

PART A

Report to: **Development Management Section Head**

To Committee:	Date of Committee: 3rd April 2014
Site address:	Croxley Rail Link Watford Vicarage Road Station
Reference Number :	14/00101/DISCON
Description of Development:	Croxley Rail Link - Details submitted for Condition 12 (Detailed Design Approval) pursuant to the planning permission for the development provided for in the Croxley Rail Link Order 2013.
Applicant	Hertfordshire County Council
Date Received:	21st January 2014
8 week date (minor):	18th March 2014
Ward:	HOLYWELL

SUMMARY

This application seeks approval for the design of the Vicarage Road 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 Cassiobridge 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 utilitarian design approach. However, the details submitted with this application show that high quality materials would 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 sides of the building would have metal trellis to support planting at ground floor to help soften the appearance of the building. The station would appear single storey in height when viewed from Vicarage Road and would not appear unduly prominent when viewed from the street. Overall, the layout, scale and external appearance of the building is acceptable.

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

BACKGROUND

Site and surroundings

The application site includes disused railway line, which is adjacent to a bridge on Vicarage Road located approximately 220m from the road junction with Hagden Lane. Harwoods recreation ground is to the north of the application site and Holywell Allotments is to the south. Laurance Haines Junior School is to the north-east. There are blocks of flats to the south and west, which are four storeys high.

The site is not located in a designated conservation area.



Aerial view of site.

Proposal

This application seeks approval of the detailed design for the station which is to be erected on Vicarage 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.

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.



Location plan

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.

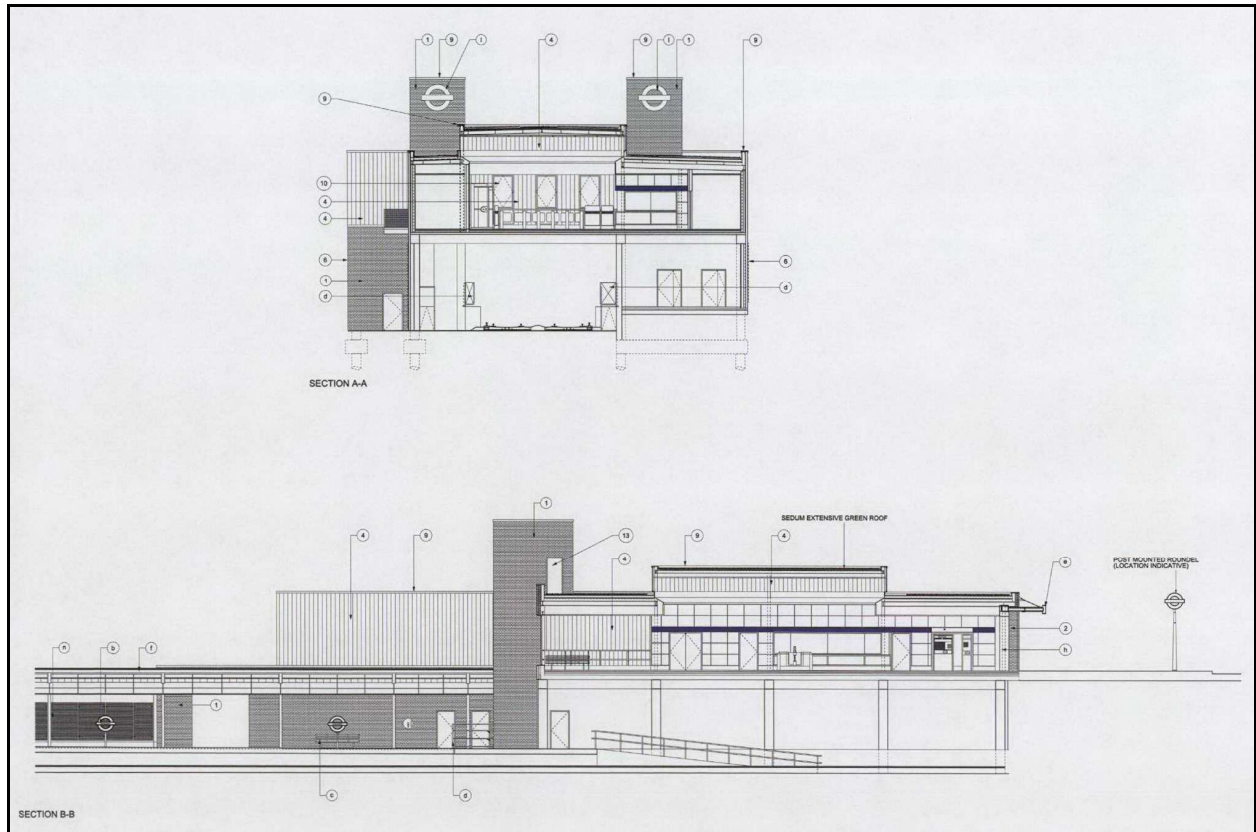
Reason: To protect the amenities of adjacent properties and ensure satisfactory external appearance for the development.

This application seeks approval for the detailed design of Vicarage Road 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. 14/00097/DISCON – Croxley Rail Link - Details submitted for Condition 12 (Detailed design approval for Cassiobridge 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.



Sectional elevations

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.

CONSULTATIONS

Neighbouring properties

Letters were sent to 134 neighbouring properties. No responses have been received.

Site notices

Site notices were placed and the period for comment expired on 27 February 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. However, it is disappointing that the application is not supported by detailed designs for enhancing the wider public realm along Vicarage Road, including measures to enhance the pedestrian/cycling infrastructure.

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”.

Layout, scale and external appearance

The station would be set back from the road to facilitate a forecourt area to the front for circulation space and to provide bicycle storage. Staircases would lead from the concourse down to platforms on each side of the track and there would also be lifts to serve each platform. The design provides a functional layout and the amount of floor space is appropriate.



The station would appear single storey in height when viewed from Vicarage Road and would therefore not appear unduly prominent when viewed from the street. Moreover, there are a number of three and four storey blocks of flats in the locality, therefore the scale of the station is acceptable in context of the surrounding area.

Conclusion

Due to the nature of its use, the proposed station incorporates a fairly utilitarian design approach. However, the details submitted with this application show that high quality materials would 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 sides of the building at ground floor level would have metal trellis to support planting to help soften the appearance of the building. As such, the external appearance of the station is acceptable.

Overall, the layout, scale and external appearance of the building is acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Drawing Numbers

CRL-ACA-SH-GF-DR-A-0001 P4; CRL-ACA-SH-XX-DR-A-009 P4; CRL-ACA-SH-GF-DR-A-0001 P4; CRL-ACA-SH-XX-DR-A-0001 P4; CRL-ACA-SH-00-DR-A-0001 P4; CRL-ACA-SH-01-DR-A-0001 P3; CRL-ACA-SH-01-DR-A-0002 P3; CRL-ACA-SH-01-DR-A-0003 P3; CRL-ACA-SH-01-DR-A-0004 P3; CRL-ACA-SH-02-DR-A-0001 P5; CRL-ACA-SH-XX-DR-A-0002 P4; CRL-ACA-SH-XX-DR-A-0003 P4; CRL-ACA-SH-XX-DR-A-0004 P4; CRL-ACA-SH-XX-DR-A-0006 P5; CRL-ARP-SH-00-DR-D-001 P3; CRL-ARP-SH-00-

DR-E-1011 P2; CRL-ARP-SH-00-DR-U-0002 P3; CRL-ARP-SH-00-PS-U-0001 P4; CRL-
ARP-SH-01-DR-U-0002 P2; CRL-ARP-SH-01-PS-U-0001 P4; CRL-ARP-SH-XX-PS-U-
0011 P1; CRL-ARP-SH-XX-PS-U-0012 P1; CRL-ARP-SH-XX-SH-U-0001 P2

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