

Written submission by John & Ruth Clatworthy – objectors

1. The public consultation/community involvement claimed by SMPC to support their application was crude and did not adequately explore public views. Prior to the drawing up of the plans there was no consultation with the public on either site location or size and at the consultation in Feb 2019 the public was presented with a seeming fait accompli with no alternative offered.

In their attempt at rebuttal of objections submitted Pro Vision refer to "various long-term benefits of the proposal for villagers and those using the station for commuting" and claim the pedestrian link will provide access to the station "and other village community facilities". There is no definition of these "long-term benefits" or "other village community facilities." There is also reference to "significant support from the wider community" but no evidence of this is provided.

2. The claim by Pro Vision that their survey demonstrated scope for a "modal shift" to increased use of rail travel from Mortimer is now severely undermined. GWR has recently announced that they plan to revise their season ticketing strategy to accommodate the reduction in passenger numbers because of the modal shift to home working resulting from the Covid 19 epidemic. Passenger numbers are 16% of pre-Covid -19 figures, they have announced. This reduction is reflected in the fact that a daily maximum of 5 parked cars has been observed in the existing station car park since the start of easing of lockdown restrictions on 15th June.

West Berkshire Council's recent residents survey of the impact of Covid-19 reports that "almost all respondents who were able to work from home intend to continue to do so and even more in the future."

It is also worth noting that there is no prospect of electrification of this line in the foreseeable future and therefore use of diesel locomotives will continue. Encouraging increased rail passenger traffic on this line and therefore road traffic to access it is surely contrary to Greener Berkshire policy.

3. The applicants claim that their proposed car park "fully respect(s) the rural character of the area." Urbanisation of the rural landscape involved shows no respect, we would contend, and no amount of "sensitive landscaping" can mitigate the visual impact of a car park with height restriction gantry and other inevitable paraphernalia.