

THAMESLINK 2000

Proof of Evidence on London Bridge Masterplan

By
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NR/4/A1

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Transport and Works Act 1992

Railtrack (Thameslink 2000) Order 1997
Railtrack (Thameslink 2000) (Variation) Order 1999

1. Inquiry into applications by Network Rail for the Thameslink 2000 railway project sites at:

11-15 Borough High Street, London SE1
2-4 Bedale Street, London SE1
7 Stoney Street, London SE1
16-26 Borough High Street and 7 Bedale Street, London SE1
Blackfriars Railway Bridge, London EC4
Blackfriars Station North, London EC4
Blackfriars Railway Bridge, London SE1 (includes proposed south bank station entrance)

2. Re-opened inquiry into applications made by Railtrack plc for orders under the Transport and Works Act 1992 and associated applications.

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I.0 INTRODUCTION

- I.1 I am Christopher Paul Bennie BSc., DA, RIBA, an architect with twenty-five years post-qualification experience since graduating with a degree and diploma in architecture from Edinburgh University in 1980. I joined TP Bennett – one of the UK’s older, and larger, architectural and town planning consultancies – that year and have been a Partner since 1987.
- I.2 My principal areas of work and experience are in the commercial, retail, residential and transportation sectors, ranging from government ministerial headquarters buildings through mixed use developments for large private sector development companies to work such as London Bridge Station. I have been (or am currently) engaged in feasibility studies at several other main line stations involving major remodelling/redevelopment and air rights development. I was a speaker on air rights development at the British Council for Offices’ annual conference in Paris earlier this year.
- I.3 The role of my practice and myself regarding the Thameslink 2000 project was as architect and lead consultant for what has become known as the ‘Masterplan’ scheme for the comprehensive redevelopment of London Bridge Station. This began first as a feasibility study in the autumn of 1998 culminating in a masterplanning report with options and recommendations in early 1999. This was followed by design development of a single option chosen by Railtrack that became known simply as ‘Masterplan’, in order to distinguish it from the then Thameslink 2000 scheme for London Bridge Station by Terry Farrell and Partners.

2.0 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

2.1 The principal purpose of my evidence is to introduce to the inquiry the Masterplan Scheme for the comprehensive redevelopment of London Bridge Station which was granted planning permission, listed building consent and conservation area consent on the 30 September 2003. Network Rail proposes that the Masterplan scheme should be substituted for the Terry Farrell designs for the station which were presented at the first inquiry.

2.2 In addressing the merits of Masterplan, I also deal with matter 8a) of the Secretaries of State's Statement of Matters [CD/176] 6 January 2005, namely:

“Whether the Masterplan scheme overcomes the deficiencies previously identified by the inspector following the earlier inquiry, such as would justify giving the statutory powers sought in the TWA order to enable the scheme to be implemented;...”

3.0 BACKGROUND TO MASTERPLAN DESIGN

3.1 Commission of the Masterplan Feasibility Study [CD/256]

3.1.1 TP Bennett were awarded the commission to produce a 'Masterplan Feasibility Study' for the redevelopment of London Bridge Station in the Autumn of 1998, having been selected in competition from a shortlist of several architectural practices. I was the partner at TP Bennett responsible for both the bid and the undertaking of the commission, whereby we were appointed as lead consultant of a multi-disciplinary team of our own choosing. Cost consultancy and agency advice were directly commissioned appointments by Railtrack, but as integrated members of the multi-disciplinary team.

3.2 The brief

3.2.1 The first phase of the work was to produce a feasibility study in the form of a Masterplan for the whole of the station site and the immediate surrounding area. Our brief was wide-ranging but in essence comprised:

- a. how best to integrate the proposed Thameslink 2000 modifications to the permanent way at London Bridge Station;
- b. to examine peak period overcrowding and congestion issues, and suggest passenger capacity and circulation solutions, taking account of given passenger growth projections;
- c. to explore the opportunities for maximising the commercial property return from the site when addressing the above;
- d. to consider how passenger experience could be enhanced through improved circulation, concourse design and retail offer;

- e. to consider how the station might better relate to the surrounding area and contribute to its regeneration;
- f. to deliver a building worthy of a major railway station serving the “world city” of London.

3.3 Variance with Thameslink 2000 architectural brief

3.3.1 The TP Bennett brief was fundamentally different from that given to Terry Farrell and Partners, which resulted in the proposals put before the first inquiry. In essence Farrell’s architectural brief was concerned with how to integrate with the minimum of change the Thameslink 2000 permanent way modifications in a redesign of the station, addressing all resultant issues. Masterplan involves a comprehensive redevelopment of the station, addressing the wider, long-standing issues of circulation and congestion and the relationship to the streets beyond.

3.4 Masterplan Schemes 1, 2, 3

3.4.1 During the analytical phase of our feasibility study it became apparent to us that we should produce three masterplanning options, each reflecting a different degree of intervention in the fabric and operation of the station.

3.4.2 Our method was first to determine the least intervention that could be made at the station with tangible resultant benefit, (Scheme 1). Scheme 1 was inevitably in the mould of the ‘make and mend’ approach, (or “piecemeal” approach as described by the Inspector in 6.3.41 of his Report [CD/199]) that has characterised the organic growth of the station throughout the last 150 years, and formed the ‘base case’ solution.

3.4.3 Second, to determine what was the most intervention with greatest resultant benefit (Scheme 3). Scheme 3 was a comprehensive

redevelopment of the entire station site that could deliver significant benefits but it was concluded that its construction would most probably close the station and tracks for several years. An alternative phased approach to Scheme 3 would have taken even longer.

- 3.4.4 The third, or middle option, (Scheme 2), sought to derive as many benefits as possible from the redevelopment scheme while allowing the works to take place in a manner that sought to maintain the existing number of train paths throughout their duration.

3.5 Masterplan Feasibility Study Report [CD/256]

- 3.5.1 We delivered our draft report in March 1999 and our final report in April that year to a Steering Group that had representatives from the Thameslink 2000, Major Stations and Property divisions of Railtrack.

3.6 Thameslink track layouts

- 3.6.1 During the currency of our feasibility study the Thameslink track layouts continued to evolve. These start with the additional passing loop track in the Autumn of 1998, progress to the adoption of two additional through platforms (7 and 8) in January 1999 and then culminate in the 'Line 9' scheme of February 1999 which included an additional single sided platform 7 alongside what had been the passing loop, together with a pair of new platforms 8 and 9. This was adopted as the preferred Thameslink 2000 scheme and was the layout within the proposals put before the TWA Inquiry.

3.7 Masterplan Scheme 2 and 3 track layout

3.7.1 We continued to look at track development with the Thameslink 2000 team and the 'northern boundary single platform' design emerged. We saw this as potentially the best arrangement of all for a Masterplan Scheme 2 or 3 approach, whereby all tracks and platforms could be optimised and the through and busiest platforms could be widened and overall moved further south to reduce their curvature. In our Masterplan Feasibility Report [CD/256] we used the 'Line 9' solution, (as Thameslink 2000) for our 'base case' Scheme 1 and the 'northern boundary single platform' for Schemes 2 and 3.

3.8 Conclusions of feasibility study report

- 3.8.1 In summary we concluded that:
- a. London Bridge Station is very congested in peak hours;
 - b. the station is inefficient in layout;
 - c. the Thameslink 2000 track works will cause considerable disruption which might permit other substantial redevelopment works to take place simultaneously;
 - d. the last major station alteration lasted 20 years. The Thameslink 2000 station caters for 15 year passenger growth projections. Masterplan Schemes 2 or 3 offer optimum train and passenger capacity within the overall width of station, future-proofing it far beyond 2020, and can incorporate the optimum Thameslink 2000 track layout;
 - e. the Thameslink 2000 London Bridge scheme before the first inquiry, if implemented, would effectively fix all tracks and platforms in place, thereby preventing future adoption of Masterplan Schemes 2 or 3 without massive disruption;
 - f. Masterplan Schemes 2 or 3 would resolve all passenger circulation and environmental issues arising in and around the station;

- g. Masterplan Schemes 2 or 3 could be phased in such a way to keep a similar number of tracks in operation throughout construction, (although in the case of Scheme 3 its comprehensive nature would probably dictate that a total closure of the station for several years would be preferable to an even longer alternative phased approach).

3.9 Recommendation of Masterplan Feasibility Study report

- 3.9.1 We recommended to Railtrack that Masterplan Scheme 2 was likely to produce the optimum redevelopment scheme for London Bridge taking into account all relevant factors, including the desirability of keeping the station operational during the construction period.

3.10 Instruction to proceed

- 3.10.1 Railtrack formally instructed us in the late Autumn of 1999 to proceed with the design development of Masterplan Scheme 2, so as to obtain a detailed planning consent by the end of 2000. Whilst this was undoubtedly a challenging programme, we considered that it could be achieved, if the support and endorsement of LB Southwark, English Heritage, and CABE was obtained early in the process.
- 3.10.2 Masterplan Scheme 2 thus became the starting point for the Masterplan scheme that subsequently received detailed planning, listed building and conservation area consent from LB Southwark on 30th September 2003.

4.0 THE MASTERPLAN DESIGN

4.1 History of the station

- 4.1.1 An understanding of the historical development of London Bridge Station and its built legacy explains the operational shortcomings of the station today and is the key to considering its future. A brief history of the development of the station from 1836 to the present day is contained within the design statement dated June 2000 [CD/180] that accompanied the revised Masterplan planning application.
- 4.1.2 The phasing diagrams and their descriptions on page 12 of that document show how the station developed over its 169 years, in eight key phases from 1836 to the present.
- 4.1.3 This history and its legacy is summarised in the following extract from the Executive Summary of the Masterplan feasibility report: [CD/256 page 9, The Historical Perspective.]

“London Bridge is the oldest of all the London stations and structurally the most complex.

The station has grown organically over the past 150 years, as it responded to each successive wave of change imposed upon it. Throughout the 1830s and 1840's it expanded rapidly as a terminus station with each new set of tracks simply positioned alongside to the north or south of the existing. The station, and all of the lines coming into it are effectively a viaduct, set about 30 feet above street level. Although apparently a brick monolith, it is in fact an accretion of different brick structures of differing ages standing shoulder to shoulder, and originally in different ownerships.

At one time there were four operating companies operating their own tracks into the station and in the 1850's, this resulted in two separate terminus stations, with a large dividing wall down the middle (part of which forms some of the north wall of what was later to become the Listed train shed)

The complexities of ownership and operation meant that no overview was ever taken on the form of the station. Twenty years of rapid

development meant that structures and buildings were successively built and demolished during this period, to satisfy commercial need and profit. An impressive Italianate palazzo style station building was built in 1851, to be first cut in half and then fully demolished within a few years.

The 1850's saw the beginning of the transition from terminus to through station as hugely profitable connecting lines were made to Waterloo and Charing Cross. This resulted not only in the viaduct across Borough High Street sweeping close to Southwark Cathedral, but in the demolition of both the Italianate station building and most of old St Thomas Hospital.

Thereafter the station development muddled along until the bombs in World War II resulted in the last station overhaul in the early 1970's, which was a "make 'n' mend" measure that did not address the underlying circulation/interchange difficulties that have reached a critical state today.

Unlike Paddington or St Pancras, London Bridge Station was never complete in itself; never the set-piece resulting from a grand plan. In short, it has never yet had a golden age. The specific elements referred to in the listing citation – train shed, south wall and Joiner Street trusses – are otherwise transitory fragments left in part from previous stations that in themselves were only a part of the overall, spared simply because they did not compromise commercial or operational need. The most complete history of the station is not in the superstructure per se, but evident in the brick railway arches."

- 4.1.4 The complexity in plan form and section of the existing structure and in particular, the different levels of the terminus and through tracks make it very difficult and very expensive to bring new structures down through this fabric. It is especially difficult to create linking passageways through the station at intermediate levels as the viaduct arches do not align. It is for this reason that the cramped and overcrowded access tunnels serving the through platforms, and the overbridge have not been rationalised and remedied in the station today. Masterplan addresses these structural impediments to rationalisation and improvement by cutting out an entire swathe of viaduct arches between track and street level to create a new concourse and circulation hub for the station.

4.2 The ability to integrate Masterplan with Thameslink 2000

4.2.1 I have described in Section 3 of this proof the adoption of Masterplan Scheme 2 from the feasibility report as the basis for the Masterplan scheme and the liaison on track layouts that had taken place with the Thameslink 2000 team and which had informed the design of the scheme.

4.2.2 The instruction from Railtrack to proceed with the design development of Masterplan and to endeavour to obtain planning consent prior to the end of 2000, was linked to the progress of the Thameslink 2000 scheme and the TWA inquiry.

4.2.3 To achieve this end it was imperative that the Masterplan scheme could sit within the limits of deviation defined in the Thameslink 2000 scheme and that it included a track layout that could deliver the railway operational requirements for Thameslink 2000 at London Bridge.

4.2.4 Appendix I [NR/4/B] contains a plan showing the Masterplan planning application boundary and the Thameslink 2000 limits of deviation. It can be seen that the planning application boundary extends beyond the limits of deviation in two places: at Station Approach/Duke Hill Street and adjacent to the Shipwright Arms in Bermondsey Street.

4.2.5 The small area of land outside the limits of deviation at Station Approach/Duke Hill Street is highway land. Masterplan requires that minor highway alterations be carried out at this point to facilitate access to the station by buses. The highway works are the subject of a S.106 agreement [CD/181] with LB Southwark. It is expected that LB Southwark will exercise its powers to allow the carrying out of the necessary works in due course.

- 4.2.6 The small area of land in Bermondsey Street is in Network Rail's freehold ownership and is the site of electricity sub-stations which are to be relocated in nearby railway arches. Under the Masterplan planning permission, the land will be used for landscaping and a sitting out area, and also as a taxi rank feeder facility.
- 4.2.7 Works in both areas are, accordingly, governed by the Masterplan planning permission. Neither constitutes an impediment to the construction of Thameslink 2000 in accordance with the TWA Orders.
- 4.2.8 Appendix 2 [NR/4/B] contains the through track layout agreed between the Masterplan and Thameslink 2000 teams on 29th October 1999 and which forms the basis for the Masterplan design development. This was a development of the north boundary single track design first seen in April that year.
- 4.2.9 Following the completion of the Masterplan design and the local planning authority's recommendation for approval in December 2000, the Thameslink 2000 team further progressed the track design, adjusting the terminus platform layout to accommodate optimal track provision in terms of crossovers. A drawing overlaying this with the Masterplan layout, demonstrating that it fitted the Thameslink 2000 TWA track layout and that all divergences were within railway land is contained within Appendix 3[NR/4/B].

4.3 The Masterplan logic

- 4.3.1 The key Masterplan Planning Application plans and perspective views as provided to the Members of LB Southwark's Planning Committee in November and December 2000 are contained within Appendix 4 [NR/4/B].

The logic behind the Masterplan design is best described by reference to those drawings and the key points listed below:-

- 4.3.2 In Masterplan all of the tracks and platforms have been repositioned to provide optimum widths and locations using the entirety of the site at track level within the physical constraints of Tooley Street to the north and St. Thomas Street to the south, utilising the car park and station office facility that lie to the south of the terminus platforms. (Appendix 4.8 [NR/4/B])
- 4.3.3 The optimisation of platforms widths enables the busiest to be wider than they are at present, which allows escalator, stair and lift access to them.
- 4.3.4 Once all of the through platforms are capable of receiving escalators, stairs and lifts then they can be served directly from below, allowing a new concourse at 90 degrees to tracks and platforms to be located at street level.
- 4.3.5 The concourse has major 4-storey high glazed facades at both entrances in Tooley Street (Appendix 4.1 [NR/4/B]) and St Thomas Street (Appendix 4.2 [NR/4/B]). The logic of the station's circulation and operation is thereby made clearly visible to passengers from the moment of their arrival.
- 4.3.6 The concourse, by making a major surgical cut through the arches below the tracks, forms a significant break in the physical barrier to regeneration that the railway has represented until now, allowing the area to the south of the station to be directly and visibly linked to the more prosperous area to the works adjacent to the river.
- 4.3.7 This major intervention in the existing structure of the station can be achieved whilst allowing the railway to continue to operate; and a key element of the Masterplan logic is to enable, through careful phasing of the works, the entire station remodelling to occur whilst maintaining the current level of train service capacity.

4.4 Description of the Masterplan design

- 4.4.1 London Bridge Station is, at present, a highly complex, multi-level and illegible transport interchange which generates confusion and congestion. Routes are labyrinthine and unclear, and spaces are inadequate, to accommodate the volume of passengers currently using the station, still less the flows anticipated in the future. An example of the problems encountered is demonstrated by the present need to operate a one-way system in the morning peak whereby egress only is permitted via the tunnels from the through platforms. Access to these platforms is diverted via the overbridge from platform 8.
- 4.4.2 The Masterplan design, by introducing the north/south concourse at street level with an interchange concourse above, simplifies the circulation routes and the relationships between access and egress, arrival and departure and the station and its hinterland, so that its physical components are readily comprehended, and its functionality is simply understood.
- 4.4.3 The two distinct station elements of through station and terminus are retained, but they are clearly and visibly linked by the office building deck, which extends over all of the platforms and gives clear definition to the exit points from each (Appendix 4.9 [NR/4/B]). They are linked by the interchange concourse (perspective view Appendix 4.6 and plan Appendix 4.5 [NR/4/B]), which gives direct access to all platforms by escalator and provides a clearly defined and highly legible route for the large number of passengers who change trains at London Bridge.
- 4.4.4 Masterplan creates three clearly defined entrances to the station (plan Appendix 4.3 [NR/4/B]). At street level in Tooley Street, the main new entrance to the station serves the huge northern catchment area for pedestrians and the new enlarged taxi facility (perspective view Appendix 4.1 [NR/4/B]). In St Thomas Street a smaller but no less dramatic entrance serves the growing southern catchment area, including Guy's Hospital and

provides the main vehicle drop off for the station (perspective view Appendix 4.2 [NR/4/B]). The third entrance is from the new public space, the piazza, a landscaped area formed where the station concourse currently exists that will be located between the improved and extended bus station and the western end of the terminus tracks. The piazza also provides the setting for the main entrances to Southwark Towers (or its consented replacement, London Bridge Tower), and the new air rights office building over the station, that forms part of the Masterplan proposals (plan Appendix 4.7 [NR/4/B]).

4.4.5 The new main station concourse running north to south and linking Tooley Street to St Thomas Street is around 50m wide, 10m high and 150m long. It provides both the space and the environment appropriate to the public realm of a station for the 21st century. It is flanked on either side by retail facilities and contains in the centre the revenue protection barriers and the two main banks of escalators that take passengers up to the interchange concourse and platforms above. Passengers can clearly see their route to the trains from the point that they enter the station (perspective view Appendix 4.1 [NR/4/B]).

4.4.6 The size and layout of the main concourse, interchange deck and all the other areas of the station have been determined by pedestrian flow analysis to ensure that they accommodate both the potential future growth in passenger numbers, with provision for perturbation.

4.4.7 Ticketing, information and main waiting areas are located half way along the station concourse, at the point where the original vaulted 19th century western arcade joins it. Built as a retail market hall in 1837, only half the western arcade is in public use at present as the link between the existing overground and underground station, having been reopened upon completion of the Jubilee Line Extension (JLE). The other half of this arcade currently lies buried within the station vaults and will be reopened

and restored as part of the Masterplan proposals. It is the primary connection in the new station to the London Underground network, which lies on the pedestrianised Joiner Street at the northern end of the arcade. This same route also provides a key connection to Guy's Hospital at the southern end of Joiner Street (Appendix 4.3[NR/4/B]).

4.4.8 In addition to providing a new clear legible transport interchange, appropriate in scale and form to a major station in London, one of the world's great cities, Masterplan provides a commercial hub comprising some 180,000 sq ft of retail space and 750,000 sq ft of office space. This commercial content will help to underpin the station's role as a focus for regeneration in Southwark and is incorporated in the design in such a way as not to impede the operation of the station or impinge upon the townscape of the area.

4.4.9 The retail space makes an important contribution to the project in providing both essential support for travellers, and a much needed retail balance for this rapidly growing area, which has almost doubled its commercial office floor space in the last five years and shows no sign of slowing down, following the consent for the London Bridge Tower. The proposal to incorporate a supermarket outlet at the south end of the concourse is intended to ensure that the retail mix will also benefit the local resident community as well as the commercial community (Appendix 4.3[NR/4/B]).

4.4.10 The quantity of retail and the attractive environment in which it is to be provided, enables it to become more of a destination in its own right, appealing to passengers, tourists and the local community. It adds to the retail offer available at Hay's Galleria, (opposite on Tooley Street), Borough High Street and Borough Market, helping to strengthen the whole area as a tourist and shopping destination.

- 4.4.11 The 10 and 11 storey office building over the station generates the type of space not commonly available in the city core, providing large floor plates of up to 65,000 sq ft. It was the lack of such space in the city that, in part, led to the development of Canary Wharf. These large floor plates are also capable of subdivision into smaller units to give the maximum flexibility for letting purposes.
- 4.4.12 The office building, despite its size, would remain relatively invisible from the streets surrounding the station. Seen in long strategic views in the context of Guy's Hospital, Southwark Towers, and New London Bridge House the predominantly horizontal form of the office development would not materially intrude. Where it would be visible, the sculpted double skin facades, with their integrated multi-coloured louvres, tracking the path of the sun, together with the inset terraces and enclosed balconies, would give the building a lively responsive appearance. The architecture is innovative and distinctive and in its use of materials and technology is clearly contemporary.
- 4.4.13 The office entrance in the newly created public space in Tooley Street is of particular importance. It sits at one end of the diagonal vista created through the 'More London' development which has at its opposite end the GLA building and provides an important visual focus within the townscape. It provides a fully integrated expression of art and architecture by incorporating into its form a 6 storey high stone monolith, conceived as a canvas for an artist/sculptor/poet and providing a solid counterpoint to the sleek glass enclosure of the office entrance lobby and the intersecting, glass sky tunnel that links it to the office building.

5.0 THE BENEFITS OF MASTERPLAN

5.1 The benefits of Masterplan are to the railway system as part of the Thameslink 2000 project; to London Bridge Station as a transport interchange; and to the local community as a regeneration hub for North Southwark meeting the needs of local businesses and local residential neighbourhoods in providing retail facilities and an improved urban environment. In summary Masterplan provides:

- a. A fully integrated transport interchange;
- b. A world class, 21st century station environment;
- c. Straighter, wider, safer platforms;
- d. Accommodation for the Thameslink 2000 service;
- e. Flexibility of station management;
- f. Proper gating and revenue protection;
- g. Disability Discrimination Act 1995 compliance;
- h. Future-proofed station capacity beyond 2020;
- i. High quality and appropriately located commercial development;
- j. Urban improvement and regeneration.

5.2 In short, Masterplan, by design and by the radical introduction of the north south main concourse and interchange concourse, addresses the shortcomings and problems of the present station layout, avoids a piecemeal solution to those problems and accommodates the Thameslink 2000 train service and provides the necessary accommodation for passengers and visitors to the station now and in the future, in an attractive and welcoming environment.

6.0 RESPONSE TO MATTER 8a) CONTAINED IN THE STATEMENT OF MATTERS DATED 6 JANUARY 2005.

“Matter 8: In regard to Network Rail’s preferred new design of London Bridge Station (known as ‘Masterplan’), for which Southwark Council granted planning permission in 2003:-

- a. whether the Masterplan scheme overcomes the deficiencies previously identified by the Inspector following the earlier Inquiry, such as would justify giving the statutory powers sought in the TWA Order to enable that scheme to be implemented;”

6.1 Response to Matter 8a)

6.1.1 In relation to Matter 8a), the deficiencies in the design for London Bridge Station identified by the Inspector are noted in the Summary of Conclusions within his report on the Thameslink 2000 inquiry [CD/199]. Paragraph 1.30 states:

“However, in the case of the proposals for London Bridge Station there are serious shortcomings which have led me to be unable to recommend either compulsory purchase of some necessary land, or the approval of the request for deemed planning permission. The deficiencies are considered in detail in Chapters 6 and 35 of this report, and are as follows:

- Design of the concourse and canopies which are inappropriate to a major station in a capital city of world city status;
- Procedural deficiencies in the consultation on designs considered by the inquiry;
- Omission of the design of the concourse and canopies from the Environmental Statement, which could lead to the quashing of planning permission;
- Reasons for compulsory acquisition which are not compelling in the public interest.”

6.1.2 Of these four points the latter three are essentially procedural, whereas the first is fundamental. A station concourse is not peripheral to the design of a major station – it is the heart of the station itself and its quality and design defines the passenger experience. Just as major international airports are the gateway to a country, so is a major station to its capital city. In the context of the ‘world city’ of London they are both required to be world-class facilities. This was also the stated measure that CABE, English Heritage and LB Southwark thought appropriate to apply in the consideration of the Masterplan proposals, during the planning approvals process.

6.1.3 The Inspector went on to acknowledge in paragraph I.33 [CD/I99]:

“The Masterplan is an alternative to the Thameslink 2000 proposals for London Bridge which I understand to have none of the objections which I set out above. It has been approved by the local planning authority; and is compatible with the Thameslink 2000 proposals for trackwork. In the event that Railtrack are able to proceed with the Masterplan, the Secretary of State should seek their advice on which parts of the Order then become unnecessary, and the remainder should be confirmed, together with approval of the appropriate parts of the request for deemed planning permission, subject again to the other relatively minor matters on which change is recommended.”

6.1.4 I set out in Section 3.0 above how the remit and brief for the Masterplan solution at London Bridge Station had been quite different to that given to Terry Farrell and Partners for the solution put before the first Inquiry. Inevitably, this has resulted in two radically different schemes, but the scale and ambition of Masterplan is greater.

6.1.5 It is both easier and quicker to list the similarities between the schemes than it is to exhaustively list the differences. In essence they both deliver the same number of train paths, and have the same distribution of 9 through and 6 terminus tracks, but Masterplan has longer, straighter platforms allowing for an additional number of longer trains. Here the similarity ends.

- 6.1.6 As far as the station is concerned, (as opposed to the permanent way improvement), the Farrell scheme represented a continuation of the 'make and mend' approach to London Bridge Station, where the design had a narrow focus based upon a narrow remit. This meant that post-implementation the Station would still have been compromised in its overall design, requiring further extensive retrofitted passenger circulation and capacity enhancements, to cater for passenger growth projections. The Masterplan brief allowed us to identify and address all the problems at London Bridge Station in a comprehensive manner and in terms of a design development brief which required the designer to create a world-class station fit for the 21st century.
- 6.1.7 Masterplan re-examined the design of the station from first principles, involving a complete re-think of passenger circulation from platform to street and resulting in the much larger new concourse running north south, down at street level. As a result, everything that can currently be seen at existing concourse level is removed, including several acres of train shed and the entire concourse itself, allowing for the optimal repositioning of every track-bed and platform.
- 6.1.8 I have noted above that it was part of Railtrack's brief to us for the design development of Masterplan to create a world-class facility at London Bridge Station, and I have also noted that English Heritage, CABE and LB Southwark sought to apply this measure. TP Bennett were given by Railtrack a twelve month period, in which to develop the Masterplan scheme from feasibility to planning consent. In order to achieve a world class design in the timescale, we welcomed Railtrack's suggestion in the early Spring of 2000 that we should strengthen the team further with the appointment of a highly-regarded architect to audit our design and work with us to further refine it. We mutually agreed to the appointment of Chris Wilkinson of Wilkinson Eyre, who had designed the much-praised new station at Stratford, East London, and whose practice has since gone

on to win twice the Stirling Prize for Architecture, the top award in the UK. After a period of audit they fully endorsed and supported our approach and worked alongside us in the more detailed development of the design and in particular, the refinement of the concourse structure and the honing of the form and massing of the office building over the station.

6.1.9 Our proposals for the new station at London Bridge required the entirety of the Grade II Listed train shed and wall to be demolished. We were fully aware of the importance of this aspect of the proposals and the test of PPG15 [CD/7]. This test was expressed succinctly in 4.3.6 of the LB Southwark Officer's Report to Development Control Committee, dated 6 November 2000[CD/257].

“4.3: Planning Policy Guidance 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment: This guidance has particular weight when considering this application. The guidance recognises that the historic environment cannot in practise remain unchanged, however it states that:

‘There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings, except where a convincing case can be made out, against the criteria set out (in the guidance), for alteration or demolition’.

There are two particular criteria set out in this guidance against which the demolition of the listed train shed and listed wall should be judged. These are the importance of the building and its architectural merit and the extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community, in particular by contributing to the economic regeneration of the area or the enhancement of the environment.

As for proposals within conservation areas, the guidance notes state that in exercising their powers, local planning authorities are required to pay particular attention to the need to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. In addition there is a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings which are considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area. Consent for demolition within conservation areas can be given if there is an acceptable replacement development.”

6.1.10 In the consultations section of the same report [CD/257] it was noted that English Heritage's comments are reported as "taking the scheme as a whole it does not formally object. It accepts that the redevelopment of the station and the retention of the listed train shed are incompatible." and that "the scheme is an exceptional circumstance, primarily due to the economic and regenerative benefits that the local community will receive". English Heritage were satisfied that the substantial benefits that Thameslink 2000 would bring to London and the South East outweighed the presumption in favour of retaining the Grade II Listed train shed.

6.1.11 The minutes [CD/257] of the LB Southwark Development Control Committee held on 6 November 2000 stated:

"This Committee welcomes the principle of the scheme and in particular the significant improvements to the railway station, transport interchange facilities and pedestrian circulation in and around the station that the scheme offers. The Committee also agrees in principle to the proposed office development above the station.

That the applicants reconsider the design of the office entrance pavilion in Tooley Street to secure a design that relates more satisfactorily to this part of the conservation area and the adjoining listed building."

6.1.12 The LB Southwark Development Control Committee met on 13 December 2000 to consider the matters above and made a positive recommendation to grant approval subject to a Section 106 Agreement. Of the office entrance pavilion re-design, it was noted in paragraph 4.4.5 of the Officer's Report [CD/258]:

"Overall, the revised design is considered an exciting and imaginative approach to what is essentially an office entrance building. The quality and architectural merit of the design is considered to justify the loss of the former South Eastern Railway Offices. It is considered that the new (sic) will make an equal, although admittedly different contribution to the character and appearance of the Tooley Street Conservation Area."

6.1.13 Transport for London commissioned Colin Buchanan and Partners, to produce an objective study of London Bridge Station, culminating in a Final Report dated May 2003[CD/251], comparing the existing station with the Thameslink 2000 proposals and Masterplan. It found overwhelmingly in favour of Masterplan with respect to passenger circulation and capacity, which are created by the concourse and platform design, as evidenced in the following extract:

“3.4 Preferred design

3.4.1 In terms of the issues discussed in this Chapter, the Masterplan scheme appears to offer the most benefits. As well as improved capacity, resilience to service disruption and superior access to platforms (particularly in terms of DDA compliance), other advantages of the Masterplan include:

- Platform layout: the wider, straighter platforms in Masterplan provide better waiting areas for train services with more capacity.
- Train dwell times: The improved sightlines along the straighter platforms provided in the Masterplan scheme means potential delays on train dwell times will be reduced. Hence, fewer costs will be incurred by train companies missing pathways and an improved service will be offered to passengers.
- Management of station accesses: a complaint of the existing station is that the multitude of small entrances makes managing access to the station difficult. This problem is not resolved in Thameslink 2000 as accesses remain as existing. However, in Masterplan a smaller number of more obvious, larger entrances are provided.

3.4.2 A summary of the differences of each scheme, in respect of the rail capacity issues discussed in this Chapter, is contained in Table 3.4.”

6.1.14 By reference to all of the above I consider that the deficiencies identified by the Inspector and referred to in Matter 8a) of the Statement of Matters are fully addressed by the Masterplan design. The piecemeal solution to the

redevelopment of London Bridge put forward at the first inquiry is replaced by Masterplan, a proposal which does away with the existing split level station and introduces a unified concourse and legible access to platforms and facilities within the station. Its overall design is, I believe, fitting for a major station, serving the 'world city' of London.

7.0 RELATIONSHIP OF MASTERPLAN WITH TEIGHMORE SITE

7.1 Relationship Of Masterplan With Existing Southwark Towers

7.1.1 Masterplan was designed in the context of the existing building known as Southwark Towers, currently occupied by PricewaterhouseCoopers, and is compatible with its remaining in situ.

7.1.2 The main entrance to that building is currently at station concourse level, which becomes piazza level in Masterplan. The escape stair, at the end of the east wing of Southwark Towers currently discharges into the station concourse as it is located within that space. In Masterplan, this stair will be located within the piazza and the retail units that undersailed Southwark Towers, within the station concourse, are now reconfigured as new retail units facing the piazza. [Appendix 4.7 NR/4/B]

7.1.3 Checks were carried out during the design development of Masterplan with regard to rights of light to Southwark Towers, in the context of the proposed air-rights office building, and were found to be satisfactory. Gordon Ingram and Associates, a leading firm of rights of light surveyors, carried out the initial developable envelope assessment which the new office building was designed to fit within.

7.2 Relationship of Masterplan with the London Bridge Tower (Shard of Glass) Scheme.

7.2.1 In the course of the design of Masterplan during 2000, we were in liaison with Broadway Malyan, the architects initially appointed by Teighmore to consider the redevelopment of Southwark Towers, and later on with the Renzo Piano Building Workshop, who succeeded them in that commission.

- 7.2.2 This liaison was instigated by Railtrack in order to safeguard Masterplan, while the embryonic proposals for the replacement Tower were taking shape. The design of Masterplan was well-developed before the 'Shard' design emerged. Indeed, the chosen context for the Shard, for the purposes of their planning application, was Masterplan (despite the fact that it might not be built). When Railtrack received a copy of the Teighmore planning application, we were asked to produce overlays to check that it was in general compliance with Masterplan, (which it was) and to highlight those areas that might need to be modified in future negotiations. (Appendix 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 5.4 [NR/4/B])
- 7.2.3 This choice of context can be explained by the fact that it was seen as more favourable for the Shard than the existing station would be. In Masterplan the Shard could address the large new landscaped piazza, from which our air-rights office building is also accessed, rather than the existing station concourse. However, prior to the public inquiry for the Teighmore scheme they amended their context to that of a re-modelled station concourse, that would be secured by S106 Agreement, aware of the need for a contingency plan should Masterplan not happen.
- 7.2.4 It should be noted that the remodelled station concourse, secured by S106 as part of the Shard proposals approved by the Planning Inspector, is in itself another superficial makeover. It has no remit to address the big issues of platform access, passenger capacity and circulation.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The problems of overcrowding, congestion and poor circulation in peak hours at London Bridge Station are a matter of common experience. The cause of these problems can be traced to the piecemeal development of the station over the last 169 years in the pursuit of accommodating growth in passenger numbers.
- 8.2 The implementation of Thameslink 2000 requires these problems to be addressed both in terms of the present day and planned future growth in capacity. The project involves major alterations to the track layout in and adjacent to the station to facilitate the introduction of new and improved through train services.
- 8.3 The partial solution to the accommodation deficiencies at London Bridge presented to the first inquiry did not find favour with the inspector. He considered it was not good design and that the station as a whole would remain mediocre. He considered that the station as it stood and as proposed for partial refurbishment in the Terry Farrell designs was unworthy of a principal interchange in one of the world's great cities.
- 8.4 Masterplan was in the process of development at the time of the first inquiry. The general preference for it as a scheme for the redevelopment of London Bridge Station was, nevertheless, recognised.
- 8.5 Masterplan now has the benefit of planning permission, listed building consent and conservation area consent. For the reasons set out in this proof I commend the scheme to the Secretary of State as an appropriate redevelopment scheme for London Bridge Station in the Thameslink 2000 project.