



03 August 2020

Planning
West Berkshire Council

By Email

To whom it may concern,

Great Western Railway

Milford House
1 Milford Street
Swindon, SN1 1HL

GWR.com

APPLICATION NUMBER: 20/00674/FUL

PROPOSAL: Change of use of land and the construction of a 150 space car park with alterations to the highway, landscaping, and associated works

SITE: Land To The South East, Mortimer Station, Station Road, Mortimer

Supporters Committee Speech

I write to confirm GWR's strong support for expanded parking provision for Mortimer Station.

GWR has worked closely with Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council (SMPC) over the last three years to progress the project. Mortimer Station has seen significantly lower growth in rail passenger numbers than the industry average over the last 15 years. The existing car parking provision at the station is full to capacity, with rail users also parking on-street in the vicinity of the station. These factors strongly suggest that the lack of car parking supply for the station is suppressing growth in rail use and limiting the station's role in the local transport network.

The 2018 Assessment of Community Survey which covered only around a third of catchment area of Mortimer Station, clearly demonstrated that use of rail services is currently suppressed by the current car park capacity. Of 494 responses received more than 350 people stated they would travel by train more often if more parking was available at the station.

The Office of Rail and Road publish estimates of station usage each year for every station in the UK. Between 2004/5 and 2018/19 the number of passenger journeys to and from Mortimer station increased by just 3%. This compares with a 95% increase in passenger numbers across the industry and, as a more local comparable, 39% growth at Bramley Station over the same period. Growth in rail use at Mortimer Station has not grown in line with background demand growth.

GWR has a track record of investing in station facilities and has expanded car parking provision at a number of rural stations over the last ten years where existing facilities were full, providing capacity for suppressed demand. For example, at Kingham doubling the car park capacity to 248 spaces increase the passenger numbers by 47%. At Hanborough increasing spaces from 39 to 278 saw a tripling of passenger numbers.

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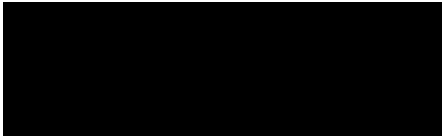


Following an expansion of station car parking at Mortimer, GWR would expect a similar significant increase in passengers using the station.

Access between the platforms at Mortimer is via a stepped footbridge and there is no step-free route between the platforms. The planning application recognises this through the provision of a safe pedestrian route and associated infrastructure via the proposed new car park and over the railway bridge on Station Road.

In December 2019 GWR introduced additional services on the Reading to Basingstoke line. GWR also intend to introduce 4-car trains on the route which have additional capacity compared to the current 2 and 3-car trains. These improvements will provide additional capacity and make the use of rail services from Mortimer Station more attractive, increasing demand and the role the station can potentially play in delivering modal shift away from the private car; for this to be realised however, additional car parking for the station is required.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Tom Pierpoint.

Tom Pierpoint

Commercial Development Director