

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260243
Site Address:	Earley Station, Station Road, Earley, Reading, RG6 7DY
Expiry Date:	26 March 2026
Site Visit Date:	19 March 2026
Proposal: Prior approval submission for railway works comprising alterations and refurbishment to the existing Earley Station footbridge, including works to staircases, landings, parapets, and associated structural and safety improvements.	

PLANNING POLICY/LEGISLATION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Section 55	Provides that 'development' includes the carrying out of building operations on land, and 'building operations' includes structural alterations or additions to buildings.
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Section 57	Planning permission is needed for all development of land.
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Section 187a	Enforcement for breach of conditions
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The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

Section 7	Prior approval applications: time periods for decision
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Article 3	In conjunction with Schedule 2, Part 18 Class A grants planning permission for development under local or private Acts or Order
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Article 4	Provides that the planning authority may give direction to restrict the effect of Article 3
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PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
N/A	N/A	N/A

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

None

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Earley Town Council raise no objection to this application.
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	Woodley Parish Council support this application in principle but have expressed disappointment that disability access had not been addressed through the provision of a ramp or lift.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	Two neighbours have commented on this application and their comments are summarised below: • It is disappointing there is no ramp to allow for wheelchair / pushchair access. • There is no bike gutter. <i>Officer comments: This application is for refurbishment works, hence no new features are proposed. The Council cannot withhold prior approval under Part 18 Class A solely because improved accessibility is not provided.</i>

PART A.1 APPRAISAL				
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)			Yes	No
1	s.55	Does it constitute development?	✓	
2	s.191	Would it be contrary to an enforcement notice?		✓
3	s.187a Art.3 (4)	Would it be contrary to any condition imposed by any planning permission granted or deemed to be granted?		✓
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)			Yes	No
4	Art.3 (5)	Are the building operations involved in the construction of the original building lawful?	✓	
5	Art.4	Is there an 'Article 4 Direction' in effect for the site?		✓
6	Sch.2 Pt. A	Does it consist of development authorised by: a) a local or private Act of Parliament b) an order approved by both Houses of Parliament, or c) an order under section 14 or 16 of the Harbours Act 1964 (orders conferring powers for improvement, construction etc of harbours) which designates specifically the nature of the development authorised and the land upon which it may be carried out?	✓	
7	A.1	Does it consist of or include: a) the erection, construction, alteration or extension of any building, bridge, aqueduct, pier or dam; or b) the formation, laying out or alteration of a means of access to any highway used by vehicular traffic, without the prior approval of the appropriate authority to the detailed plans and specifications being obtained.		✓

PART A.2 APPRAISAL

Development under Class A is permitted subject to the following requirements under Part A.2:

A.2 The prior approval referred to in paragraph A.1 is not to be refused by the appropriate authority nor are conditions to be imposed unless they are satisfied that—

a) the development (other than the provision of or works carried out to a dam) ought to be and could reasonably be carried out elsewhere on the land; or

The proposed works relate to an existing footbridge, and it is considered that the footbridge is already in the optimal location to serve users of the station. Additionally, the proposed footbridge is of a similar scale to the existing and can utilise the existing foundations. As such it would not be reasonable that the works be carried out elsewhere.

b) the design or external appearance of any building, bridge, aqueduct, pier or dam would injure the amenity of the neighbourhood and is reasonably capable of modification to avoid such injury.

The scale of the bridge is similar to the existing but it is noted there is a minor increase in height of 35mm. Overall, the new bridge is providing a more modern equivalent of the existing, with the main intentions of improving strength and safety. It is therefore considered that the design and appearance of the bridge would cause no further injury to the amenity of the neighbourhood.

As such the proposal requires prior approval and prior approval should be granted.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):

In exercising its functions, the Council is required under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The scope of the prior-approval process under Part 18, Class A is limited to consideration of the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed works. Within this limited framework, no evidence has been identified to indicate that the proposal gives rise to differential or disproportionate impacts on persons with protected characteristics. The Council's PSED has therefore been met, but it does not extend or alter the statutory matters that may lawfully be taken into account in determining this prior-approval submission.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	25 March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	3 March 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	26/03/26