

STATION AREA

CONTEXT

The area around the railway station is currently subject to a planning application (14/P/02168) and feasibility studies and will play an instrumental role in terms of infrastructure, connections and a significant uplift in density and intensification. The proposed illustrative scheme defines how this could be designed, but the exact approach is likely to be determined through the current planning application.

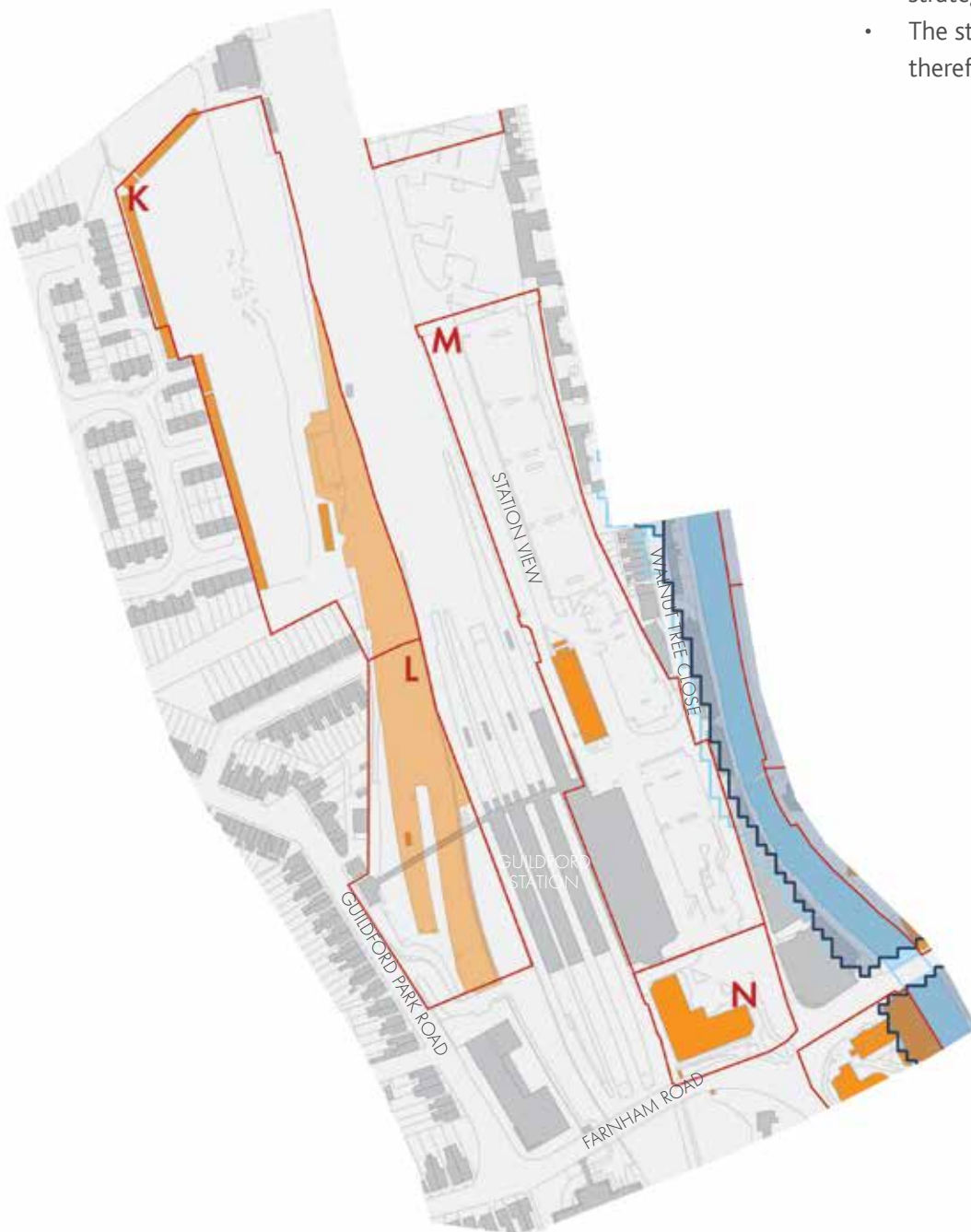
CONSTRAINTS

- Network Rail has safeguarded some of the rail land area for future expansion which could limit a more comprehensive approach to the development of the west side of the station.
- The station is of a low townscape quality and the area suffers from poor pedestrian connectivity and a low quality of public realm.

- The steep sides of the railway corridor make some of this land challenging to develop and access.
- The garages in the car park on the west side of the railway line may form an ownership constraint on the development of this site.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Provide a pedestrian route from the west of the railway line, passing through the station area and crossing the river into Bedford Road.
- Maintain views to the cathedral from the forecourt in front of the station.
- Improve the general quality and continuity of the public realm at the station and along Bridge Street.
- Improve the access and signage to the interceptor car park on the west of the railway line, encouraging visitors to the town centre to park in this location, rather than enter the gyratory.
- Establish opportunities for improved bus provision at the station as part of an integrated public realm strategy.
- The station area is out of the flood plain and is therefore a key opportunity for new development.



- Listed buildings
- Locally listed buildings
- Buildings of townscape merit
- Retained buildings
- Potential for redevelopment
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3A
- Flood zone 3B

Existing context (flood zone 2 represents medium risk, flood zone 3B is highest risk)

KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Redevelopment of the station incorporating a new eastern station square, a new western station square and a clear east-west public link across the tracks for pedestrians and cyclists. The spaces adjacent to the eastern and western station entrances should include mini transport hubs to accommodate a wide range of sustainable transport alternatives.
2. New mixed-use development to the west of the station at street level with Guildford Park Road will permit the provision of new parking and/or additional station platforms at the lower level, creating a seamless arrival at the station.
3. The existing car park site to the west of the station will be redeveloped to provide a consolidated multi-storey car park and new residential development. A clear and direct route will be created immediately to the west of the tracks, linking the university and the public parking to the new station entrance.
4. New residential development of a sensitive scale and mass on the eastern side of the tracks should help to connect Station Road with Yorkies Bridge, providing a further route to the University from the town centre. A new multi-storey car park will re-provide the existing station parking on a reduced footprint. This area could also include a hotel.
5. The redevelopment of the station could re-locate the entrance. It could be accessed from a new station square designed to create a clear interchange for buses, taxis and private vehicles as well as pedestrians and cyclists. The square will also integrate with the new bridge to Bedford Wharf, creating a strong pedestrian route in to the town centre which avoids traffic.
6. The Guildford Park site has potential to be used more intensively through the introduction of a residential-led mix of uses and a new car park facility.



Framework plan



The Billings Improved waterside environment with enhanced connections between the town centre and station





Station View. New residential development could create activity along Station View, with buildings set back from the railway behind the road and new tree planting. Station car parking will be re-provided with active ground floor uses, close to the new proposed station entrance.



THE MASTERPLAN

The drawing below illustrates the potential layout of the station area, drawing on the analysis and principles identified in this report. For ease of reference, the approximate capacity of key sites is identified in the adjacent capacity table.

COMMENTARY ON LAND USES

The primary land use proposed in this area is residential. The sites further from the centre would not be appropriate for other uses due to distance from key pedestrian routes and town centre activity. There is also an opportunity for greater residential to be built outside of the core of the centre, generating significant receipts which could be utilised for the provision of infrastructure and the overall viability of the masterplan.

Office accommodation is proposed adjacent to the train station. This is considered to be an optimal office location due to proximity to the railway station.

The proposals for site N (Ranger House) illustrate how a new office development (total gross new floorspace replacing the current building) could assist in achieving a clearer approach to access and servicing alongside a more contemporary form.



Illustrative masterplan

INDICATIVE CAPACITY

The illustrative masterplan for the station area identifies a number of potential development opportunities which could account for a significant development capacity as estimated below.

SITE K	
Plot area (ha)	2.22
Gross non-residential area (sqm)	0
Gross residential area GEA (sqm)	20,844
Multi-storey car park GEA (sqm)	14,208
Approximate number of dwellings	197

TOTAL	
Gross non-residential area (sqm)	14,988
Approximate number of dwellings	594

SITE L	
Plot area (ha)	1.02
Gross non-residential area (sqm)	0
Gross residential area GEA (sqm)	19,362
Approximate number of dwellings	186

SITE M	
Plot area (ha)	1.52
Gross non-residential area GEA (sqm):	
• A1 uses	780
• Office / leisure / hotel	3,072
Gross car park area GEA (sqm)	10,560
Gross residential area GEA (sqm)	21,852
Approximate number of dwellings	211

SITE N	
Plot area (ha)	0.46
Gross non-residential area GEA (sqm):	
• Office / leisure / hotel	11,136
Gross residential area GEA (sqm)	0
Approximate number of dwellings	0