

Public Report with Exempt Appendices  
Cabinet

---

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 18 September 2023

**Report Title**

Rotherham Integrated (Mainline & Tram Train) Station Land Acquisition & Project Update

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

**Report Author**

Lucy Mitchell, Major Project Officer  
Lucy.mitchell@rotherham.gov.uk

**Ward(s) Affected**

Boston Castle  
Rawmarsh West  
Rotherham West

**Report Summary**

This report provides an update on the project progress and the acquisition of land required to facilitate delivery of a new Integrated (Mainline and Tram Train) Station. On 28th March 2022, as part of the Regeneration Programme Strategic Land Assembly, Cabinet gave authority to acquire one property (as detailed in Appendix 1) to facilitate delivery of a new mainline station. This report is seeking Cabinet authority to acquire four additional properties, two of which are essential to facilitate delivery of the Integrated Station and two of which would bring significant benefit to the project but are not currently considered essential to delivery of the station based on the preliminary information which is available. It is of course possible that all or part of the desirable properties may need to be acquired once further, more detailed, plans are prepared. This report is also seeking a Resolution in Principle to investigate use of powers to acquire by Compulsory Purchase or through use of a Transport and Works Act Order.

In the event that it is not possible to acquire any or all of the properties by agreement within the required timescales and/or funding envelopes and the investigation into the use of CPO powers indicates an acceptable likelihood of success, a further

report may be submitted to Cabinet seeking formal resolution to acquire the property interests through use of Compulsory Purchase or Transport and Works Act powers. This report will necessarily set out full details of the target properties.

## **Recommendations**

That Cabinet:-

1. Authorises the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport to negotiate the acquisition by agreement of the property interests in Appendix 1 Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 and within the available funding, in consultation with the Council's S.151 Officer, Assistant Director - Legal Services, the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.
2. Grants a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of powers, under either the Compulsory Purchase Order or Transport and Works Act Order, to acquire the necessary property interests.

## **List of Appendices Included**

- Appendix 1 EXEMPT Red line boundary plan for land acquisition site 1
- Appendix 2 EXEMPT Red line boundary plan for additional land acquisition sites 2 & 3
- Appendix 3 EXEMPT Red line boundary plan for further potential land acquisition sites 4 & 5
- Appendix 4 EXEMPT Finance implications
- Appendix 5 Equality Impact Assessment screening
- Appendix 6 Carbon Impact Assessment

## **Background Papers**

Cabinet Paper March 2022

Cabinet Paper April 2023

Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to SYMCA 2022

## **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

Cabinet 24 April 2023

## **Council Approval Required**

No

## **Exempt from the Press and Public**

Part Exempt (Appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4)

An exemption is sought for **Appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4** under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains financial information relating to the acquisition.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because all such negotiations and financial information should remain confidential between the parties.

## **Rotherham Integrated (Mainline & Tram Train) Station Land Acquisition & Project Update**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Rotherham suffers from comparatively poor rail connectivity - the Town is currently served only by a branch line at Rotherham Central station. Existing rail services at Rotherham Central comprise three stopping trains per hour, with a limited range of direct destinations and lack of fast and frequent connections to key centres of employment. In contrast, the Sheffield to Leeds rail corridor currently operates five passenger services per hour between these two cities, mostly bypassing the town.
- 1.2 The Council is working with partners to promote and progress development of a new Integrated (Mainline and Tram Train) Station in Rotherham. This new station will significantly improve local, regional, and national rail connectivity for local people and businesses, offering access to employment and business growth opportunities, and contributing significantly to the economic regeneration of the town.
- 1.3 It is anticipated that the new mainline heavy rail station could offer mainline connections to Sheffield, Doncaster, Leeds, York and Birmingham. Taken together with local connectivity offered by a new Tram Train Station adjacent, this project will radically improve the Town's connectivity, delivering social, economic and environmental benefits. These benefits are captured in a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the project that was submitted to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) in 2022.
- 1.4 Following SYMCA approval of the SOBC, the Council secured £1m City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement funding to progress the project to the next investment gateway; the preparation of an Outline Business Case (OBC).
- 1.5 To progress the OBC, Cabinet, in April 2023, gave authority to appoint Network Rail and Transport for the North to prepare key workstreams for the OBC, including:
  - Modelling and scheme testing to understand catchment and impact.
  - Operational railway design work.
  - Timetable modelling (heavy rail and tram train) to confirm service provision and power supply capability.
  - Station building/facilities design.
  - Preferred location and preliminary layout for tram train stop.
  - Updated cost estimate.

Work to prepare the OBC is now underway with an anticipated completion date of January 2024.

- 1.6 The Council has also secured Towns Fund investment to acquire land necessary to accommodate the station and develop a masterplan for the Integrated Station. Preparation of the masterplan is underway and focuses on the station, the location of facilities and key connections to the Tram Train

and beyond. It also sets out a longer-term vision for the surrounding area in order to capitalise on the benefits that significantly improved connectivity to the national rail network could bring to the Town.

## **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 Given the benefits that this project could bring to Rotherham and its residents, the Council is acting as scheme promoter and seeking to lead the development of the project and lobby for its delivery. The Council's efforts are currently focused on:
- Facilitating delivery of the station through land acquisition.
  - Preparing a comprehensive masterplan for the station.
  - Delivering an Outline Business Case to articulate the project benefits and secure the necessary funding for the project to progress to Full Business Case.
  - Promoting the integrated station opportunity and lobbying for its delivery with partners, SYMCA and Government.
- 2.2 The Outline Business Case and subsequent Full Business Case will consider in greater detail and provide more certainty in relation to the construction of the station but it is currently anticipated that this will be completed by Network Rail, or a contractor appointed on their behalf.
- 2.3 In March 2022 Cabinet gave authority to acquire the land necessary to facilitate delivery of the Integrated Mainline and Tram Train Station. The need for this property (detailed in Appendix 1) was based on work completed by Transport for the North during the early project development phase. Negotiations to acquire this property are ongoing with the landowner.
- 2.4 In recent months, the Master Planning Team appointed by the Council have been working to identify key routes and connections through and around the station to ensure direct connectivity between the mainline station and the Tram Train stop and beyond. The masterplan has also identified a preferred location for the station building and a layout for supporting facilities including car parking, a pick-up/drop off area and space to accommodate rail replacement bus services.
- 2.5 As part of the masterplan development the Team has identified additional land and property that is essential to accommodate the station, its facilities and supporting infrastructure including a secondary means of egress from the northern platform. These additional properties are identified in Appendix 2.
- 2.6 The Masterplanning Team are trying to ensure that property interests affected by the station proposal are kept to the minimum necessary to facilitate delivery of the Integrated Station. Appendix 1 and 2 identify these affected property interests. However, two further properties have been identified that may be affected as further detailed engagement with Network Rail in relation to the station design and required facilities progresses in the coming months. The acquisition of these two additional property interests (or part of) as set out in Appendix 3 may also be required.

2.7 Acquisition by agreement is the Council's preferred route to secure the necessary land and property and is a precursor to any Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) or Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO). However, given the length of time and cost implications of the Council pursuing acquisition powers it is important that the Council prepares for this potential route. This report seeks a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of CPO or TWAO powers. If the use of formal powers is required, it will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet for authority to make any such order.

2.8 In this context, and following Cabinet approval in March 2022, solicitors have recently been appointed to advise on the land acquisition strategy for the project. This initial advice will outline the benefits and implications of the different powers (Compulsory Purchase or Transport and Works Act) that exist and are available to the Council to acquire the required property interests necessary for this project prior to exploring the use of such powers.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 The preferred option is to acquire all the necessary properties by agreement. Use of statutory powers (CPO or TWAO) will be exercised if it is the only way to assemble the parcels of land required to facilitate delivery of the Integrated Station. Negotiation is a mandatory precursor to any use of acquisition powers and therefore progressing immediately to use of these powers is not an option for consideration.

3.2 Consideration has also been given to acquiring an 'option' to buy the required land and properties although this option is not recommended. There are significant benefits to the Council owning the properties that an 'option' on the land would not provide. The main benefits are around de-risking the project and the ongoing management of the properties until such time when the land is required for the station development.

3.3 In addition, some of the properties are occupied and would provide the Council with an income stream covering the holding costs associated with the property acquisitions. Acquisition of the properties as opposed to taking an 'option' also provides an opportunity to recover the capital outlay of the purchases through a future sale should the properties not eventually be required for development of the station or if the development does not proceed. This opportunity would not exist with an 'option' to buy and the cost of securing the 'option' would not be recoverable.

3.4 To do nothing is not a recommended option considering the availability of, and timescale associated with the funding and the significant impact the land acquisition will have in de-risking the project.

### **4. Consultation on proposal**

4.1 There has been considerable engagement with stakeholder partners through the project steering group and board which endorsed the project Strategic Outline Business Case and will oversee the preparation and submission of

the Outline Business Case and other project workstreams including the masterplan preparation and land acquisitions.

- 4.2 Locally, a strategic engagement plan formed a key part of the Town Investment Plan (TIP); MyTown portal was used to initially engage the wider community in understanding the Town’s needs. As the TIP was progressed, a more targeted approach was developed, enabling the public to comment directly on proposals via a Virtual Exhibition (in line with Covid 19 restrictions). The presence of the platform was promoted through social media and Council newsletters.
- 4.3 Events such as the Rotherham Show have also provided a platform for sharing plans and obtaining feedback from communities regarding the town’s regeneration proposals. At the show in 2022, there was significant interest in the station proposal from local people.
- 4.4 The Town Deal Board has been consulted on the project and is supportive of the approach being taken. The Town Deal Board at their May 2023 meeting were consulted specifically in relation to the necessary land acquisition and approved the proposal.
- 4.5 Gateley Hamer, the surveyors working with and advising the Council, are in negotiation with the main landowners impacted by the proposal.
- 4.6 A stakeholder engagement and communications plan was endorsed by the Integrated Station Project Board at its May 2023 meeting. Engagement with Train Operating Companies and the potential Station Facility Owner took place in June 2023 in order to get their views on the design and layout of the station and associated facilities to ensure operational requirements are adequately reflected in the designs.
- 4.7 Internal colleagues from across the Council have been involved in a number of masterplan workshops to ensure compatibility and fit with emerging policies and proposals that impact the station location and design, including the flood alleviation schemes for example.

**5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 5.1 An indicative high-level programme to station opening is detailed below. However, the development and construction phases will be subject to confirmation or amendment as the OBC is developed, and subject to further funding being secured for the project.

Masterplan finalised	November 2023
Outline Business Case submitted to SYMCA & DfT	January 2024
Full Business Case completed	Late 2024 / 2025
Land acquisition and tenant relocation complete	2025
Construction Start	2026
Station opening	Spring 2028

*NOTE – The above Timetable is indicative and subject to change*

## **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

- 6.1 The financial implications of the proposed acquisitions are detailed within the exempt Appendix 4. The Council has sufficient Capital budget identified to support the acquisition of the properties and the financial implications of holding the properties once acquired have been identified. It should be noted that these costs are estimates and the full cost of the acquisitions will only be known as an agreement is reached and the maintenance costs of holding the properties as the Council gains further information on the condition of the assets through the acquisition process.
- 6.2 The recommendations detailed in this report are property related, and do not carry any direct procurement implications. Relevant procurement implications will become applicable as the project moves into preparing for construction and will need to be undertaken in line with relevant procurement law at the time.

## **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 7.1 Legal Services and the external firm of solicitors which has been appointed for preliminary specialist advice are being kept informed at all stages and are advising as and when new issues arise. However, there are no substantive legal issues arising from the contents of this report other than as detailed in the report itself.

## **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 There are no such implications arising from this report.

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

- 10.1 The acquisition of these properties will not result in any changes at this stage, therefore current arrangements will be preserved and there will be no impact affecting different groups or service users. As the project progresses, a detailed Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted considering access in and around the site and the potential groups/individuals affected by the proposals.

## **11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

- 11.1 There may be a small amount of increased activity on site from visiting Council staff and contractors involved in survey work, however, this impact will be minimal. Where possible, survey work will be desk-based. As the project progresses to Full Business Case, a Carbon Impact Assessment will be undertaken as appropriate. As this is a major transport project, it is

anticipated that consultants with environmental expertise will be appointed to conduct a comprehensive assessment to fully understand impacts.

## 12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 There are no implications anticipated for partners from these acquisitions. Development of a new mainline station will deliver positive impacts for partners with the land acquisition (the subject of this report) an essential component in de-risking the project.

## 13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The main risks to the successful land acquisition:
1. Land acquisition costs higher than budgeted for;
  2. Lack of certainty regarding project delivery undermines ability to acquire land
- 13.2 Landowner acquisition costs higher than budgeted for:  
Risk: Additional land requirements identified and/or cost of land higher than budgeted for. **Mitigation:** Masterplanners and surveyors have been appointed at an early stage in the project to identify the extent of land required and to provide 'worst-case' scenarios and ensure all potential compensation costs are covered.
- 13.3 Lack of certainty regarding project delivery undermines ability to acquire land  
Risk: Early stage of project development and certainty of delivery could impact Council ability to acquire land. **Mitigation:** Preparation and acceptance of OBC by SYMCA/Department for Transport (DfT) increases certainty project delivery and enables project to move to Full Business Case. Solicitors and surveyors have been appointed at an early stage in the project to advise on land acquisition strategy and use of Council powers.

## 14. Accountable Officers

Simon Moss, Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	31/08/23
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	31/08/23

*Report Author:* Lucy Mitchell, Major Project Officer  
Lucy.mitchell@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).