

Updated plans for major improvements at Reading West Station

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Designs for major improvements at Reading West Station have been updated and are now available for public comment as part of the ongoing planning application process.

Following discussions between Reading Borough Council, Great Western Railway and its architects, and Network Rail, proposals have been updated as part of the planning consultation process. Latest designs show a brand new station building with a distinctive brick and glass exterior. The footpath immediately in front of the new station building has also been widened to make access easier for both passengers using the station, and for pedestrians walking past.

New ticket gates at both the Tilehurst Road and Oxford Road entrances will mean access to the station is limited to paying passengers only, which is not currently the case. New lighting, CCTV, toilets, a retail facility and better waiting areas, will all combine to significantly improve safety and security at Reading West, which continues to suffer from anti-social behaviour.

Outside the station, an improved bus interchange will make it easier for commuters to easily swap from bus to train, with additional cycle parking also in place. The proposals also include improvements to the

Tilehurst Road entrance.

The full planning application and latest designs for Reading West Station can be found on the Council's Planning Portal. The planning application number is 201448 and members of the public are invited to comment.

All comments will be considered by the Planning Applications Committee, which is due to consider the planning application next month. If approved, initial construction works to the road layout to make room for the improved bus interchange and cycle facilities, could begin as early as March 2021. The project would take approximately a year to complete.

Tony Page, Reading Borough Council's Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, said: "The latest designs for Reading West Station are a huge improvement on the previous draft designs. Over the last few weeks Council officers and Councillors have worked closely with GWR and its architects to improve all aspects of the designs.

"We now have a proposed station building, constructed from a range of coloured bricks and glass, much more in keeping with the surrounding Oxford Road and the nearby Conservation Area.

"By marginally moving a bus stop and kerb lines on both sides of the road, the footpath directly in front of the station has been widened, addressing concerns expressed about access into and in front of the station. The pavement will be three metres wide outside the cafe booth."

Reading West Station sits just off the busy Oxford Road and is on the Reading to Basingstoke and Reading to Newbury line. The project aims to attract even more commuters to the rail network, which is an important element of Reading Borough Council's new Local Transport Plan to 2036, and its ambitions to become a net zero carbon town by 2030.

The planning application has been submitted by Great Western Railway (GWR), working in partnership with Reading Borough Council and Network Rail.

While proposals include 'futureproofing' the new station building for the installation of lifts at Reading West, Network Rail has advised the Council that this would involve rebuilding the train platforms, which makes the costs prohibitive for them at this time.

Councillor Page added: "While there is no doubt that this scheme is a huge upgrade, it is important to say these improvements are the just the first stage of delivering a wider masterplan for Reading West Station.

"It has been a long term ambition of Reading Borough Council for lifts to be installed at Reading West. However we are informed by Network Rail that the bulk of the cost for this work comes with rebuilding the train platforms to accommodate the new lifts, rather than the lifts themselves. Unfortunately, these works have not been prioritised for funding at this time."

More information on the Reading West Station improvement scheme is available at <https://www.reading.gov.uk/council/policies-finance-and-legal-information/transport-schemes-and-projec>

[ts/reading-west-station/](#)

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