

# Great Missenden & Prestwood Revitalisation Group

Incorporating Ballinger, South Heath and Heath End

20<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Emma Showan  
Directorate for Planning Growth and Stability  
Buckinghamshire Council  
King George V House  
Amersham HP6 5AW

Dear Emma Showan

**Re: PL/21/0534/FA**

**Submission of Revised Drawings- Land at Great Missenden Railway Station, Station Approach, Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire HP16 9AZ**

We believe that a redevelopment at Great Missenden Station would be a benefit, as long as the development is appropriate and blends into the existing village and its conservation area.

We have now had the opportunity to review the revised plans submitted by the applicant.

## **Block A**

The design changes and bulk reduction in Block A are an improvement. Also the change in materials helps the building to blend into the village better. There are however certain reservations-

- The underprovision of parking, despite the reduction of 2 residential units
- The building when viewed from the station is still somewhat overbearing

## **Block B**

Although there is a slight reduction in size and removal of the zinc Mansard roof, this leaves a building which fails to integrate with Block A in its design features. The building has very hard lines. The penthouse that is retained leaves the building at too great a height to fit into the village. The roof design is considered inappropriate in the Chilterns AONB.

Our concerns are-

- The underprovision of parking, despite the reduction of 2 residential units
- The inappropriate design of Block B in the AONB, the Conservation Area and the setting of listed buildings

## **Overall Design**

The station forecourt has an Urban feel and would benefit from a less metropolitan colour palette to integrate better into the village.

Changing the colour of the window frames to white would help to blend the buildings into Station Approach.

A mini roundabout at the junction would help to improve highway safety, particularly reducing the speed of traffic coming down Martinsend Lane.

There are a number of other issues which have not been addressed:

## **Sustainability**

Arguments have been put forward about the sustainability of the site to justify the low level of parking provision. The Chiltern Line provides a reasonable level of services to London, Amersham and Aylesbury. The local bus services are poor and run infrequently. The majority of people need a car to access the Chilterns AONB. Arguments made that there is a low level of car ownership among flat owners in the village relies on the fact that the majority of flats in the village are occupied by elderly retired people. The situation of the apartments at the station is unlikely to attract older people. In addition, parking is a major problem in the village, with commuters and local employees seeking free parking.

## **Traffic Assessments**

The Traffic Assessments have been based on a rush hour from 8am to 9am, and 4.30pm to 5.30pm. This is unrealistic at Great Missenden.

The rush hour starts before 7am with commuters accessing the station car park for the trains to London. There are 3 trains per hour. There is another surge for the first train after 9am for commuters seeking off-peak fares. This is compounded by the school rush hour which starts at around 8.30 am. With The Misbourne School, Great Missenden Combined School and the Gateway there are significant number of children who arrive by car. The afternoon rush hour starts at around 3pm with the schools. The trains then bring a lot of commuters, who arrive between 6pm and 7.30pm. Many of these have parked in the station car park.

There are relevant reports of traffic volumes on both PL/21/0534/FA and on PL/21/2198/FA. This later development will be accessed through the access to Station Approach. Thus volumes generated from this development and the Station development will impact the volume of traffic. From the assessments in PL/21/2198/FA it would appear that the two sets of traffic generated have not been combined.

## **Visibility Splay**

The visibility splay leaving the station to the left is shown as 2.4m x 37m. This assumes that the 2.4m is taken from the centre of the Access Road, whereas we believe that it should be taken from the centre of the Leave lane. This would reduce the splay further. Also Station Approach / Martinsend Lane rises quite steeply with the railway bridge being a bump in the road. This reduces the visibility splay further.

The traffic approaching from the West down Martinsend Lane generally is at 30mph or higher. Thus we believe that the full splay of 2.4m /43m is needed.

## **Trees**

There is a sycamore (T59) shown on the Tree Protection Plan and the Tree Constraints Plan. On the Ecology Report and the original Site Plan it is not shown. Nor is it shown on the latest drawings. The tree is a mature specimen which has a high amenity value and is well loved locally. There is also the possibility that it is or could be used by Bats. Should this tree remain, this will further impact the Visibility Splay to the West.

As this tree is in the Conservation Area, we understand that an application to remove the TPO will be needed. The removal of the tree would appear to be necessary to implement the site plan. Another concern about the removal of this tree is the risk of heave, as the tree currently takes up a significant amount of water. With risk of heave there is a risk to the A4128 bridge and highway over the railway.

## **Bats**

The reports indicate that there are bats in the area. However the reports on the Static Detectors appear to be conflicted in that-

- 2.4.15 states Southern Detector – Low to Moderate – with 34.4 bat passes per night. Northern Detector – Very Low – with 1.4 passes per night
- 2.4.16 shows total number of bats recorded as Southern – 10. Northern - 241.

2.4.16 would seem to indicate that the bat activity is greater in the northern part of the site. If this is the case then the Sycamore T59 becomes a more significant tree.

## **Conclusion**

- The revised drawings are a step in the right direction towards a satisfactory development.
- Further work is required, particularly on Block B, to reduce the impact of the building when seen from the roundabout. A pitched clay tile roof would help integrate Block B with Block A.
- Using a different colour palette would blend the station forecourt into the village
- There is insufficient parking, failing to meet the Council's parking provision.
- Revised traffic assessments are required taking into account the additional development specified in PL/21/2198/FA.
- The safety of the junction with the A4128 needs to be re-assessed, with consideration of the introduction of a roundabout to slow the traffic coming down the A4128.
- Further assessment required on the impacts of removing sycamore T59, in particular any potential impacts on the bridge over the railway.
- Further clarification of the impact on bats.

Yours sincerely

*John Gladwin*

John Gladwin on behalf of GMPRG

[www.gmprg.org.uk](http://www.gmprg.org.uk)