

## 3 Development of the Scheme and Alternatives

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This Chapter, prepared by Waterman in conjunction with the Applicant and Project Architects (CRTKL, Chapman Taylor and Macgregor Smith), describes the main alternatives considered by the Applicant during the design development of the Phase 1B (North) RMA.

3.1.2 Under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011<sup>i</sup> as amended in 2015<sup>ii</sup> (the 'EIA Regulations'), an ES is required to provide:

*"An outline of the main alternatives studied by the applicant...and an indication of the main reasons for the choice made, taking into account the environmental effects".*

3.1.3 Given that the Scheme already has the benefit of planning permission (as per the 2014 Permission), the main alternatives set out in the s73 ES are not re-examined or re-presented in this Chapter since they remain valid. Commentary in this chapter is only provided on significant design alternatives which were considered during design evolution for the Phase 1B (North) RMA.

### 3.2 Phase 1B (North) RMA Alternatives

3.2.1 The Phase 1B (North) RMA is governed by the parameters and principles defined by the 2014 Permission. As such, the nature of alternatives available to the Applicant are limited to those within the flexibility provided in the 2014 Permission and the parameters and principles of the Development Specification and Framework (DSF), Design and Access Statement (DAS) and Design Guidelines (DG).

3.2.2 The main design alternatives to the 2014 Permission, as summarised in this section, have been in response not only to considerations identified by the design team, but also as a result of engagement and consultation with LBB and other statutory authorities and stakeholders such as the Consultative Access Forum (CAF).

3.2.3 Any minor deviations from the 2014 Permission, as defined in **Section 4.5**, are not considered as they are not considered to be 'main alternatives' under the meaning of the EIA Regulations.

### 3.3 Phase 1B (North) RMA Design Evolution

#### Infrastructure

#### Highway Improvements

3.3.1 The detailed design for planning purposes for the Gateway Junctions was approved by the 2014 Permission. The parameters for other highway works were approved by the 2014 Permission, and the details of these other highway works were applied for through the Phase 1A (North) RMAs. These RMAs were subsequently approved, subject to minor amendments to certain elements including Tempelhof Bridge. Changes to the phasing of four highway links (Claremont Avenue, Claremont Road Junction North, High Street South (East Works) and Orchard Lane) to the south of the A406 (re-phased from Phase 1A (North) to Phase 1B (South)) along with limited changes to the design of the surrounding highway network in the intervening period, were subject to a resolution to grant planning permission in February 2016. Therefore, the highway works necessary to facilitate the implementation of Phase 1B (North) have been approved or are subject to a resolution to grant planning permission, and are not considered here further.

### Transport Interchange T2 (Replacement Bus Station)

- 3.3.2 The initial design for the transport interchange proposed to place the passenger areas and bus stops towards the back of the bus station undercroft, i.e. adjacent to the retail, with layover spaces (for buses waiting between trips) to the outside, and with passenger / customer entrances to the centre at the west end and towards the eastern end of the Plot. Following Transport for London (TfL) and LBB feedback, this design option was rejected due to the potential adverse effects that the enclosed space would have on customer environment and amenities.
- 3.3.3 A passenger island was subsequently considered, located to the outside of the undercroft with layover to the inside. In order to ensure passenger safety, a passenger peninsular arrangement was developed, providing access from the western end with an entrance into the shopping centre, as well as a crossing to allow pedestrian access to the Fenwick Circus Threshold Space and entrance. This is the option included in the RMA submission.
- 3.3.4 An internal route to the malls from the eastern end of the peninsular via the crossing was also considered. However, this was rejected due to concerns that it would increase the number of pedestrian movements across the main bus in and out route, and therefore increase the risk for passengers' safety.
- 3.3.5 The replacement bus station would be designed to work more efficiently than the existing bus station to reduce the traffic impact on Prince Charles Drive. The new station would be designed to reduce emissions and would encourage air circulation, particularly around passenger areas. The design of the new bus station is also led by the design criteria as set out in Schedule 6 and Plans 13 and 14 of the s106 agreement.

### Neighbourhood Police Unit

- 3.3.6 The Neighbourhood Police Unit location and size has been developed based on discussions held with the Met Police. The unit has been designed as a separate small unit (circa 93sqm) located adjacent to the proposed retail units within the Phase 1B (North) Development Plots. The Unit is located within Phase 1B (North), linking to the basement and lower ground floor and therefore ensuring good accessibility.

### Open Space and Public Realm Areas

#### High Street North

- 3.3.7 Initially, the first floor level of High Street North was considered as mezzanine retail space including a group of restaurants at the mouth of a north / south entertainment street that extended on to the roof of the existing shopping centre. However, due to structural limitations and the logistics of building across the existing shopping centre, the High Street North design evolved to a four-storey high retail street. At lower ground level, following consultation with LBB, the High Street North design has evolved to be part of the 24-hour route through the centre. At the interface of High Street North with Brent Cross Main Square, vertical transportation options have been included that allow the route to continue at the upper ground level, providing a choice of directions.

#### Brent Cross Main Square

- 3.3.8 Following consultation with LBB, and based on the parameters and principles of the 2014 Permission, Brent Cross Main Square has been designed to accommodate events and performances and has been designed to allow customer movements across a number of levels. The

multi-layered space is also the nodal point of the covered 24-hour route, with routes from Tempelhof Circus, the Living Bridge, Fenwick Place and Layfield Place all converging on the Main Square.

#### Fenwick Place, Layfield Place and Tempelhof Circus Threshold Spaces

- 3.3.9 The design for these threshold spaces has changed and evolved following consultation with LBB (including the need to include counter-terrorism measures) and public consultation.
- 3.3.10 The design for Fenwick Place Threshold Space has changed to provide more seating than was originally proposed, the addition of a small informal play space, the removal of canopies to allow clearer views of the retail units (where previously a hotel had been proposed) and the removal of a proposed water feature. The overall space has been to reflect the themes and forms of the riverside park and to provide a seating area to the east of Fenwick.
- 3.3.11 Layfield Place Threshold Space design changes include making it feel more enclosed with the use of planters, and the addition of an incidental play area and more seating.
- 3.3.12 Design changes for Tempelhof Circus Threshold Space include reducing the length of graded route and extending the level areas outside the fire escapes, providing screening for the seating area on the terrace from the road, providing a stair link from the level outside M&S to the upper riverside walkway beneath Tempelhof Bridge, creation of a seating / viewing area at the southern end of the space to the west of M&S, and the addition of a lift between the upper and lower riverside walkways.
- 3.3.13 Following meetings with LBB, the proposals were developed to provide a small seating terrace beneath a small grove of trees enclosed by a formal hedge. The graded route between Tempelhof Road and the shopping centre was shortened to provide more direct access.

#### Fenwick Overclad and Walkway

- 3.3.14 Options which were considered for the walkway included a walkway across Fenwick's roof and a cantilevered or support walkway at first floor level. However, in order to provide direct access from the car park to the restaurants, a first floor walkway was incorporated from the car park around Fenwick to the proposed restaurant and leisure entry level at first floor level.

#### Western and Eastern Riverside Parks (including Nature Park)

- 3.3.15 The proposals for the Eastern and Western Riverside Parks (Reaches 1 and 3) were developed to coordinate with the proposals approved under the Phase 1A (North) RMA for the Central Riverside Park (Reach 2). During the design process, the low flow water channel flow rates for the realigned River Brent have been reviewed and as a result, there have been associated changes to the planting proposals along the length of the river.
- 3.3.16 A small wetland area is to be provided within the eastern roundabout as a shallow depression at the higher level in response to the need for earth ramparts to provide support to the roundabout. The wetland area was initially proposed at a lower level.

#### Sturgess Park

- 3.3.17 Initial proposals for Sturgess Park provided for a relocated 1-5 years' play space to the southern end of the park, a central seating area, an activity space for 5-12 year olds in the centre of the park and flexible space for a variety of activities, which were to be confirmed following public consultation at the northern end of the park. A new link from the southwest corner was also proposed to better connect the park to the south.

- 3.3.18 Following public consultation, table tennis and outdoor gym equipment have been added to the proposals. The hard standing for the activity area for older children at the northern end of the park has been reduced in area to allow for more green space within the park to be used for picnics. A set of informal goal posts has been provided in lieu of more formal provision for activities here. In addition, because of comments received from the public during the consultation, seating provision throughout the park has been increased and an additional length of fencing has been added to the northern boundary to make this more secure relative to the adjacent property.

## Development Plots

### Plot 101: Energy Centre, Bicycle Café and Showroom

- 3.3.19 A number of options were considered for Plot 101, including residential use. However, residential was not considered feasible or viable due to the reduction in the size of the site due to Phase 1A (North) infrastructure, access restrictions and limited opportunities for required parking. An Energy Centre, incorporating a bicycle café and showroom was considered an appropriate use for the plot and which would activate the Tempelhof Avenue frontage.
- 3.3.20 Following consultation with LBB and public consultation, a number of design changes were made, including the link from the upper riverside walkway in front of the building to the bottom of Tempelhof Bridge to provide a shallower grade, adding cycle stands and relocating the cycle parking from the undercroft area to the terrace in front and outside the building.

### Plot 102: Southern Department Store

- 3.3.21 The massing and uses of Plot 102 have evolved in line with retailer preferences, resulting in an overall reduction in massing in the final design for commercial reasons, compared with earlier design options.

### Plot 103: South Building (Transport Interchange / Replacement Bus Station)

- 3.3.22 Plot 103 was considered a good location for multi-storey car parking, as the location (in combination with the north, west and east car parks) would give an even distribution of parking around the Shopping Centre.
- 3.3.23 It was also decided to locate community use at the western end of Plot 103. This would activate a fire escape frontage and has the benefits of direct access from the Living Bridge and good access to the Bus Station, in addition to one level of car parking.

### Plot 104: East end of South Building

- 3.3.24 Initial development plans for Plot 104 included a hotel with associated retail at lower ground, upper ground and first floor level as well as a spiral ramp providing connection to the South Building (Bus Station) on Plot 103. However, for commercial reasons, the hotel option was removed from the development plans and this plot now comprises retail and leisure use and the spiral ramp.

### Plot 105: East Multi Storey Car Park

- 3.3.25 For the East Multi Storey Car Park, a range of options for the car park layout were considered. The most appropriate option for accessibility and safety reasons, was multi storey car parking on upper ground level and above, accessed and egressed from the perimeter road on the north east side of the car park. Parking was also included at lower ground level.

- 3.3.26 Following consultation with LBB, several design changes were made. These included a reduction in the number of cycle stands outside the car park entrance and amendments to planting proposals around northern and eastern entrances to the car park.

#### Plot 106: Central Retail Building

- 3.3.27 Large retail stores were considered appropriate for Plot 106. Initially a restaurant street and cinema at first floor level of the proposed building, spanning north / south and connecting to the existing shopping centre's food court, were considered. However, the structural limitations of the existing building and the need to provide lifts and escalators from the proposed retail use meant that further options were explored.
- 3.3.28 The food and beverage offer has expanded from John Lewis to the Main Square along 'The Park' and continuing along High Street North with 'The Market' and up to the interface with Fenwick.

#### Plot 107/108: Western Retail Building

- 3.3.29 Following a decision by John Lewis to remain in their existing building, the alignment of the shopping street on which the western retail building is located was changed. The concept for a leisure and entertainment district developed, and included the incorporation of a restaurant level in lieu of a retail mezzanine.

#### John Lewis

- 3.3.30 Options were considered in terms of the cladding for the proposed John Lewis store. In consultation with LBB, several options were considered for recladding of the building elevations. The illustrative option for the façade of the John Lewis building includes a grid of large square cladding panels, set at slightly varied angles and which includes feature lighting. The square gridding is also visible in the adjoining Western Multi Storey Car Park, generating a link between the two buildings.

#### Plot 110/111: Western Multi Storey Car Park

- 3.3.31 The initial option to use Plots 110/111 for a retail store was rejected, as it was considered a poor location for retail. Alternatively, it was decided to develop an efficient car park with good access and circulation. The community facility originally identified in this area on the illustrative phasing plan ("K35") was also relocated to a position adjacent to the Living Bridge and Bus Station which would provide good connections to a greater number of the community.
- 3.3.32 The vehicle entry, exit and ramp circulation was designed at the northern end of the plot, resulting in fewer vehicles circulating at the southern end of the plot and providing better and safer access for pedestrians to the western taxi rank, drop off and pick up bay.
- 3.3.33 Following consultation with LBB, proposed planting to the southern end of the car park was altered and redesigned to allow improved views from Layfield Place to the taxi rank, cycle stands were replaced by seating beneath the car park overhang and tree planting and climbing plants added to the spiral ramp threshold.
- 3.3.34 A number of design features have been incorporated into the design of the West Multi Storey Car Park including the inclusion of electric vehicle charging points.

#### Plot 113: Residential

- 3.3.35 Plot 113 has been considered for residential use, as the existing surrounding land use is residential. Five alternative site layouts and variations have been considered and discussed with LBB. Initially it was decided to retain the earth berm and trees on the west boundary of the Site to protect the

amenity of the existing bungalows in the adjacent Layfield Close. However, to increase the amount of actively useable space, several alternatives were considered, including removing part of the berm, removing all the berm and placing the access road on the east side with back to back gardens to Layfield Close.

- 3.3.36 Following consultation with LBB, it was decided to progress with the layout retaining the berm and the majority of trees, as this provided the optimum balance of amenity for existing and new residential properties. Consultation with LBB also resulted in revising the location of the refuse area at the southern end of the building so the refuse stores would adjoin the building rather than be freestanding, and a revision was also made to the car parking layout, to minimise impact on existing trees and to better accommodate service vehicles' access.

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## References

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i HMSO (2011); 'Statutory Instrument No. 1824 - Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011'.

ii HMSO (2015), The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (S.I. 660) HMSO, London.

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