the area. Overall, the layout, scale and external appearance of the building is considered to be acceptable.

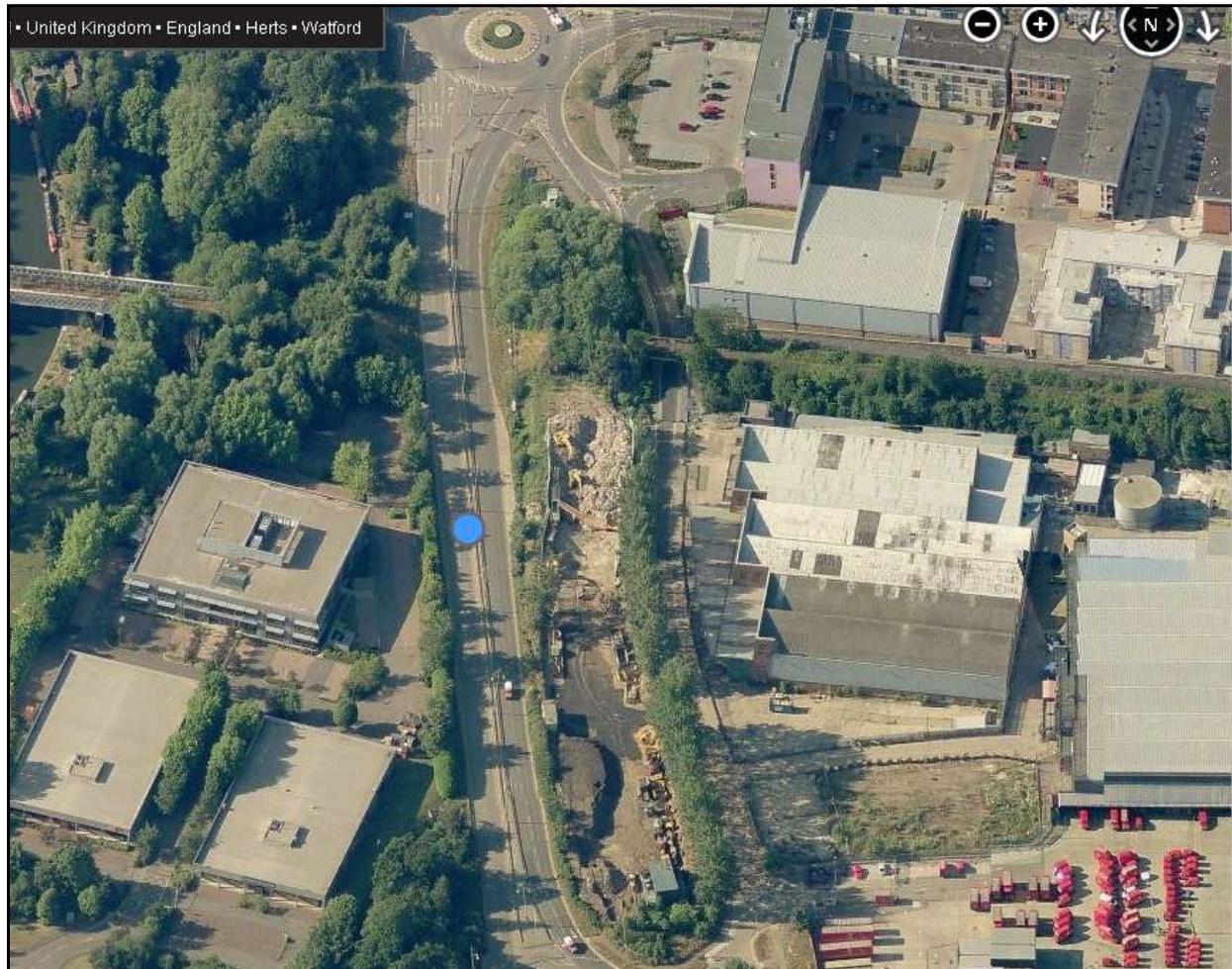
The Development Management Section Head recommends that the application be approved as set out in the report.

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## **BACKGROUND**

### **Site and surroundings**

The application site includes disused railway lines, land and embankment in the proximity of Ascot Road. The station will be built on an island between the old and new Ascot Roads which is located just north of the Old Royal Mail site, now partly occupied by the Morrison store.



Aerial view of the site

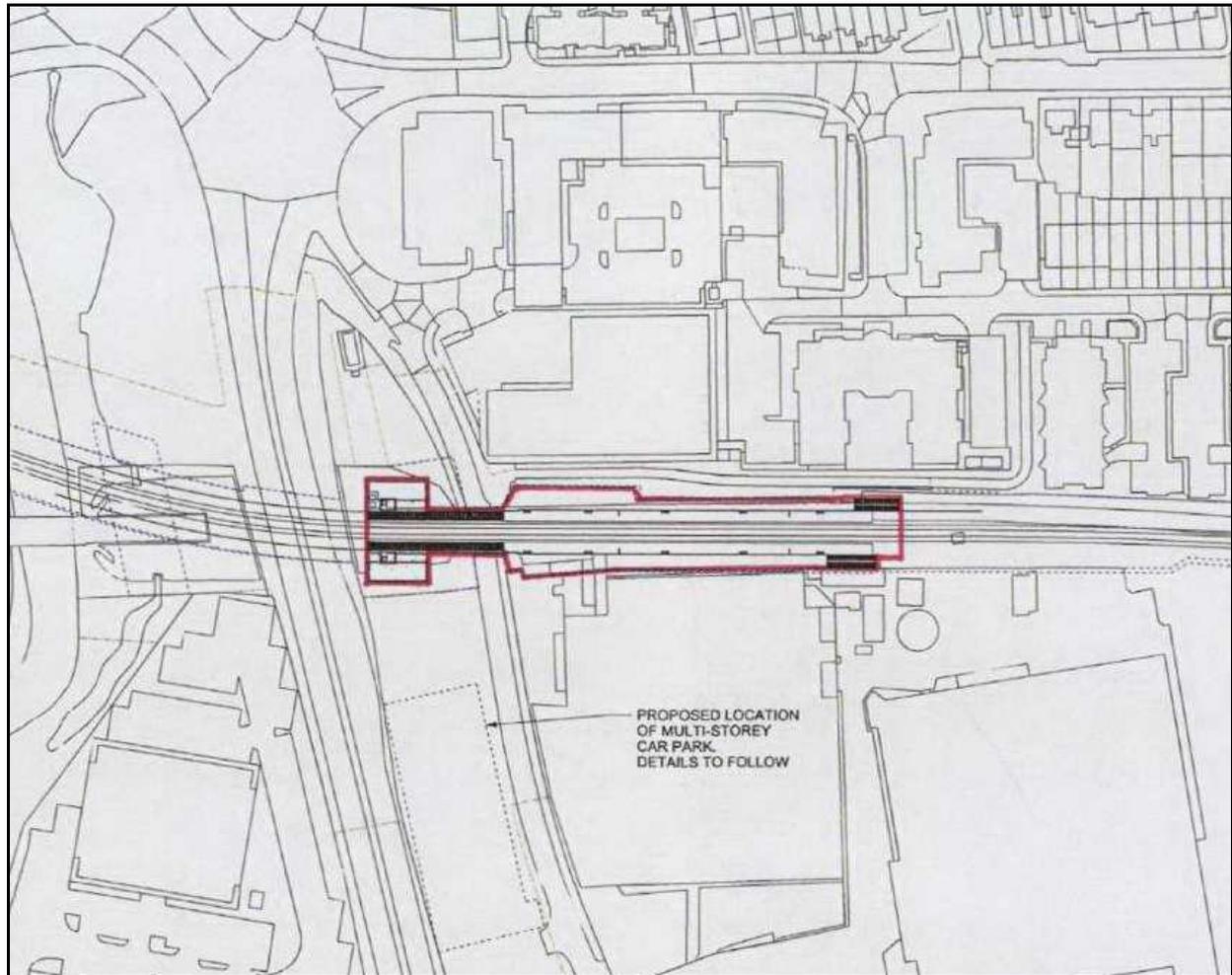
To the west of the station site is the green realm adjacent to the Grand Union Canal, but elsewhere the area around the site comprises a number of isolated commercial buildings and is dominated by the road network.

The site is not located in a designated conservation area.

### **Proposed development**

This application seeks approval of the detailed design for the station which is to be erected on Ascot Road as part of the Croxley Rail Link project. Details of the layout, scale and external appearance of the station, including facing materials, are to be considered under this application. The main elements of the work include a new entrance concourse,

gateline, new staircases and lifts giving step free access to platforms, new platforms and canopies, plant rooms, and bridge over old Ascot Road. As well as the station building itself, the proposal also includes the station platforms which will extend eastward towards Westfield College School.



Location plan

Details of the materials have been submitted and these include the following:

Walls: Staffordshire Blue Brindle smooth facing brickwork; Reglit Glass system; metal planted trellises to part of front and side elevations

Roof: Extensive sedum planting on single ply membranes.

Doors: Polyester powder coated.

Windows: Polyester powder coated metal windows.

Boundary treatment: 2.4m high Expamet 'fastrack' fencing. 2.4m high timber fencing to land boundary adjacent to allotments.

Lighting: provision includes lighting columns, bollards and LED uplighters.

Others; Metal planted trellises to lower elevation, LU signage and poster panel information schemes.

### **Relevant planning history**

Following the funding approval for the Croxley Rail Link, issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) in December 2011, Hertfordshire County Council and London Underground Limited have jointly applied to the Secretary of State for Transport under Section 6 of the Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) 1992 for an Order authorising the construction, maintenance and operation of a new railway comprising the extension of London Underground's Metropolitan Line to Watford Junction. The TWAO Public Inquiry took place in October 2012 and deemed planning permission was granted in July 2013 (Ref. TWA/12/APP/01). The CRL is expected to be operational from 2016.

The deemed planning permission was granted subject to a number of conditions relating to various reserved matters. Condition 12, which forms the subject of this application, states the following:

*No development for the stations, the viaduct, the Ascot Road bridge works, the Cardiff Road bridge works, the parapet works or the substation shall commence in each case until written details of the layout, scale and external appearance, including facing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details or any subsequent revisions that have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.*

*Reason: To protect the amenities of adjacent properties and ensure satisfactory external appearance for the development.*

This application seeks approval for the detailed design of the Cassiobridge station only. The approval of the designs for other sites referred to in the condition are being considered under the following applications:

Ref. 14/00094/DISCON – Croxley Rail Link - Details submitted for Condition 12 (Detailed design approval for substation) pursuant to deemed planning permission for the development provided for in the Croxley Rail Link Order 2013 – application pending consideration at time of writing this report.

Ref. 14/00096/DISCON – Croxley Rail Link - Details submitted for Condition 12 (Detailed design for approval for the viaduct) pursuant to deemed planning permission for the development provided for in the Croxley Rail Link Order 2013 – application pending consideration at time of writing this report.

Ref. 14/00101/DISCON – Croxley Rail Link - Details submitted for Condition 12 (Detailed design approval for Vicarage Road station) pursuant to deemed planning permission for the development provided for in the Croxley Rail Link Order 2013 – application pending consideration at time of writing this report.

### **Relevant policies**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework**

Section 7     Requiring good design

#### **Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies**

##### **Document 2011-2026**

No relevant policies.

#### **Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016**

No relevant policies.

## **Watford Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy 2006-31**

WBC1	Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
IP1	Croxley Rail Link
SD1	Sustainable Design
SS1	Spatial Strategy
UD1	Delivering High Quality Design
T1	Regional Transport Node
T5	Providing New Infrastructure

## **Watford District Plan 2000**

No relevant policies.

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## **CONSULTATIONS**

### **Neighbouring properties**

Letters were sent to 53 neighbouring properties. No responses have been received.

### **Site notices**

Site notices were placed and the period for comment expired on 18 March 2014. No responses have been received.

### **Press advertisement**

A public notice was published in the Watford Observer and the period for comment expired on 28 February 2014. No responses have been received.

### **Statutory Consultations**

#### **Design and Conservation team**

We have no objection to the proposed station design.

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## **APPRAISAL**

In accordance with s.38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Development Plan for Watford comprises:

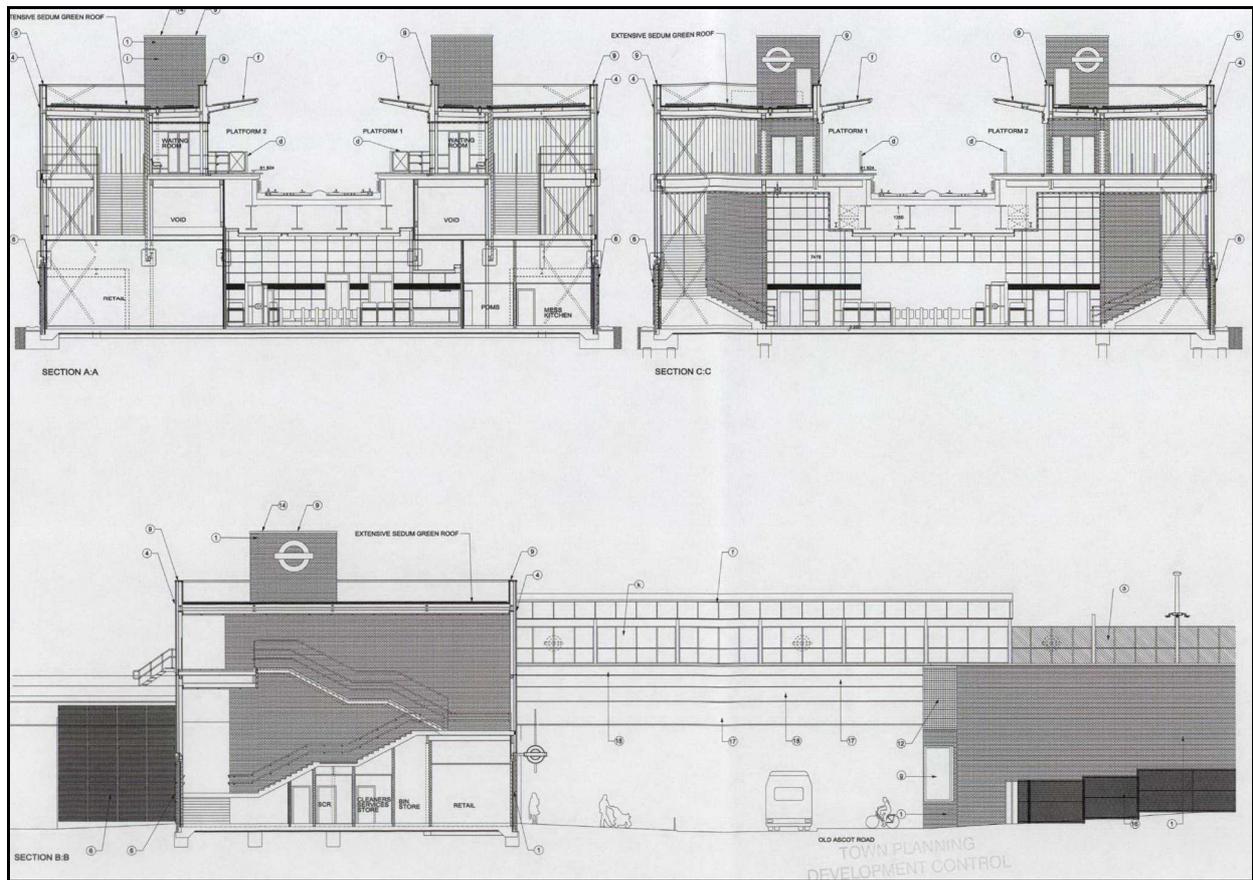
- (a) *Watford Local Plan: Core Strategy 2006-31 (adopted January 2013)*;
- (b) the continuing “saved” policies of the *Watford District Plan 2000*;
- (c) the *Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2011-2026*; and
- (d) the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016.

### **Policy background**

National planning policy, provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), makes clear that development should “add to the overall quality of the area” and “respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings” (paragraph 58). Paragraph 58 of the NPPF also requires that developments be visually attractive as a result of good architecture. Paragraph 64 states that “Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions”.

Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31 states that “new development should respect and enhance the local character of the area in which it is located”.

Policy IP1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31 states, in relation to the Croxley Rail Link, that “The council will work alongside Hertfordshire County Council, Department for Transport and other major stakeholders involved in this infrastructure project in order to maximise the chances of the project's delivery at the earliest possible date. The council will seek to maximise the benefits to the community by actively engaging in discussions regarding detailed design and operational issues, and seeking to influence outcomes for the benefit of the community”.



Sectional elevations

### **Layout, scale and external appearance**

The station and the platforms will be elevated above the street level and hence, they will be in a highly prominent position. The lower part of the building will incorporate significant solid element. This is a functional requirement as this part of the proposed development will have to be sufficiently strong to bear the weight of the station buildings, the platforms and the railway tracks as well as the trains. However, the appearance of this element is enhanced by the use of high quality materials. Metal trellis will be fixed to the elevations at ground level to enhance further its appearance.



The station building will largely be built using lightweight materials. The presentation images indicate that this will be tinted green. This approach will ensure that the proposed building will respect the green appearance of the adjacent land around the canal to the west.

The area includes a number of large (and mainly modern) commercial buildings. The proposed station building and the bridge across the old Ascot Road will bring a new dimension to the surroundings, but the decision to incorporate a modern and highly innovative design is considered to be the right approach here. Further, the details submitted with this application demonstrate that high quality materials will be used in construction of the building. The combination of quality materials and design innovation will result in a building which will make a strong and positive impact on the character and appearance of the area.

### Conclusion

Due to the nature of its use, the proposed station incorporates a fairly functional design approach. However, the details submitted with this application demonstrate that innovative modern design and the use of high quality materials will result in a building that will have a positive impact upon the character and appearance of the area.

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That all details submitted pursuant to Condition 12 (detailed design approval relating to Cassiobridge Station) of the planning permission for the development provided for in the Croxley Rail Link Order 2013 be approved.

### **Drawing Numbers**

CRL-ACA-SA-XX-DR-A-0006 P3; CRL-ACA-SA-XX-DR-A-0001 P4; CRL-ACA-SA-GF-DR-A-0002 P4; CRL-ACA-SA-GF-DR-A-0001 P4; CRL-ACA-SA-01-DR-A-0001 P3; CRL-ACA-SA-01-DR-A-0002 P3; CRL-ACA-SA-01-DR-A-0003 P3; CRL-ACA-SA-02-DR-A-0001 P5; CRL-ACA-SA-XX-DR-A-0002 P4; CRL-ACA-SA-XX-DR-A-0003 P4; CRL-ACA-SA-XX-DR-A-0004 P4; CRL-ACA-SA-XX-DR-A-0005 P5; CRL-ARP-SA-00-PS-U-0001 P4; CRL-ARP-SA-00-PS-D-0001 P1; CRL-ARP-SA-00-PS-U-0002 P3

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