Cottam Parkway Railway Station

Description of the Station and Summary of the Environmental Reports

Lancashire County Council

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1 Description of the Station

1.1.1 The Fylde Line has direct train services between Blackpool and Preston, and onwards to destinations such as Blackburn and Manchester/Manchester Airport. Other regional and national service can be accessed from Preston Railway Station.

1.1.2 Easier access to rail services would encourage more people to travel via train, which relieves road congestion. The benefits of this includes better access by rail to key employment centres, key leisure destinations, city centre shops and services.

1.1.3 It is an aspiration of Government to improve the health of the population in general. which can be assisted by reducing road traffic congestion by encouraging trips from car to rail. By encouraging more journeys by rail, air quality in built-up areas could improve, along with a reduction in road collisions and road crashes, and reduced vehicle noise leading to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

1.1.4 A new junction will be created on the Cottam Link section of the Preston Western Distributor Road, with an access road and new road bridge over Lancaster Canal.

1.1.5 Access to the station and car park will be via a direct connection to the Preston Western Distributor Road. The station will be supported by a range of new and improved local transport connections by bus, cycle and walking modes of travel.

1.1.6 The station will have two platforms, a station building and an accessible footbridge/lift access bridge over the railway lines, and a 250-space car park.

1.1.7 The facility would be run by Northern Trains and would access services currently up to two trains an hour between Blackpool North and Preston. The journey time would be five minutes to Preston and eighteen minutes to

Blackpool North. Approximately three minutes would be added to current journey times to include a stop at the station.

Location

1.1.8 The siting of the proposed station looked at engineering constraints and key considerations. The aim was to avoid the unnecessary placement of the platforms on sections of curved track; minimise or avoid alterations to existing signalling infrastructure; minimise onwards maintenance of railway track; and, avoid unnecessary alterations to the overhead line equipment.

1.1.9 Three main locations were considered for the platforms:

- Option one: Situated partly below the future Lea Viaduct of the Preston Western Distributor Road and the overhead electricity power lines;
- Option two: situated between Lea Road and Sidgreaves Lane;
- Option three: Situated on a curved section of track to the west of Darkinson Lane

1.1.10 We've taken forward option two, because it is on the straightest section of track and would have the minimum level of operational compromises when the station is in use.

1.1.11 A number of access routes were considered as part of the options assessment. The main consideration was to connect directly to the Preston Western Distributor Road from the preferred station location.

1.1.12 The preferred route closely follows the west side of Sidgreaves Lane. This was chosen because the ground south of the canal is generally higher, allowing the alignment to tie to Sidgreaves Lane at the station entrance, It also provides the opportunity to replace the existing bridge as the main vehicular route, while keeping the current alignment of Sidgreaves Lane for pedestrian and cycle use.

Station building

1.1.13 The size and appearance of the building takes account of the numbers of passengers expected to use the station which would accommodate 1,000 passengers per week. The level of the floors is the same as the platforms and is approx. 1m higher than the forecourt, though would remain fully accessible via a ramp approach. An open waiting area would form an adaptable community event space.

1.1.14 A large roof overhang will create an outside waiting area next to the platform. The elevations are expected to be brick with sections of wooden cladding – to resemble some of the rural buildings in the area - and full height glazed openings in the waiting areas.

1.1.15 The size of the building also accommodates the potential for off-site construction.

Forecourt

1.1.16 The forecourt layout includes bus stops and a taxi rank, as well as pedestrian crossings and a shared use cycle track to maintain segregation.

Platforms

1.1.17 The new station infrastructure would include two platforms, with minimum lengths to cater for eight-car trains

Footbridge

1.1.18 The platforms are accessed via a footbridge over the railway line, which includes two lifts. This is the highest structure of the development owing to the requirement to clear the railway overhead line equipment (OLE).

Safety measures

1.1.19 An emergency evacuation area is proposed on the Lea side of the railway line. with access to and from Lea Road.

Access

Cars, buses, cycles and walking

1.1.20 Buses and cars access the site from Sidgreaves Lane via the new access road. A bus gate prevents private vehicle access to Lea Road. Bus service provision in this location is limited therefore the County Council is working with bus service providers to increase the offer as housing developments in the area are completed.

1.1.21 The customer drop-off area has provision for three cars. The taxi rank allows provision for five vehicles. Each area has a safe waiting/exit area for people. A pedestrian crossing would provide an access route to the forecourt. Pedestrian guardrails will direct pedestrians along safe access routes.

1.1.22 The forecourt includes spaces for staff parking and delivery / maintenance and a space for refuse vehicles - accessible from the refuse store to the side of the building.

Access road

1.1.23 Access to the station development by motor vehicle is from the Preston Western Distributor Road via a new highway that creates a direct route into the station. Access to Darkinson Lane can also be achieved from the proposed access road.

Access road bridge

1.1.24 Use of the Quaker's Canal Bridge on Sidgreaves Lane is not a viable access solution for access to the station because clearance between the parapets.

1.1.25 The bridge is owned by the Canal and Rivers Trust and is Grade II listed., It is not considered desirable to alter the bridge for vehicle access without impacting its setting.

1.1.26 The access road bridge would be constructed with a minimum of 2.7m headroom above the towpath, as required by the Canal River Trust. Boats and towpath users will still be able to pass under the new bridge. The overall height of the new bridge has been kept as low as possible, in order to minimise the impact on the landscape and Quakers Bridge. Cattle creeps are required for current farming activity on the north and south of the canal.

1.1.27 The access road will allow a section of Sidgreaves Lane to become a fully segregated cycle/walking route. A cycle/walking route is also proposed from the station onto Lea Road. The Lea Road access will not be open to private vehicles, only buses, which will keep traffic movements low and help to encourage walking and cycling.

1.1.28 The station will be connected via Darkinson Lane to Lea Town. When the Preston Western Distributor opens, Darkinson Lane will be closed to through-traffic, but still open to pedestrians and cycles.

Footpath diversion

1.1.29 The site is crossed by footpath no. 44, which follows the alignment of the north railway embankment from Lea Road Bridge to the railway bridge (Lea Road Station West bridge) adjacent to five railway cottages on Sidgreaves Lane. The footpath will be diverted through the new station facility.

Drainage

1.1.30 The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) requires the level of surface runoff from highways to be the same as a greenfield location, and to also ensure water quality in receiving water courses is to a good standard. Attenuation ponds are essential to capture and filter the proposed water runoff from new surfaces such as the car park and roads.

Car park and lighting

Car capacity and passive capacity

1.1.31 The proposed development proposes a commuter car park. The size was determined by carrying out a demand study which looked at comparable established rail Park & Ride facilities. The study was later revised to consider the level of uncertainty surrounding forecast rail demand following the COVID-19 pandemic and the role of the station including its wider function across Preston's Transforming Cities strategy.

1.1.32 The revised study set the overall capacity and allows for passive provision for a deck expansion of the west car park. The station will provide approximately car 250 spaces. The Department for Transport Uncertainty Toolkit and guidance for post-COVID-19 demand has been used to calculate the car park capacity.

1.1.33 The car parks would be located north of the rail line, either side of the Station building and would be split into two sections, known as the 'West Car Park' and the 'East Car Park'.

1.1.34 The West Car Park would have a total of 165 parking spaces in the form of: 146 standard parking spaces, 9no. designated disabled parking spaces, 9no. enlarged spaces that could be adapted to be designated parking spaces to reflect future population changes and 1no. large designated disabled parking space for side or rear access using hoists or ramps.

1.1.35 The East Car Park would have a total of 83 spaces in the form of: 75 standard parking spaces, 4no. designated disabled parking spaces, 10no. motorcycle bays and 4no. enlarged spaces that could be adapted to be designated parking spaces to reflect future population change. The eastern car park also has the potential for Electric Vehicle parking bays.

1.1.36 Cycle parking and storage facilities would be sited to the east of the station building, with direct and coherent access from the proposed shared use

footpath and cycle track (3.0m wide) into the site connecting to the main cycle network. Cycle parking would comprise 10 bike storage lockers and Sheffield stands providing a capacity of 40,

Please advise the project team via Have Your Say of any locations where there could be issues in accessing the station by walking and cycling as well as providing general comments.

Lighting

1.1.37 The station approach, car park, platforms and forecourt of the station building will be lit at night. It is envisaged at this stage for the facility to be continuously lit during night-time. The lighting scheme has been designed to minimise spill beyond the proposed station. The lighting will be directional LED fittings to ensure downward lighting which minimises upward light pollution.

2 Summary of the Environmental Reports

Introduction

2.1.1 The planning application for the station will be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report of the potential environmental effects of the development. Survey and analysis work for the EIA has been carried out and will be completed before the planning application is submitted. A brief summary of the current interim findings of those surveys is described in the sections below.

Landscape

Construction

2.1.2 Temporary reversible changes on landscape from the construction of the station are considered to be removal of landscape features, e.g. trees, grassland and then construction of:

- contractors compounds;

- site levelling;
- the station, access road and access road bridge, roundabout junction (to the Cottam Link Road) and the car parks,
- the station footbridge and lifts;
- installation of fencing and gates;
- installation of lighting; and,
- reinstatement and replacement of planting.

Fylde Landscape Character Area

2.1.3 The station is located in the Fylde Landscape Character Area west of the built-up area of Preston and in the south-east areas of Fylde bordering the River Ribble Estuary. On assessment it is considered that the Landscape Character Area would experience a moderate negative impact for the locality of the station and a very slight effect on the overall Landscape Character Area.

Local Landscape Character Area

2.1.4 The station would result in an impact on the area known as the Lea-Cottam Rural Urban Fringe Local Landscape Character Area.

2.1.5 The station would result in an impact on the Fylde Farmland Local Landscape Character Area.

- Visual Amenity
- Residents
- Nearby residents would experience a range of temporary impacts of their visual amenity during construction from construction activities, which would vary depending upon the closeness to the site.
- Recreational

2.1.6 The Lancaster Canal Long Distance Path and towpath would experience a large impact during construction.

2.1.7 Walkers on Public Right of Way (PRoW) Footpath (FP) 7 would experience a moderate impact.

2.1.8 Walkers on PRoW FP45 and users of the Ashton and Lea Golf Club would experience moderate impact.

2.1.9 The majority of the view for walkers on PRoW FP15 would experience a slight negative impact.

2.1.10 PRoW FP44 will be closed during construction and permanently diverted and as a consequence the character of the journey through the site will be entirely changed.

Community and business premises

2.1.11 The station construction would result in a slight negative impact on community and business premises receptors.

Users of the local road network

2.1.12 The station construction would result in moderate impact on the users of local road networks during construction in landscape terms.

Operation

Year one of opening of the station

2.1.13 Negative impacts on landscape from the removal of trees and hedgerows would be experienced. In this period the pastoral farmland used on a temporary basis will have been reseeded, though not fully established.

2.1.14 A reduction in the perceived tranquillity in the landscape would increase as construction activities would no longer be present. The removal of trees and

hedgerows would result in highlighting the presence of traffic on the access road and the access road bridge.

Effects on landscape character

2.1.15 The presence of the station may create a negative impact on Fylde Landscape Character Area.

2.1.16 During the first year of opening the station is considered to have a neutral effect on the Urban Landscape Character Type.

Local Landscape Character Area

2.1.17 The station would have a moderately adverse impact on the Lea-Cottam Rural Urban Fringe Local Landscape Character Area in the first year of opening. There would be a moderate adverse impact on the Fylde Farmland Local Landscape Character Area.

Visual amenity

Recreational and Residential receptors

2.1.18 Until the screening planting is established, the impact of the station would be quite large.

Community and business receptors

2.1.19 In the early years of the establishment of the landscape scheme staff and pupils at Lea Endowed School would experience near distance partial views south-west of the completed roundabout junction and access road bridge. This would result in a moderate adverse impact on their visual amenity.

Users of the local road network

2.1.20 Users of the National Cycle Route (NCR) 62 would have near distance open and oblique transient views east of the completed car park, station building and footbridge, access road and access road bridge. Sidgreaves Lane would be a cycling, equestrian and pedestrian-only route. The loss of field boundary

vegetation would open up views of the Lancaster Canal access road bridge, the access road and the station car park.

Mitigation

2.1.21 The aims of the draft landscape planting proposals intend to restore landscape features and elements lost during construction to integrate the station into the local landscape and complement or reinforce the special character of the surrounding landscape. The landscape plating will also be used to screen views of the station from sensitive visual receptors; to limit and manage views from the wider landscape; to restore and enhance existing landscape elements including reconnecting fragmented landscape features; and, to diversify the range of landscape elements within the area.

Year 15 of opening the station

2.1.22 It is not considered that the station would not result in any impacts by year 15 of opening - although the loss of pre-development open green space would be permanent. The planting in combination with the vegetation protected during construction is predicted to have reached sufficient height and density to screen and integrate the station into the landscape. Some features such as lighting would remain visible above the canopy, the station would be viewed within the context of the highway infrastructure of the Preston Western Distributor Road and Cottam Link Road and the urban edge of Lea and Cottam.

Ecology

Construction

2.1.23 The ecology of the site would be affected because of the removal of habitats resulting in negative impacts for the following: Scattered mature broad-leaved trees; Hedgerows; Common toad; Slow worm; Breeding birds; Wintering birds; Bats; Bat roosts; Hedgehog; Brown hare; and Otter.

2.1.24 A day roost for bats is present at Quaker's Bridge this will be considered in the detailed design of the Scheme.

2.1.25 The Environment Act 2021 is a UK Government Bill about targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment. The bill sets out the need for developments to achieve a minimum 10% required gain in biodiversity calculated using Biodiversity Metric and approval of a net gain plan. Additionally, enhanced habitats would need to be secured for at least 30 years. As such, the Scheme will be taking this into consideration during the planning stage.

Operation

2.1.26 The implementation of ecological mitigation measures would reduce impacts to these valuable ecological features to insignificant levels in the year of opening or before. The exceptions to this are listed below: Scattered broad-leaved trees (mature trees); hedgerows; common toad; slow worm; bats; hedgehog; and, brown hare.

2.1.27 After 20 years it is anticipated that impacts to the most important ecological features detailed above would not be noticeable. An exception to this would be brown hare. Due to the cumulative impacts of habitat loss on the site, brown hare would be negatively impacted.

2.1.28 The maturing of the implemented ecological mitigation measures would mean that the station would not result in Local level negative impacts and it is expected that the proposed ecological mitigation would provide positive benefits overall.

Cultural Heritage

Construction

Archaeological Remains

2.1.29 During the construction of the station, there would be a potential impact on 17 of the 38 archaeological sites that have been assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment. 17 non-designated archaeological sites would require

detailed on-site investigation and where necessary, removal from site resulting in a negative impact.

Historic Buildings

2.1.30 Construction of the station would have a potentially adverse impact on 6of 26 historic buildings assessed in the surrounding area.

Historic Landscape

2.1.31 Construction of the station would have a potential adverse impact on 2of 5 Historic Landscape Types in the locality.

Operation

2.1.32 Operation of the station would have the potential to impact heritage assets by impacting their setting and this could include visual and noise intrusion, and severance (of the asset from the historic character or context of an area).

2.1.33 Only 1 historic building is considered to incur negative impacts during operation of the station. The following is a summary of the cultural heritage assets associated with the construction of the station and how the station may impact them.

Archaeological Remains

2.1.34 None of the archaeological sites in the baseline have settings considered to contribute to their value. After mitigation of those impacts assessed at construction, operation of the station would not have an adverse impact on the 38 archaeological remains assessed as part of the baseline and would result in no negative impacts to their environmental assessment baseline conditions.

Historic Buildings

2.1.35 Operation of the station would have a potential adverse impact on 3 of the 26 historic buildings assessed as part of the baseline study of the environmental assessment, and a potential positive impact on 1 building. 22 historic buildings would have no negative impacts on their baseline conditions.

Historic Landscape

2.1.36 No adverse impacts on the historic landscape are predicted during operation of the station and 5 Historic Landscape Types (HLT) would have no negative impacts on their baseline conditions.

Air Quality

Construction

2.1.37 Appropriate good practice measures have been identified to manage and control dust emissions during the construction phase of the station based on the identified risk levels from the assessment. With these measures in place, it was concluded that air quality effects from the construction of the station would not negatively impact air quality.

Operation

2.1.38 The assessment of road traffic emissions during the operation of the station demonstrated that any changes in air quality at human receptor locations would be negligible, and therefore would represent no change in air quality.

Traffic and Transport

Construction

2.1.39 Details regarding the proposed levels of construction traffic will be supplied to LCC once a contractor has been appointed.

2.1.40 During the construction phase, the Cottam Parkway Station site would be constructed predominantly off-line. Temporary construction access would be required from the Cottam Link Road and, in order to construct the development on the south side of the railway line, from Lea Lane.

2.1.41 The construction of a new bridge over the towpath to form an access road would have an impact and may result in temporary closures if it cannot be built off-line and installed overnight. Due to noise, visual, and dust effects, users following the Lancaster towpath in close proximity to the Scheme may experience a

reduction in amenity while the Scheme is being built. In nature, these effects would be temporary.

2.1.42 There would be short to long term disruption to cyclists, towpath and PRoW users as the Scheme:

- Intersects FP44 which will be permanently closed;
- Intersects Darkinson Lane, National Cycle Route 62, and the canal towpath with the construction of new access road along alignment of Sidgreaves Lane and constriction of a new bridge parallel to Quaker Bridge. With Quaker Bridge retained the conflicts will be crossing construction of the new access road at points of tie in. Mitigation will be provided during construction to signpost alternative cycle routes.

2.1.43 There may be disruption to bus service along Lea Road as a result of slow-moving vehicles or traffic control measures in operation during construction. This will be mitigated by ensuring that traffic movements are managed in such a way that construction traffic uses the most appropriate main roads, and that traffic is kept out of sensitive areas and unsuitable roads.

Operation

2.1.44 The proposed station is predicted to generate approximately 1,146 daily passengers in 2024, increasing to 1,248 in 2039. The station will increase public transport accessibility for the Cottam and north-west Preston with areas such as Blackpool and South Ribble all easily accessible by public transport.

2.1.45 Traffic modelling undertaken of the proposed station indicate that there would be negligible impact upon the capacity, safety or operation of the surrounding highway network and as a result no mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.46 Once the station is open, there would be a neutral impact to the PRoW network, as closures would be mitigated by the provision of diversions.

Noise and Vibration

Construction

2.1.47 During the construction phase, potential noise impacts have been identified for a number of noise sensitive receptors.

2.1.48 Whilst the application of Best Practicable Means for controlling construction noise would provide a reasonable level of mitigation, it cannot be guaranteed that all adverse impacts would be reduced to a level resulting in no negative impacts at the nearest noise sensitive receptors. These effects would be temporary and limited to when construction is occurring.

2.1.49 During the construction phase, no potential negative vibration effects have been identified.

Operation

2.1.50 The station is predicted to result in a number of positive impacts in the short-term. These beneficial impacts have been predicted along Lea Road, which is predicted to experience a reduction in traffic flow with the station in place. No negative impacts are predicted.

2.1.51 No negative impacts are predicted as a result of operation of the station and overall, the station is predicted to result in a relatively low number of negative impacts occurring during construction and the positive impacts occurring when the station is opened.

The Water Environment

Construction

Surface Water Quality

2.1.52 No negative impacts on surface water quality are anticipated during the construction of the station.

Hydromorphology

2.1.53 Hydromorphology is a term used in river basin management to describe the hydrological (water flow, energy etc) and geomorphological (surface features) processes and attributes of rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters. The proposal has been the subject of a hydromorphological assessment which confirmed no negative impacts on hydromorphology are anticipated during the of the station.

Flood Risk

2.1.54 As the station would be classified as Essential Infrastructure in the Environment Agency's Standing Advice, its location within Flood Zone 1 is considered to be appropriate within planning practice guidance.

2.1.55 Embedded mitigation and good practice including the appropriate design of a new culvert to convey the central watercourse beneath the new station and a surface water management system based on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) would ensure that the station is safe from flooding without increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Groundwater

2.1.56 No negative impacts to groundwater are anticipated during the construction of the station.

Operation

Surface Water Quality

2.1.57 No negative impacts on surface water quality are anticipated when the station is open.

Hydromorphology

2.1.58 No negative impacts on hydromorphology are anticipated when the station is open. Groundwater

2.1.59 No negative impacts to groundwater are anticipated when the station is open.

Climate Change

Construction and operation of the station

2.1.60 The station is designed to be resilient to foreseeable future climate changes and weather events, and with mitigation measures, will be able to withstand any possible future threats.

2.1.61 Further is currently ongoing the results of which will inform the station design and the amount of greenhouse gases attributed to the Scheme.

Human Health

Construction and Operation of the station

2.1.62 Negligible adverse impacts on population and human health are predicted as a result of the construction and operation of the station.

2.1.63 The station is predicted to provide the population of Ingol and Cottam with beneficial outcomes from a human health perspective.

2.1.64 No negative impacts are anticipated from the development of the station.