



Purpose: For Decision

# Planning Committee Report

Report of	STRATEGIC MANAGER FOR PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY
Date	<b>25 OCTOBER 2022</b>
Application Reference	<a href="#"><u>22/01239/FUL</u></a>
Application type	Full
Application Description	Proposed alterations and refurbishment of existing station buildings to include refurbished public toilets, café, and pedestrian link to pier
Site address	Ryde Esplanade Railway Station, Esplanade, Ryde, PO33 2HE
Parish	Ryde
Ward Councillor	Cllr Phil Jordan
Applicant	Isle of Wight Council
Planning Officer	Stuart Van-Cuylenburg

Reason for Planning Committee consideration	The Strategic Manager has directed the application to the Planning Committee as it is considered that the application is for Council purposes
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Recommendation	Conditional permission
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## **Main considerations**

- Design
- Impact on the significance and setting of heritage assets, including the grade II listed Pier, grade II listed buildings along the Esplanade, and the Ryde Conservation Area
- Impact on Ecology and Solent Special Protection Area
- Highway considerations

## **1 Recommendation**

**1.1** Conditional permission subject to planning conditions covering the following matters:

- Construction Environment Management Plan
- Timing of demolition works outside of bird breeding season (01 April to 31 August inclusive), unless supervised by suitably qualified ecologist
- External Materials to be used

## **2 Location and Site Characteristics**

**2.1** The application relates to Ryde Esplanade Station located on the northern side of Ryde Esplanade, adjacent Ryde Pier (grade II listed) to the north. The site is bounded to the north by the existing sea wall and pier, Western Gardens and the existing pier access to the west, and the railway line and bus station to the north, east and south. Along the south side of the Esplanade (A3055), the main built-up

frontage of Ryde Esplanade consists of terrace buildings of three or four storeys, dating from the Regency/Victorian periods, most of which are grade II listed, many with commercial uses at ground floor level.

**2.2** The existing station comprises four separate single storey building blocks under a series of connected pitched and flat roofs, as well as a covered way (concourse) providing a link through the station to existing rail and bus services. These buildings provide a range of office, staff, public information and waiting facilities, retail and café concessions, storage, and public toilets (currently closed). The site includes the covered waiting area adjacent to the bus station at the southern end of the station.

**2.3** The site is located within Ryde Conservation Area, Flood Zones 1 and 2, and adjacent Ryde Sands and Wootton Creek SSSI, and the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar.

### **3** **Details of Application**

**3.1** The application seeks permission for external alterations to the existing station buildings as part of the station refurbishment to be undertaken in conjunction with the wider Department for Transport (DfT) funded Ryde Interchange Project. This project seeks to improve travel connectivity and enhance sustainable transport at Ryde gateway, to include enhanced facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users. Whilst the plans do show modification of the interior spaces and layout of the station, these works and use of those spaces do not require planning permission as they would relate to internal works and would not result in any material change in use of the station buildings.

**3.2** As part of the internal refurbishment, the existing toilets would be brought back into use as public toilets to replace the public toilets recently lost on the Esplanade to facilitate the highway realignment works. Internally, facilitated by the proposed exterior alterations to the building, the existing circulation space within the station would be extended northwards to connect with the tram pier. Again, these internal works do not require planning permission from the Council. The tram pier is to be refurbished as part of the wider project to provide a dedicated pedestrian route to Ryde Pier Head and consent for this is already in place.

**3.3** As shown on the location plan, the station consists of four separate blocks. The proposed works would involve removal of the western/southwestern facades of the western part of the northern most block, as well as the western part of the north façade of this block. The works would also see alteration and extension of the roofs in these areas, as well as a new southwestern glazed entrance feature. Externally these works would see:

- Replacement of the western façade with low masonry walls, with planters behind, aluminium glazing, fascias and café louvre system for ventilation
- Small extension at the north end of the building
- Roof modifications - minor roof extension at the north end (part of small extension), and provision of a low-pitched rolled lead-effect roof over the existing flat roof area where the enlarge café is proposed
- Provision of a new glazed entrance feature (where the existing southwest entrance is) that would project above roof level – this would incorporate

- new signage and a low-pitched rolled lead-effect hipped roof
- The existing projecting flat roof canopy at the southwestern end of the building, outside the existing entrance would be part removed and cut back to the proposed new glazed entrance. An existing column supporting this canopy would be removed
- At the north end, the building would be left largely open to provide direct access through the station to/from the tram pier – exterior overhead signage would also be provided here.

The roof apex of the new glazed entrance feature would project about 0.5m above the height of the highest part of the roof of the existing station building. Other roof alterations proposed would not be higher than the overall roof height of the station.

- 3.4** These exterior alterations, in conjunction with the internal works, would provide for a larger and enhanced café concession at the southwestern end of the building, an enhanced southwestern entrance, and a covered way connecting the station to the tram pier.
- 3.5** The proposed works would also see a number of other minor alterations to the fenestration of the station buildings. Externally no works are proposed trackside.

## **4 Relevant History**

### **4.1 Ryde Esplanade Station**

P/00123/16: Demolition of part of canopy; proposed fascia board: granted 11/03/16

### **4.2 Ryde Esplanade – Western Gardens**

22/00448/FUL: Proposed temporary public conveniences: 27/04/22.

21/02431/FUL: Proposed relevant demolition of [café and toilets] building: granted 04/03/22.

### **4.3 Ryde Pier**

22/01287/LBC: Listed building consent for strengthening and repair works to Zone 4 of Ryde Railway Pier: current application.

22/00235/LBC: Listed building consent for construction of new pedestrian access/pathway: granted 25/03/22.

## **5 Development Plan Policy**

### National Planning Policy

- 5.1** At the heart of the NPPF (2021) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay, or where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly or demonstrably

outweigh the benefits or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

**5.2** Paragraph 8 sets out the three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development. These being:

“a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

**5.3** Paragraph 9 clarifies that “These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.”

**5.4** Paragraph 10 sets out that; “so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.”

**5.5** Section 16 of the NPPF covers conserving and enhancing the historic environment, and looks specifically at proposals affecting heritage assets and considering potential impacts.

**5.6** Paragraph 200 states that “Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional”.

**5.7** It then goes on to say in paragraph 201:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

**5.8** Paragraph 202 then establishes “Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

#### Local Planning Policy

**5.9** The Island Plan Core Strategy identifies the application site as being located within the Ryde Key Regeneration Area but outside of its defined settlement boundary. The following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

- SP1 Spatial Strategy
- SP5 Environment
- SP7 Travel
- DM2 Design Quality for New Development
- DM11 Historic and Built Environment
- DM12 Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- DM14 Flood Risk
- DM17 Sustainable Travel

#### Neighbourhood Planning Policy

**5.10** There is no neighbourhood plan in place covering this application.

#### Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other planning guidance

- 5.11**
- Isle of Wight Regeneration Strategy 2019-2030
  - Ryde Conservation Area Character Appraisal

## **6. Consultee and Third Party Comments**

### Internal Consultees

**6.1** The Council’s Ecology Officer has advised that a condition should be imposed to ensure any demolition would be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season. They have also commented that Natural England’s advice will be important when

determining the suitability of measures within the submitted Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), to ensure migratory birds would not be impacted during the works, given the site lies adjacent the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar and Wootton Creek and Ryde Sands SSSI.

- 6.2** Island Roads, commenting on behalf of the Local Highway Authority, has recommended approval, subject to a condition to secure implementation of a Construction Management Code during the construction phase of development. It has subsequently been confirmed by Island Roads that the submitted CEMP would be acceptable for this purpose.

#### External Consultees

- 6.3** The Hampshire Constabulary's Designing Out Crime Officer has advised that this area of the Esplanade is a place from which regular reports are received of crime and disorder. He has advised that for the period 27/07/20 to 26/07/22 115 incidents have been reported, with 55 being of relevance to the application. Of these relevant incidents 27 occurred between 10pm and 6am. The following comments were also made:

- Proposed building has three entry/exit points from the public realm and one onto the station platform – this would make policing difficult should incidents occur
- Once within the building - very little surveillance from the public realm
- Possible to gain access to the building at all times – particular concern accessibility of internal doors (access to offices, using toilets for drug taking etc)

To reduce opportunities for crime and disorder it has been advised:

- The facility should be secured between 10pm and 6am, with roller shutter doors installed at entry/exit points
- CCTV system should be installed within the building, with cameras deployed to provide images of public spaces, including the toilet lobby

- 6.4** Natural England has confirmed the proposal is not likely to have a significant effect on the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area alone or in combination with other plans or projects. General advice on consideration of protected species and other natural environment issues has also been provided.

#### Parish/Town Council Comments

- 6.5** Ryde Town Council has confirmed it has no objections.

#### Third Party Representations

- 6.6** In total four third party comments were received on the application.

- 6.7** The Ryde Society has raised the following concerns/comments

- Rationalisation of disused and underused spaces welcome

- The “Gateway” should herald sense of arrival, enhance setting of the Pier and heritage buildings, and maintain a visual connection between Union Street, the Pier, and the Esplanade
- ‘Glass box’ at the station entrance an incongruous addition
- Paving to the eastern section at the Rose Garden should be continued into the station to maintain a coherent high quality public realm
- Ryde Conservation Area is on the Historic England At Risk Register – any alterations or interventions should respect history and context of surroundings
- Understand this is a transport project, but it is crucial to Ryde in terms of heritage place making to protect its historic context whilst simultaneously fulfilling transport requirements

**6.8** A comment of support has been received from a local resident, which can be summarised as follows:

- Overall plans look good
- Materials and external finish should be consistent with the local environment
- Former waiting room on the station platform should be restored for passenger use
- Ticket gate/vending machine would be useful to collect rail fares
- Toilets should be open from the first train to the last, with additional time for those catching the trains to use them
- Appropriate protection should be provided to prevent crime in and around the facility - particularly the toilets
- Queried whether there would be any waiting facilities for bus passengers

**6.9** Objections have been received from two local residents, who raise the following concerns:

- Design not in character with the rest of the buildings along the Esplanade or an outstanding modern design – not in keeping with how a Victorian seaside town should look
- Police comments should be acted upon
- Missed opportunity to give Ryde another iconic building
- Queried whether we are to be saddled with the proposal to ensure the project can be completed within the DfT deadline
- No need for another retail unit in this area
- No need to remove existing bus information office, as it is in the most accessible location
- Area proposed for bin store contains existing murals – where are these to be relocated to?
- Plans rushed, some of the building interior not surveyed and no public consultation on the plans – numerous questions need to be answered:
  - Opening times and management of public toilets
  - Whether the historical waiting room is to be refurbished/reopened?
  - Whether commemorative plaque for the old tramway is to be kept?
  - Will the decoration/paint colours blend in?



## **7**      **Evaluation**

### **Design**

- 7.1**      The main changes to the exterior of the building, would involve modernising the western and south western facades, which overlook the highway and the open spaces between the transport interchange and the town centre. These changes would include removing the existing walls and replacing them with glazing, to serve an enlarged café, and a retail unit with a central glazed entrance feature, between them. Some concerns have been raised regarding the impact of the central entrance feature, which rises up beyond ground floor level. The roof apex of this feature would be about 0.5m higher than the highest part of the existing roof of the station building. This feature would provide a focal point and enhance legibility, and it is considered would be in keeping with the functional design and appearance of the station building. While a new feature of this building, it is noted that the grade II listed terminal building at the head of the pier, includes tower features that provide legibility and a sense of arrival. It is considered that the entrance to the interchange would provide a contemporary version of these features and therefore, link to the historic appearance of the pier. Officers consider that in certain views to and from the Pier and the Esplanade listed buildings this feature would be visible, but this would be limited to very specific views from the Esplanade or the Pier. It is further considered that most typical transient views would be unaffected when passing along the Esplanade or from other viewpoints along the beach, or from the water, especially considering the relatively small scale of this feature when compared to the scale of the listed buildings.
- 7.2**      The materials to be used in the new external walls, glazing, and roof elements would be in keeping with the station building. A condition is recommended to ensure that the colour of these new external elements would ensure the external alterations proposed would harmonise with the existing building.
- 7.3**      The application does not identify whether any new external plant or extraction, particularly to serve the café, may be required. The applicant has advised that the demands for any such plant could vary dependent on the café operator. The submitted Design and Access Statement also discusses running services internally wherever possible. The current application does not propose installation of any external plant/extraction and the application has been assessed on that basis. However, it is recommended that an informative is used to advise that any future extraction/plant mounted externally could require further planning permission to be obtained from the Local Planning Authority. Where permission is required, any impacts of future plant/extraction (including on the significance and setting on heritage assets) would be assessed through a later planning application.
- 7.4**      Officers consider that whilst the proposed design would not result in a comprehensive regeneration of the interchange building, it would nonetheless, improve its current rather service-like appearance and also provide a better sense of arrival. The glazed frontage, presence of the café and open circulation areas would provide a more attractive environment for those using the interchange. Moreover, the presence of the café and retail unit, along with the more obvious entrance would open the building to the town centre that it faces, rather than the

current situation where the building shares a poor relationship with the town. As a result, the design is considered to be acceptable and would result in a noticeable improvement to the appearance and functionality of the interchange, complying with policies DM2 and DM12 of the Core Strategy.

Impact on the significance and setting of heritage assets, including the grade II listed Promenade Pier, grade II listed buildings along the Esplanade, and the Ryde Conservation Area

- 7.5** Policies DM2 and DM11 of the Core Strategy state that the Council will support proposals that positively conserve and enhance the special character of the Island's historic and built environment and which preserve or enhance heritage assets and their settings. Furthermore, sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) places duties on the Council in the exercise of its planning functions to pay special regard/attention to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting, or any features of special architectural and historic interest which it possesses, as well as preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 7.6** Given the immediate proximity of the listed Ryde pier to the application site and the potential impacts of the proposal on the pier, the local planning authority needs to establish whether the proposal meets the local policy and legal requirements set out above, along with the requirements of the NPPF set out in paragraphs 5.6 to 5.8 above.
- 7.7** The station is located within Character Area 1: Esplanade, Pier and Seafront, of the Ryde Conservation Area (RCA), the appraisal of which summarises the special interest of this character area and refers to it as the face of Ryde, easily read from the seaward approach, in particular from the pier, with views of the pier, the Solent and the mainland a permanent backdrop when viewed from the town. It adds that the town's origin as a traditional seaside resort and transport interchange is inherent in the architecture and landscaping along the Esplanade. Open space, public gardens, sandy beaches, and seaside stalls, as well as the hustle and bustle of the transport interchange, are all features/qualities that are mentioned as contributing to the creation of a distinctive coastal resort. Paragraph 9.1 of the appraisal explains that the pier is the dominant landmark from both land and sea, from which the best panoramic views of the area can be gained, the Esplanade appearing as a long continuous open space.
- 7.8** The RCA appraisal discusses development of the western Esplanade from 1900, including demolition of properties to make way for a road widening scheme, as well as further investment in this area in the 1930s. It refers to the dominance of transportation in recent years, with the western end of the Esplanade nearest the pier developed into a transport interchange. Open space, uninterrupted views along the coast, as well as municipal horticulture and street trees, are mentioned as contributing to the special interest and character of this area.
- 7.9** Officers understand the importance of the function and relationship of the building with the Pier and the Esplanade, but also recognise the building has been compromised to the extent that its visual contribution to the conservation area and the listed buildings (including setting) has a negative impact.

- 7.10** There are elements within the building that are of historic interest and these are to be retained and refurbished. The alterations proposed would predominantly affect the rest of the building which has been subject to various changes over time. Officers consider the works proposed would result in an overall improvement to the appearance of the building and thereby result in a positive impact upon the character of the conservation area, the listed buildings, and their setting.
- 7.11** Whilst comments have been made regarding the extension of new paving into the station, this comment is more relevant for the wider station circulation refurbishment shown on the submitted plans to be undertaken as part of wider station refurbishment works. The type of paving/surface to be used would therefore be a matter for the wider project and would not require the consent of the Planning Authority.
- 7.12** Officers consider that, subject to a condition in respect of external materials, the overall impact from the development would be positive. Given this, combined with the public benefits associated with the proposal in terms of the visual improvement to the area, as well as the function and operation of the building for users of public transport, officers are satisfied that the proposal would accord with the legislation and local and national policies concerned with the preservation of designated heritage assets, and that the significance and setting of the listed Pier, Esplanade listed buildings and the Ryde Conservation Area would be preserved and/or enhanced. Minor positive weight is therefore be afforded this in favour of the proposal.

#### Ecology and Solent SPA/Ramsar

- 7.13** The applicant has submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal/Roost Assessment (20 September 2022). This concludes limited effect on site habitats, and that cautionary measures should be followed as identified in the submitted Construction Environment Management Plan, due to the site being adjacent the SPA. The submitted assessment also states that no evidence of bats using the building was identified, but advises that works should stop, and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted for advice, if protected species are identified during the works.
- 7.14** The Council's Ecology Officer has also advised that a condition should be imposed to ensure any demolition works would be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season (1 April to 31 August).
- 7.15** As the site is adjacent the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar, there is the potential for the proposed development to impact the SPA in terms of noise and visual disturbance, and pollution run-off into the SPA, during construction, particularly as the works are programmed to take place during the bird overwintering period (October to March). The Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) submitted by the applicant sets out a series of measures to ensure the integrity of the SPA would be protected during construction. Measures include:
- Use of hand tools, and limiting use of power tools to only where necessary to complete the required task
  - Pollution and waste control/management measures

- Erection of sheeting to reduce view of work site/areas (majority of work will also be internal), as well as cleaning and replacement of sheeting during the works

The CEMP explains that the works would take place between the hours of 07.30 and 17.30 Monday to Friday, and that the level of activity during those times outside of the buildings would be unlikely to exceed normal day-to-day levels in this busy area.

- 7.16** The Council, as the Competent Authority, has undertaken a Habitat Regulations (Screening) Assessment (HRA), which concludes that the project alone and in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the SPA. Natural England has reviewed the Council's HRA Screening Assessment and confirmed it agrees within its conclusions. A condition is recommended to ensure that the submitted CEMP would be adhered to during construction.
- 7.17** Having regard to the submitted ecological appraisal and CEMP, the Council's HRA Screening Assessment, and comments received from the Ecology Officer and Natural England, it is concluded that the proposal would not be likely to have any adverse ecological implications, or likely significant effects on the SPA, and that adjacent SPA/Ramsar and SSSI sites would be protected, conserved, and enhanced in accordance with policies DM2 and DM12 of the CS, the NPPF, and the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Conditions are recommended to ensure compliance with measures set out in the CEMP, as well as timing of any demolition works outside the bird breeding season to ensure this.
- 7.18** This matter is considered to be a neutral factor in the overall planning balance.

#### Highway considerations

- 7.19** The proposal forms part of the wider Ryde Interchange Project and seeks to provide an improve pedestrian link through the station to the tram pier which is to be adapted to provide a segregated pedestrian route from the station to Ryde Pier Head. As part of the wider DfT-funded Ryde Interchange Project, this would significantly improve sustainable transport locally.
- 7.20** Island Roads has commented that there would be no detrimental highway safety implications. However, it has been recommended that a Construction Management Code is agreed prior to commencement of development. Having reviewed the submitted Construction Environment Management Plan, Island Roads has confirmed this would be acceptable for this purpose. Officers therefore recommend that a condition is imposed to secure implementation of the submitted CEMP during construction.
- 7.21** On the basis that implementation of the CEMP is secured by condition, it is considered the proposal would be unlikely to have any unacceptable highway safety implications, and as part of the wider Ryde Interchange Project, be likely to result in significant improvement to the highway network locally, as well as promote sustainable transport, in accordance with the aims of policies SP7 and DM17 of the CS, as well as section 9 (Promoting sustainable transport) of the NPPF.

**7.22** This matter is attributed substantial positive weight in favour of the development given the positive benefits for sustainable travel and that these would combine with the benefits of the wider design / sense of place/arrival benefits outlined above.

#### Other matters

##### *Flood risk*

**7.23** The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment that identifies the station is predominantly within Flood Zone 1, with a small area to the south around the bus station forecourt within Flood Zone 2. It is therefore at lower risk of flooding. The proposal would not change the use(s) of the station or be likely to increase flood risk to the site, given the nature of the works which seek to refurbish the station and improve its appearance. Given the existing use(s) of the site would be fall within the less vulnerable category of Annex 3 – Flood Risk Vulnerability of the NPPF, and this would not change, it is considered that the proposal would have no significant implications for flood risk.

**7.24** This is therefore considered to be a neutral factor, neither weighing for or against the development.

##### *Crime & Design*

**7.25** Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a general duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent,

- (a) crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
- (b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol, and other substances in its area; and
- (c) re-offending in its area

**7.26** Policy DM2 of the CS, as well as the NPPF, also requires proposals to be high quality design and to promote a safe and accessible built environment, where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

**7.27** The proposal would result in a new entry/exit point which is necessary to provide a link through the station to the tram pier. However, an existing entry/exit point between the retail concession and existing Southern Vectis Information Office would be blocked up to provide bin storage. Other entry/exit points to/from the public realm and station platform already exist. The station platform entry/exit point is already gated. Although Hampshire Constabulary has commented that all of the entry/exit points should be secured between 10pm and 6am, this would mean that those using public transport services would be unable to access station facilities and the tram pier pedestrian way during the early morning and later at night when ferry and train services are running, and the ticket office and waiting room open. Given the building is already open to the public throughout the day, and that the proposal would not increase the amount of entry/exit points, it is considered that it would not exacerbate the existing situation.

- 7.28** There is already CCTV within the station building, at the platform and within the public areas. The applicant has advised that a CCTV system for the station building is currently being designed and this will need to comply with Network Rail requirements. It is therefore recommended that an informative is used to advise the applicant/developer to liaise with Hampshire Constabulary over the design of any modified/replacement CCTV system to be installed within the station so that the opportunities can be taken to support policing through the design of that system. Given internal works do not require planning permission, that the existing toilets are existing (albeit currently closed), and that there is already CCTV in the building, it is considered use of an informative would be appropriate.
- 7.29** Whilst it is fully appreciated that this area is a hotspot for crime and disorder incidents that are reported to the police, the lack of surveillance of the building interior from the public realm, multiple entry/exit points, and public accessibility of the building throughout the day, are existing longstanding issues, many of which are reflective of its public transport function.
- 7.30** The proposed external alterations to the building would enhance its appearance, as well as promote sustainable travel and improve pedestrian linkage with the pier. Furthermore, the increased glazing within the building would also improve views into and out of the building, which would increase intervisibility with the public realm, particularly along its western elevation, where the new walkway is proposed. As such, the proposed changes would be unlikely to have any significant implications for crime and disorder, and would be likely to go some way to addressing some of the issues identified by the police in terms of increasing building surveillance from the public realm.
- 7.31** This is considered to be a neutral factor neither waying for nor against the proposal.

*Queries regarding public toilets opening times/management, refurbishment and provision of waiting areas, and relocation of existing tramway plaque and murals*

- 7.32** A number of queries have been raised by local residents in relation to the opening times and management of the public toilets, provision of waiting facilities for bus customers, refurbishment of the historic northern waiting area adjacent the platform, and relocation of existing murals within the building, as well as the existing commemorative tramway plaque on its exterior.
- 7.33** Opening times and management of the public toilets would be a matter for the station/service operator, as would provision of waiting facilities within the station. In terms of waiting areas, these are indicated on the plans, and it is understood that the historic waiting room adjacent the platform is likely to be refurbished/redecorated as part of the overall station refurbishment. However the refurbishment of this waiting area is shown on supplied plans to fall outside the scope of this application.
- 7.34** With regard to the existing murals within the building and the commemorative tramway plaque, again this would be a matter for the applicant/developer, station operator, and any owners of these murals/plaques. There would appear to be space to relocate these existing features within the station building or on the new walls that would be created to form the café/covered walkway. It is not considered

necessary to secure the protection and/or relocation of these features through the planning application process, as these features could be removed from the building without planning permission at present.

- 7.35** These matters have not been given any weight when arriving at the recommendation.

*Impacts on the amenity of nearby uses*

- 7.36** The application site is a well-established transport hub, located within the town centre of Ryde, where there are many historic retail uses, including shops, cafes and other such uses. While there are residential properties throughout the commercial areas of Ryde, the residents of these would already experience the normal effects of the busy nature of the town centre. It is therefore considered that the altered nature of the application site, including the proposed café, would not result in effects on other uses, over above those already experienced. Because the nearby shops, cafes and other uses are historic, their opening times are not controlled by the planning process and therefore, it is not considered necessary to impose any such controls in relation to these proposals.
- 7.37** This is considered to be a neutral factor neither waying for nor against the proposal.

*Lack of consultation*

- 7.38** Whilst concerns have been raised in respect of lack of public consultation, the LPA encourages applicants to engage at an early stage with the local community regarding proposals, but cannot require them to do so. In terms of publicity and consultation on this planning application, it is considered that the LPA has met its statutory duty in this regard.
- 7.39** This matter is therefore not given any weight when arriving at the recommendation.

**8. Planning balance and conclusions**

- 8.1** The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system is planned and that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development. In the same way, planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The role of the planning system is to balance issues, particularly where they compete and compare the benefits of a proposed development with any identified harm. In this context, as set out in paragraph 5.2 above, the NPPF advises that the planning system has three overarching objectives, these being economic, social and environmental objectives. These issues are balanced below:

Economic

- 8.2** The NPPF states that the economic objective is to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth. The proposal

would provide enhanced station facilities (including an enlarged cafe concession) and have operational benefits for transport operators. It would also improve travel connectivity at Ryde Gateway, which is an important link with the UK mainland, as part of the DfT-funded Ryde Interchange Project. There would also be some temporary (construction) and longer term (café concession) employment benefits from the proposal. Substantial weight in favour of the development is afforded to these economic benefits of the scheme.

## Social

- 8.3** The NPPF states that the social objective is to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, referring to supporting the community's health, social and cultural well-being. The proposal includes the refurbishment of the existing toilets and other facilities within the station building. Given the recent demolition of the existing public toilets in Western Gardens to facilitate the highway realignment scheme as part of the Ryde Interchange Project, enhancement and re-opening of public toilets would be a substantial public benefit, not only for those using public transport services, but also those visiting the area.
- 8.4** There are existing issues in the area with crime and disorder, particularly between the hours of 10pm and 6am. However, the proposal is unlikely to have any significant implications for crime and disorder, and may go some way to addressing intervisibility issues between the public realm and building interior. This is considered to be a neutral factor, neither weighing for or against the development.
- 8.5** Significant weight is given to the proposed improvements in terms of creating a higher quality station building, which positively contributes to a better sense of place, which in turn positively contributes to a sense of arrival at one of the Island's key gateway towns.
- 8.6** Overall, substantial positive weight is afforded to the social benefits.

## Environmental

- 8.7** The NPPF states that the environmental objective is to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 8.8** Environmentally, the proposed development would enhance the appearance and environment of the station building, improve its facilities, which would benefit users of the station, as well as positively enhance the character and appearance of the Ryde Conservation area and setting of nearby listed buildings. The project would also encourage and promote sustainable travel and public transport use, which would contribute to reducing car usage and carbon emissions, in the effort to address impacts of climate change. Overall, substantial weight in favour of the proposal is afforded to these environmental benefits.
- 8.9** Potential for impacts to protected species and the Solent and Southampton Water SPA would be avoided through timing of demolition works and adherence to a



CEMP, and therefore these issues are considered a neutral factor, neither weighing for or against the proposal.

## Conclusion

- 8.10** Having regard to the above, it is concluded that overall, the proposal would have substantial social, economic and environmental benefits, and would comply with the provisions of the Island Plan Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework as a whole, and the requirements of sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended), as well as The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

## **9 Statement of Proactive Working**

### **9.1 ARTICLE 31 - WORKING WITH THE APPLICANT**

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF, the Isle of Wight Council takes a positive approach to development proposals focused on solutions to secure sustainable developments that improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area. Where development proposals are considered to be sustainable, the Council aims to work proactively with applicants in the following ways:

- By offering a pre-application advice service; and
- Updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and, where there is not a principle objection to the proposed development, suggest solutions where possible.

In this instance the applicant was updated and advised of any concerns, and given the opportunity to submit additional information to address those concerns. Following receipt of additional information, the application was considered to be acceptable and therefore no further discussions were required.

## **10 Conditions and reasons**

- 1** The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from date of this permission.

**Reason:** To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2** The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the details shown in the submitted plans, numbered:

0001 R1 Site Location and Block Plan  
0015 R3 Proposed General Arrangement Floor Plan Use  
0016 R3 Proposed General Arrangement Floor Plan  
0017 R3 Proposed General Arrangement Floor Plan Project Scope  
0025 R2 Proposed Building Elevations  
0035 R3 Proposed 3D Views Sheet 01  
0036 R2 Proposed 3D Views Sheet 02 Plan Cut

**Reason:** For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the development in accordance with the aims of policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) of the Island Plan Core Strategy.

- 3 The submitted Construction Environment Management Plan, dated August 2022, shall be adhered to for the duration of the development.

**Reason:** This is a pre-commencement condition to ensure that measures would be put in place during development to protect the integrity of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and the Ryde Sands to Wootton Creek SSSI, and the safe use and condition of the highway network in accordance with the aims of policies SP7 (Travel), DM2 (Design Quality for New Development), and DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Island Plan Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

- 4 Demolition works comprised in the development hereby permitted shall not be carried out during the bird breeding season (01 April to 31 August inclusive), unless supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist.

**Reason:** To ensure breeding birds and their nests would be protected in accordance with the aims of policies DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) and DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Island Plan Core Strategy and the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

- 5 Notwithstanding the submitted plans, the external alterations hereby permitted (other than demolition works) shall not begin until details of the materials and finishes (including colour) to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason:** In the interests of the amenities of the area and to ensure the character and appearance of the Ryde Conservation Area, and setting of nearby listed buildings, would be preserved or enhanced in accordance with the aims of policies DM2 (Design Quality for New Development) and DM11 (Historic and Built Environment) of the Island Plan Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework, and to reflect the requirements of sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

## 11 Informatives

- 1 Hampshire Constabulary's Designing Out Crime Officer has commented on the application that to reduce opportunities for crime and disorder:

- a CCTV system should be installed within the station building, with cameras deployed to provide images of public areas, including the toilets lobby
- Entry/exit points to the station and station platform should be secured between the hours of 10pm and 6am by roller shutter doors

The applicant/developer is advised to discuss these comments with the Designing Out Crime Officer, so that where practicable, the station refurbishment works can be designed to assist policing and deter crime and design locally. All comments received on the application can be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website (online planning register).

The applicant/developer is also advised that any further material alteration to the appearance of the station buildings (not authorised by this permission) may require further specific planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

- 2** Any externally mounted plant or means of extraction that may be required in future to serve the café could require specific planning permission from the Local Planning Authority. You are advised to contact the Local Planning Authority for advice prior to installation to establish whether consent may be required.