



Atkins Appointed to Design Oxford Railway Station Concept Masterplan

Atkins, a member of the SNC-Lavalin Group, has been appointed to produce a concept masterplan for the expansion of Oxford train station and the surrounding sites. Commissioned by Oxford City Council, Network Rail, County Council and the Oxford Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), the masterplan is a vital step in the project, and aims to raise the quality of urban design and become a catalyst in the redevelopment of Oxford's West End as well as delivering the station's capacity increase for the East-West Rail (EWR) scheme.

The masterplan will support Oxford City Council's vision for the West End to become an extension of the city centre, with major development around the station, along Oxpens Road and Osney Mead Industrial Estate. Together, these developments will transform the West End into an innovation district; a critical project within the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy which was recently published by the OxLEP and central government.

Atkins – supported by PRD and Faithful+Gould – will take a holistic approach to the redevelopment of the station area, which comprises a multi-modal transport interchange with rail service enhancements; capacity upgrades including an improved station forecourt and commercial area; and better connectivity to Beckett Street and other key developments in the city centre. The work coincides with an investment in track and other capacity factors to deliver the nationally significant East-West Rail timetable requirements.

Ali Mowahed, Stations and Transport-Oriented Development Director at Atkins, said: "This commission is an opportunity to reimagine the gateway to one of the UK's fastest growing cities; supporting the region's growth by improving rail capacity and exploring how the surrounding region can be transformed into a world-leading hub for businesses, research and development, and laboratories.

"We're excited to get started, working closely with the Oxford City Council, Network Rail and OxLEP to deliver an ambitious station redesign and urban regeneration proposal for the city and its residents."

Priorities for the new masterplan are:

- Improved rail infrastructure and services to meet growth in demand and deliver support for the introduction of EWR and other key services
- Create an iconic and welcoming gateway to support Oxford as a leading global innovation hub

- Maximise economic and mixed-use development opportunities to create a well-designed and integrated, commercially viable station quart that catalyses development across the West End
- Provide an efficient city centre transport interchange that reduces congestion and provides better connectivity, to facilitate 'first and last mile' connection.

Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of Oxford City Council, said: "Creating the masterplan for Oxford's station is a significant step forward in delivering on our ambitions for the west end of Oxford and the wider city. The redevelopment of the station will be a catalyst for opportunities in the city and wider regional economy, including our long-held ambition to reopen the Cowley Branch Line, but also our wider connectivity across the Oxford Cambridge Arc through East West Rail. The proposals that come forward will not just be rail focused, but will look to put active travel measures, such as walking and cycling, at the heart of travellers onward journeys, as well support a modern bus interchange"

With Atkins' multi-disciplinary team leading on the commission, property development consultancy PRD will be providing the Strategic Outline Business Case, with Faithful+Gould supporting on cost estimates.