

Changes to the design and appearance will be made and are being discussed at the moment. In the meantime I would refer you to the Q&A on the RBC website: (<https://www.reading.gov.uk/council/policies-finance-and-legal-information/transport-schemes-and-projects/reading-west-station/>)

## **Reading West Station Upgrade**

This scheme is the proposed enhancements to Reading West Station in west Reading on the Reading to Basingstoke and Reading to Newbury line as well as associated highway improvements to the Oxford Road. The scheme includes new station building, multi-modal interchange and highway amendments and will improve the environment, accessibility and connectivity of the station to the surrounding area. The proposals aim to attract new users to the rail network and open up new journey opportunities as the current environs at Reading West Station are recognised as poor-quality and act as a barrier to accessing the rail network.

The proposals will provide a new station building on the Oxford Road, with potential ticket gates and a new retail unit, creating a presence on the Oxford Road and dramatically changing the nature of the area in terms of safety and security. There will be minor changes to the road layout to facilitate the station building and to provide a high-quality bus interchange facility and improved cycle parking. A new access has already been provided from the Oxford Road to the Basingstoke bound platform 1.

Improved integration with bus stops, provision of cycle parking and improved security are important to facilitate the area surrounding Reading West station not only as an interchange but a place where people want to spend time. Encouraging passengers to use Reading West will also relieve pressure on interchanges at Reading Central station.

**[Reading West Station upgrade – full business case](#)**

**[Reading West Station upgrade – economic appraisals report](#)**

# Planning Application Submitted – October 2020

A planning application has now been submitted by Great Western Railway for the scheme and it is anticipated that this will be reviewed at the Council's Planning Committee before the end of this year. Should the scheme be granted planning approval it is fully funded and work on site is expected to start in Spring 2021 starting with the highway works.

Press Release: <http://news.reading.gov.uk/application-submitted-reading-west-station/>

## Reading West Station Upgrade – Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the purpose of the scheme?

Reading West Station has suffered from underinvestment over many years and has generally poor-quality surroundings, with concealed entrances, very limited waiting and ticket facilities and low natural surveillance.

A station upgrade scheme has been developed by Reading Borough Council, Great Western Railway (GWR) and Network Rail. GWR are leading on the station enhancements of the scheme the main components of the scheme will include:

- New building and interchange facilities on Oxford Road entrance;
- Improvements to platform waiting facilities;
- Improvements at the Tilehurst Road entrance and
- Better safety and security across the station;

The scheme also includes highway improvements on the A329 Oxford Road outside the station. These works will involve some realignment of Oxford Road and create space for the new station building footprint, cycle parking spaces and relocation of bus shelters.

The upgrade plan is funded by the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) through £3.1m from the Local Growth Fund money from central Government and £200k from Section 106 contributions secured by Reading Borough Council. The upgrade plans form part of a wider masterplan with Great Western Railway and GWR which will deliver long overdue investment in Reading West Station to match investment in other stations in Reading including at Reading

Station, the new station at Green Park and improvements planned at both Tilehurst and Theale stations.

### **What will the new station building look like?**

The appearance of the new station building was conceived as a simple rectangular building to be located under the railway bridge on the south side of the Oxford Road. Its primary function is to operate as ticket office with the facilities expected of similar sized stations on the GWR network.

The entrance to the station will be large glazed entrance doors and screens which provides visibility to and from the street with also an opportunity as a non-station user to be aware of the buildings function as well as natural light in to the building. Rail users will enter the building centrally from the South side of Oxford Road, pass through the ticket gate-line and then access the desired platform. If required, there are opportunities to utilise the additional facilities that are provided, such as the self-service ticket vending machines, retail offering or WC facility.

The design of the station building itself – which has been submitted by GWR's architects as part of the application – is still subject to the usual planning processes and consultations. This process will also include approvals of the materials, cladding and colour schemes. In the meantime, Council planners will liaise with GWR and its architects over its proposed choice of materials and finish for the station building as these have not been finalised.

The shape of the plan has also been arranged to reduce the potential of loitering with CCTV provided throughout.

### **Why is there a retail unit? Could it be scrapped to reduce the size of the building?**

A retail unit is proposed to enhance the current facilities at the station for passengers. The intention is also to feature a 'serving hatch' so that members of the public can purchase refreshments, also contributing to the local economy. The aspiration will be to source a local supplier for the unit.

### **What measures will there be to prevent people climbing on to the roof?**

From the Oxford Road public side, the exterior of the building has been designed to minimise potential grab/climbing points in combination with a high-level overhanging soffit. The out-of-hours gates are within metal screens with anti-climb top. From the platform access routes inside the Station demise, the existing palisade fencing located on the embankment walls will be adapted to prevent access to the new building roof. CCTV is also provided around the new Station building.

### **How will the scheme improve safety and security of the station?**

The scheme will improve security and aims to reduce crime incidents at the station, as barrier systems will only allow rail users with tickets into the station area from both the Oxford Road and Tilehurst Road entrances. The station facilities are also relocated to a visible location on Oxford Road, therefore improving natural surveillance.

The scheme will provide enhanced CCTV cameras at the station to cover both platforms and station buildings. GWR has an aspiration to change the operational model to increase manned hours at the station.

### **Why do the plans not include the installation of lifts?**

The station upgrade does not include the installation of lifts at the station as, due to Network Rail safety regulations, the addition of lifts at Reading West Station would require the full rebuild of the station platforms to meet the regulations and this is currently unaffordable. However, these plans do include the 'passive provision' for the installation of lifts to each platform in the future subject to the amendment to the Network Rail regulations and if funding is identified.

The Council will continue to liaise with Network Rail and GWR to identify possible solutions that will allow for the installation of lifts at Reading West Station.

### **What are the plans for the transport interchange improvements on Oxford Road including the bus stops and cycle storage?**

The plans include the enhancement to the street scape on the Oxford Road and improvements to the transport interchange. The bus shelters will be moved slightly to accommodate the changes to the highway and new cycle storage will be installed on both the north and the south side of the Oxford Road. The enhancements to the transport interchange will also compliment wider sustainable transport improvements planned on the Oxford Road corridor including bus and cycle lanes and pedestrian enhancements.

### **Once the new station building is in how wide will the pavement be?**

The highway and interchange enhancements have been designed to compliment the new station building on the Oxford Road. This includes realigning the road to move it north to create space for the new building and new footway on the south side. The revised pavement width would be 2.0m at its narrowest point.

### **What is the current status and programme for the scheme?**

A planning application has been submitted by Great Western Railway for the scheme and it is anticipated that this will be reviewed at the Council's Planning Committee

before the end of this year. Should the scheme be granted planning approval it is fully funded and work on site is expected to start in Spring 2021 starting with the highway works.

### **How can I make comments on the scheme?**

Comments regarding the Reading West Station scheme can be submitted through the planning application process and the full planning application can be found on the Council's Planning Portal at <http://planning.reading.gov.uk/>

The [\*\*planning application number is 201448\*\*](#)