

PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

1 2 NOV 2010

RECEIVED

RA

Sent: 11 November 2010 16:22
To: Planning
Cc: Heywood Karen, Bewick Stewart, Martin Edward, Anita Ward
Subject: Application N6/2010/2055/MA Shredded Wheat Factory, Welwyn GC

For the attention of Richard Aston

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below Network Rail's response to the application for development of the former Shredded Wheat factory at Welwyn Garden City (N6/2010/2055/MA).

We have two areas of concern, the first relates to the alteration to the existing footbridge access to the station, the second relates to more general asset protection measures.

In relation to the proposed alterations to the station footbridge, you will be aware that the Authority itself has entered into a Standard Fast Track Development Agreement to produce a feasibility study looking at various design solutions to improve the existing footbridge entrance to both the station and the Howard Centre.

A number of scenarios are being looked at, viz.

1. The renewal (replacement) of the Footbridge over the operational lines, including the sidings, and the provision of disabled access to the east side. The bridge will be dual purpose serving both passengers and public. The footbridge spans over the redundant land and road, including the stairs, will also be removed.
2. The erection of a new footbridge next to the existing. The new footbridge will span over the operational lines, including the sidings, and will include disabled access to the east side. The existing footbridge spans over the sidings will be renewed and will tie into the new footbridge at the Network Rail boundary. The existing footbridge spans over the redundant land and road including the stairs will be removed.
3. The construction of a new footbridge outside the station lease. The renewal of the footbridge spans over the siding and the provision of a disabled access to the east side. The removal of the existing footbridge spans over the redundant land and road, including the stairs.
4. The enhancement of the footbridge span over the operational lines. The renewal of the footbridge spans over the siding, and the provision of a disabled access to the east side. The removal of the existing footbridge spans over the redundant land and road, including the stairs. As part of this, the option should consider the following: cosmetic enhancement to the footbridge span over the operational lines including potentially cladding the existing corrugated iron surfaces, improving the lighting, providing a new floor surface, and potentially widening the existing footbridge out to the depth of the existing lift shafts. Here it would be useful to get an understanding of the costs involved in delivering each proposed enhancement to ascertain whether it's feasible to deliver a package of enhancements of just one or two.
5. Option 3 & 4 together

The proposal as tabled provides for the removal of the redundant spans at the east end of the structure and the provision of a new staircase and lift to gain access to the bridge, station and Howard Centre beyond. However there is no consideration of the increased use of the footbridge as a result of the overall development; there are no figures (as far as can be ascertained) on what the increased footfall over the bridge would be overall. Mention is made of perhaps an additional 200 or so rail trips associated with the development but there is no estimate of how many people would use the bridge to gain access to the town centre, or how many would go in the opposite direction on foot to the various uses proposed (particularly the supermarket and leisure centre). Our immediate concern is whether the existing bridge structure could cope with the increased footfall resulting from the development. This work should emerge as part of the feasibility study currently being carried out. We hope to have some initial feedback on this w/c 22nd November, so we will have to reserve judgement on this particular aspect until that week at the very least.

Clearly we are supportive of the proposal to shorten the existing bridge spans but the option tabled represents the least form of improvement in terms of attractiveness and does not reflect the aspirations of the Authority as expressed in the development brief. We would also be concerned about potential pinch points within the retained structure if there is a significant increase in footfall predicted. Additional issues such as the maintenance of the new structures will also have to be taken into account. As such we would expect the results of the feasibility study discussed above to influence the determination of the application with respect to these aspects of the proposal.

Clearly the question of signage will be important, both to orientate passengers to parts of the Spenhill development and similarly for those in the Spenhill area to be directed back to the station. This should be the subject of a condition of the outline consent or could be part of the Obligation.

In relation to Asset protection matters, the following need to be taken into account:

Drainage

All surface and foul water arising from the proposed works must be collected and diverted away from Network Rail property. In the absence of detailed plans all soakaways must be located so as to discharge away from the railway infrastructure.

Fail Safe Use of Crane and Plant

All operations, including the use of cranes or other mechanical plant working adjacent to Network Rail's property, must at all times be carried out in a "fail safe" manner such that in the event of mishandling, collapse or failure, no materials or plant are capable of falling within 3.0m of the nearest rail of the adjacent railway line, or where the railway is electrified, within 3.0m of overhead electrical equipment or supports.

Excavations/Earthworks

All excavations/ earthworks carried out in the vicinity of Network Rail property/ structures must be designed and executed such that no interference with the integrity of that property/ structure can occur. If temporary works compounds are to be located adjacent to the operational railway, these should be included in a method statement for approval by Network Rail. Prior to commencement of works, full details of excavations and earthworks to be carried out near the railway undertaker's boundary fence should be submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority acting in consultation with the railway undertaker and the works shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Where development may affect the railway, consultation with the Asset Protection Engineer should be undertaken.

Security of Mutual Boundary

Security of the railway boundary will need to be maintained at all times. If the works require temporary or permanent alterations to the mutual boundary the applicant must contact Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer.

Fencing

Because of the nature of the proposed developments we consider that there will be an increased risk of trespass onto the railway. We would request that the Developer must provide a suitable trespass proof fence adjacent to Network Rail's boundary (minimum approx. 1.8m high) and make provision for its future maintenance and renewal. This is particularly the case alongside the hotel/YMCA & NR boundary. Network Rail's existing fencing / wall must not be removed or damaged.

Method Statements/Fail Safe/Possessions

Method statements may require to be submitted to Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer at the below address for approval prior to works commencing on site.

Where appropriate an asset protection agreement will have to be entered into. Where any works cannot be carried out in a "fail-safe" manner, it will be necessary to restrict those works to periods when the railway is closed to rail traffic i.e. "possession" which must be booked via Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer and are subject to a minimum prior notice period for booking of 20 weeks. Generally if excavations/piling/buildings are to be located within 10m of the railway boundary a method statement should be submitted for NR approval.

OPE

Once planning permission has been granted and at least six weeks prior to works commencing on site the Asset Protection Engineer (OPE) MUST be contacted, contact details as below. The OPE will require to see any method statements/drawings relating to any excavation, drainage, demolition, lighting and building work or any works to be carried out on site that may affect the safety, operation, integrity and access to the railway.

Demolition

Any demolition or refurbishment works must not be carried out on the development site that may endanger the safe operation of the railway, or the stability of the adjoining Network Rail structures. The demolition of buildings or other structures near to the operational railway infrastructure must be carried out in accordance with an agreed method statement. Approval of the method statement must be obtained from Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer before the development can commence.

12/11/2010

Vibro-impact Machinery

Where vibro-compaction machinery is to be used in development, details of the use of such machinery and a method statement should be submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority acting in consultation with the railway undertaker prior to the commencement of works and the works shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved method statement.

Scaffolding

Any scaffold which is to be constructed within 10 metres of the railway boundary fence must be erected in such a manner that at no time will any poles over-sail the railway and protective netting around such scaffold must be installed.

Tower Cranes

With a development of a certain height that may/will require use of a tower crane, the developer must bear in mind the following. Tower crane usage adjacent to railway infrastructure is subject to stipulations on size, capacity etc. which needs to be agreed by the Outside Party Engineer prior to implementation. Details should be included in the construction method statement mentioned previously.

Two Metre Boundary

Consideration should be given to ensure that the construction and subsequent maintenance can be carried out to any proposed buildings or structures without adversely affecting the safety of, or encroaching upon Network Rail's adjacent land, and therefore all any building should be situated at least 2 metres from Network Rail's boundary. This will allow construction and future maintenance to be carried out from the applicant's land, thus avoiding provision and costs of railway lock-out protection, supervision and other facilities necessary when working from or on railway land.

Noise/Soundproofing

The Developer should be aware that any development for residential use adjacent to an operational railway may result in neighbour issues arising. Consequently every endeavour should be made by the developer to provide adequate soundproofing for each dwelling. Please note that in a worst case scenario there could be trains running 24 hours a day and the soundproofing should take this into account.

Trees/Shrubs/Landscaping

Where trees/shrubs are to be planted adjacent to the railway boundary these shrubs should be positioned at a minimum distance greater than their predicted mature height from the boundary. Certain broad leaf deciduous species should not be planted adjacent to the railway boundary. We would wish to be involved in the approval of any landscaping scheme adjacent to the railway. Where landscaping is proposed as part of an application adjacent to the railway it will be necessary for details of the landscaping to be known and approved to ensure it does not impact upon the railway infrastructure. Any hedge planted adjacent to Network Rail's boundary fencing for screening purposes should be so placed that when fully grown it does not damage the fencing or provide a means of scaling it. No hedge should prevent Network Rail from maintaining its boundary fencing. Lists of trees that are permitted and those that are not permitted are provided below and these should be added to any tree planting conditions:

Acceptable:

Birch (Betula), Crab Apple (Malus Sylvestris), Field Maple (Acer Campestre), Bird Cherry (Prunus Padus), Wild Pear (Pyrus Communis), Fir Trees – Pines (Pinus), Hawthorne (Crataegus), Mountain Ash – Whitebeams (Sorbus), False Acacia (Robinia), Willow Shrubs (Shrubby Salix), Thuja Plicata "Zebрина"

Not Acceptable:

Alder (Alnus Glutinosa), Aspen – Poplar (Populus), Beech (Fagus Sylvatica), Wild Cherry (Prunus Avium), Hornbeam (Carpinus Betulus), Small-leaved Lime (Tilia Cordata), Oak (Quercus), Willows (Salix Willow), Sycamore – Norway Maple (Acer), Horse Chestnut (Aesculus Hippocastanum), Sweet Chestnut (Castanea Sativa), London Plane (Platanus Hispanica)

A comprehensive list of permitted tree species is available upon request

Lighting

Where new lighting is to be erected adjacent to the operational railway the potential for train drivers to be dazzled must be eliminated. In addition the location and colour of lights must not give rise to the potential for confusion with the signalling arrangements on the railway. Detail of any external lighting should be provided as a condition if not already indicated on the application.

Hazardous Materials

The materials contained within the site subject to the applicants control should be stored and processed in a way which prevents over spilling onto Network Rail land and should not pose excessive risk to fire. If hazardous materials are likely to be sited on the land then Network Rail must be further contacted by the applicant.

Access to Railway

All roads, paths or ways providing access to any part of the railway undertaker's land shall be kept open at all times during and after the development. We note that the existing access route for our maintenance vehicles from Bridge Road is shown as being retained although, curiously, it bisects the proposed recreation ground. Although it is recognised that in part it falls within an outline section of the application we would point out that the route is to be kept open and free from obstruction as access is required on a 24 hour basis; a condition should be placed to that end to ensure the route is not blocked.

Children's Play Areas/Open Spaces/Amenities

Children's play areas, open spaces and amenity areas must be protected by a secure fence along the boundary of one of the following kinds, concrete post and panel, iron railings, steel palisade or such other fence approved by the Local Planning Authority acting in consultation with the railway undertaker to a minimum height of 2 metres and the fence should not be able to be climbed.

Network Rail is required to recover all reasonable costs associated with facilitating these works.

It is realised that much of the above does not apply directly to the application but should be taken into consideration as appropriate. Nevertheless it gives a useful guide as to the considerations to be taken into account in relation to development adjacent to the railway. Pending the final comments with respect to the footbridge I would advise that in particular the boundary fencing, method statements, soundproofing, lighting and landscaping should be the subject of conditions, the reasons for which can include the safety, operational needs and integrity of the railway. For the other matters we would be pleased if an informative could be attached to the decision notice.

I trust full cognisance will be taken in respect of these comments. If you have any further queries or require clarification of any aspects, please do not hesitate to contact myself I would also be grateful if you could inform me of the outcome of this application, forwarding a copy of the Decision Notice to me in due course.

Your most sincere regards will need to be agreed with

Asset Protection Engineer Team
Network Rail (London North Eastern)
Floor 1B
George Stephenson House
Toft Green
York
YO1 6JT

Email: assetprotectionline@networkrail.co.uk

Regards,
Tony Rivero
Senior Town Planner LNE
Network Rail

.....
The content of this email (and any attachment) is confidential. It may also be legally privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure.

12/11/2010

This email should not be used by anyone who is not an original intended recipient, nor may it be copied or disclosed to anyone who is not.
If you have received this email by mistake please notify us by emailing the sender, and then delete the email and any copies from your system.
Liability cannot be accepted for statements made which are clearly the senders own and not made on behalf of Network Rail.
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited registered in England and Wales No. 2904587, registered office Kings Place, 90 York Way London N1 9
.....

Click [here](#) to report this email as spam.