

Submission ID: S427FDDAC

Please find attached Powerpoint presentations, alongside edited transcripts of accompanying audio.

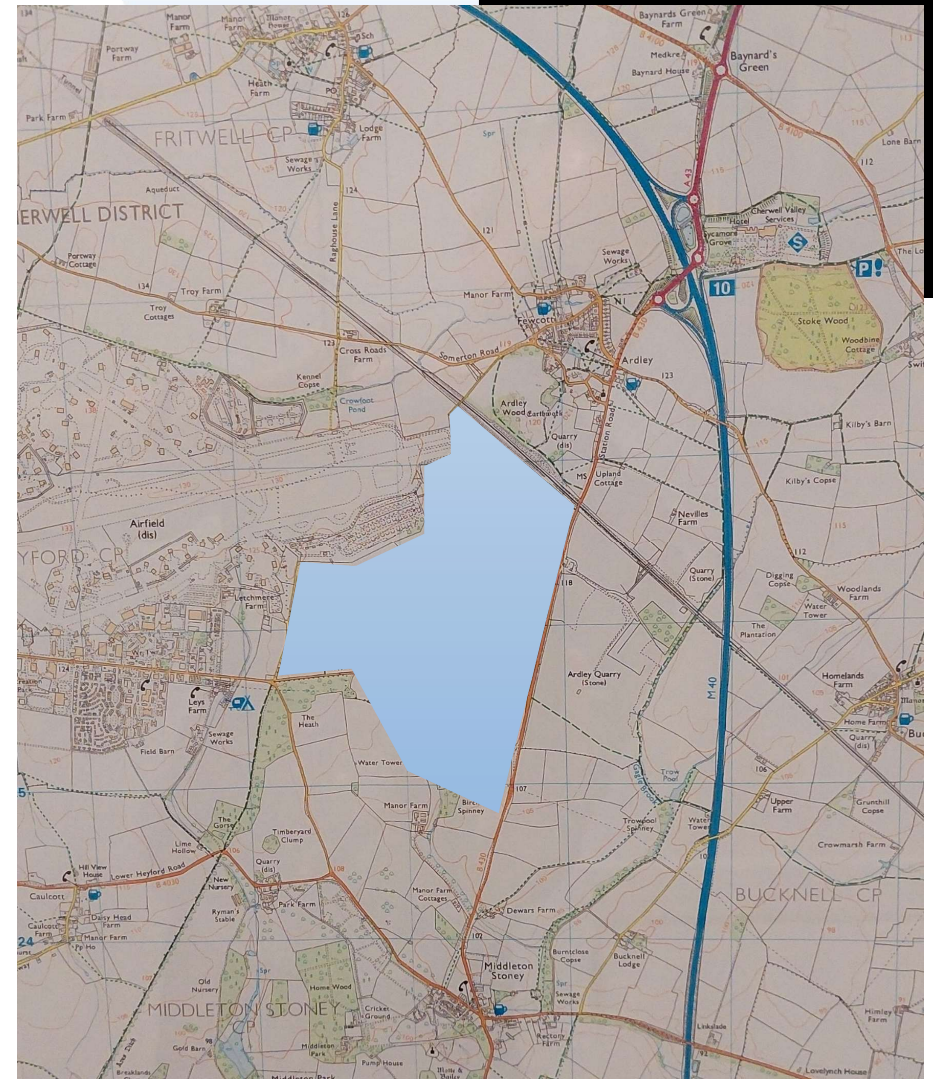


Stop the Trojan Horse

Monday 31st August 2026



2 The OxSRFI proposal



3

What is wrong with the proposal The overarching problem:

OxSRFI is a trojan horse for a super-large warehouse development, served by lorries

The NNNPS supports SRFIs because they maximise long-haul rail freight. In reality, rail use of OxSRFI is purely speculative; even in the most optimistic scenarios, the development will function primarily as a super-large warehouse development, served by lorries

What is wrong with the proposal (from a *planning* perspective!) Page 1/2

1: M40 Junction 10 and local highways will be overloaded

Problems with congestion, local road capacity, and onward freight movement go against the NNNPS requirement to avoid severe transport impacts

2: Employees will be forced to drive to the site

Plans for thousands of 24-hour shift workers with very limited public transport and no passenger station go directly against Chapter 4 (accessibility policy) in the NNNPS

3: The OxSRFI would cause enormous landscape harm

The scale of the warehouse massing and its visibility across open countryside goes directly against the NNNPS landscape provisions

What is wrong with the proposal (from a *planning* perspective!) Page 2/2

4: The *cumulative* impact of OxSRFI, Baynards Green, Puy du Fou, etc., would destroy our area

The interaction with Heyford Park, Bicester growth, and other major proposals around Junction 10 should be part of a *cumulative assessment* under the NNNPS.

5: Biodiversity harm is not being avoided; focus is only on mitigation and compensation

Avoidance hasn't been genuinely prioritised before mitigation and compensation.

6: Doubtful carbon benefits

The claimed carbon benefits depend heavily on shaky assumptions about future rail utilisation and reduced HGV mileage.

6

What we know so far: "Initial Assessment of Principal Issues" (IAP) from the Planning Inspectorate

Key points identified in IAP

- Need, location and delivery
- Landscape and visual (including lighting)
- Heritage
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Groundwater
- Soils
- Minerals and waste
- Socioeconomics and Health
- Traffic and Transport

Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (IAPA) from the Planning Inspectorate (p. 1/3)

Need, location and delivery

- Whether there is an **identified need** for the proposed development, in terms of its **size and scale**, its **proximity to the markets to be served** and the presence of **nearby proposed logistics development**
- Whether the **location of the site** is acceptable, having regard to the **suitability of the Chiltern Main Line (CML)** to accommodate the proposed development, and any effects upon existing and future **passenger rail services** on the CML, including the potential delivery of **Ardley Station**
- Overall strategy and construction sequence for the proposed development, including timings for the delivery of Ardley Bypass, Middleton Stoney Relief Road and a fully operational rail connection
- Whether good design has been considered in all elements of the proposed development

Landscape and visual (including lighting)

- Effects on **landscape character**, including effects on hedgerows and trees
- Visual effects, including from PRow [Public Rights of Way] and residential receptors
- The applicant's approach to mitigation, in particular the use of landscape bunds
- **Night time effects** and whether sufficient information has been provided in the lighting strategy [APP-256] to determine that there would be no adverse effects.

Heritage

- Effects on the setting of designated heritage assets, in particular the Threshing Barn at Ashgrove Farm and Upper Heyford Conservation Area.

Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (IAPA) from the Planning Inspectorate (p. 2/3)

Ecology and biodiversity

- Whether sufficient information has been provided in the draft Construction Environmental Management Plan [APP-189], the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [AS-072] and the draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan [AS-075] to determine that the proposed development would have an acceptable effect having specific regard to SSSI, ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, habitat provisions, Biodiversity Net Gain and protected species.

Groundwater

- Potential impacts on groundwater levels, private supplies and aquifers due to excavation (possible piled foundations and leachate) and disturbance of existing historic pollutants
- Storage of fuel, oil and other chemicals
- Monitoring proposals during construction and operation

Soils

- Effects on BMV [Best and Most Versatile] agricultural land
- Effects on soil resource
- Approach to soil management as part of the overall earthworks strategy

Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (IAPA) from the Planning Inspectorate (p. 3/3)

Minerals and waste

- Potential sterilisation of mineral resources and conflict with the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan
- Impacts associated with the removal of the existing Ashgrove Farm (Biffa) IVC [In-Vessel Composting] facility
- Impacts on continuity of operation of the Ardley ERF [Energy Recovery Facility] and household waste sites

Socioeconomics and Health

- What economic impacts the proposed development would bring locally, regionally and nationally in terms of employment
- Whether the proposed development would have social impacts in relation to health, wellbeing and residential amenity

Traffic and Transport

- Effects of operational traffic on both the strategic and local road networks, local access arrangements, road safety and non-motorised users
- The applicant's approach towards the mitigation of construction traffic, operational movements, HGV routing strategy and suitability of proposed sustainable transport initiatives, including measures in the Framework Travel Plan [APP-203]
- Cumulative effects and whether these have been adequately assessed/mitigated by the applicant
- Consideration of the methods of transporting containers from their origins to their final destinations, including the movement of containers between the rail terminal and individual warehouses



Why the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Proposal Is a Trojan Horse

Hi, my name is Philip Norstrand, and I am the founder of the Stop the Trojan Horse community group. In this video, I want to explain what is fundamentally wrong with the proposed Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and why I believe it is, in reality, a Trojan horse for a massive warehouse development.

The proposal is presented as a rail freight project, but when you examine the detail it becomes clear that it is overwhelmingly about lorries and warehouses. The plans would cover several square miles of agricultural land between Upper Heyford and Ardley with warehouses up to 500 metres long and 25 metres high, transforming countryside, footpaths and open landscapes into a vast industrial estate.

The national planning policy for Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges is intended to encourage long-distance freight to move from roads onto rail. In principle, that is a sensible objective. However, the evidence behind this proposal suggests that rail is not the primary purpose of the development.

Mountpark is a warehouse developer rather than a rail operator. Its business model is to obtain planning permission for large logistics buildings and lease them to commercial tenants. The rail element allows the application to be treated as nationally significant infrastructure, moving the planning decision away from local councils and into Whitehall.

Even under the developers' most optimistic forecasts, only around 20–25% of inbound freight would arrive by rail, while all outbound freight would leave by lorry. Overall, at least 85% of freight movements would still depend on road transport. If the rail services fail to materialise—as many people fear—they could become little more than underused tracks serving an overwhelmingly road-based warehouse operation.

The proposal also raises a series of serious planning concerns.

First, there is the impact on the road network. Junctions 9 and 10 of the M40 already suffer from regular congestion, while the A43, B430 and B4030 experience increasing pressure whenever motorway traffic diverts through local villages. Adding hundreds of lorry movements every hour, together with employee traffic, would place enormous additional strain on roads that are already operating beyond comfortable capacity.

Second, the transport strategy for employees is fundamentally weak. Very few people live within walking or cycling distance of the site, public transport is limited, and the proposal does not include a passenger station at Ardley. Most employees would therefore have little choice but to drive, creating further congestion and undermining claims about sustainable

transport.

Third, the landscape impact would be dramatic. Warehouses of this scale would permanently change the character of the countryside between Heyford Park and Ardley, replacing open rural views with industrial buildings visible across a wide area. Night-time lighting, noise and around-the-clock operations would further alter the area's rural character.

The proposal also needs to be judged alongside other developments already planned or proposed nearby. Additional warehouse schemes around Baynard's Green, together with the proposed Puy du Fou leisure park, would create cumulative impacts that cannot be ignored. Looking at this development in isolation risks underestimating its overall effect on traffic, infrastructure and the surrounding landscape.

Another important planning principle is avoidance. Existing Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges around Northampton and Daventry already serve the wider region. Before creating an entirely new terminal, there should be a serious assessment of whether those facilities could meet future demand through expansion or better use. Instead, the proposal focuses primarily on mitigating environmental harm after the fact by planting trees and offering compensation measures, rather than demonstrating that a new terminal here is genuinely necessary.

The claimed carbon benefits are equally uncertain. They depend heavily on assumptions about future rail services. If those services prove unrealistic, many of the projected emissions savings disappear, leaving an overwhelmingly road-based logistics operation.

There is, however, some encouraging news. The Planning Inspectorate has already identified a substantial list of issues requiring detailed examination through its Initial Assessment of Principal Issues. These include need, location and delivery, landscape and visual effects, heritage, ecology and biodiversity, groundwater, soils, minerals and waste, socio-economic impacts, health, traffic and transport.

Several of these areas overlap directly with concerns raised by local residents. One key question is whether a new Strategic Rail Freight Interchange is actually needed at Ardley at all, or whether existing terminals could serve the same purpose. Another is whether the warehouse component has grown far beyond what would be necessary for a genuine rail freight operation.

The Inspectorate will also examine whether the Chiltern Main Line can realistically accommodate additional freight services. The developers suggest trains could arrive via complex routes involving Reading and the London area before reaching Ardley, but those assumptions appear highly theoretical. The line already carries heavy passenger traffic, and future passenger growth—including the possibility of a reopened Ardley passenger

station—raises legitimate questions about where freight services would fit within existing timetables.

Environmental issues extend beyond the warehouses themselves. Groundwater, soils and biodiversity all require careful scrutiny. One issue that deserves particular attention is PFAS contamination associated with former fire-fighting foam used at the nearby airfield. Questions remain about the extent of existing pollution, how construction could affect contaminated land, and what safeguards would be needed to protect local waterways.

The Inspectorate is also examining social impacts, including health, well-being and residential amenity. Replacing green countryside with industrial development inevitably affects the quality of life for surrounding communities. Traffic management raises further unanswered questions, including how future lorries will be powered, whether charging infrastructure for electric heavy goods vehicles will exist, and where drivers will park or take mandatory rest breaks.

Taken together, these issues reveal a consistent pattern. The proposal presents itself as a rail freight project, yet many of its claimed benefits rely on assumptions that remain uncertain, while many of its impacts are immediate, substantial and heavily road-based.

In the end, the central argument remains the same. This proposal is marketed as a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, but its practical effect would be to create a vast warehouse estate served predominantly by lorries. Many of the weaknesses identified by Stop the Trojan Horse have also been recognised by the Planning Inspectorate, giving local communities a real opportunity to ensure these issues receive the detailed scrutiny they deserve.

As the examination continues, it is essential that every aspect of the proposal—from traffic and landscape impacts to PFAS contamination and the realism of the rail assumptions—is properly tested before any decision is made.

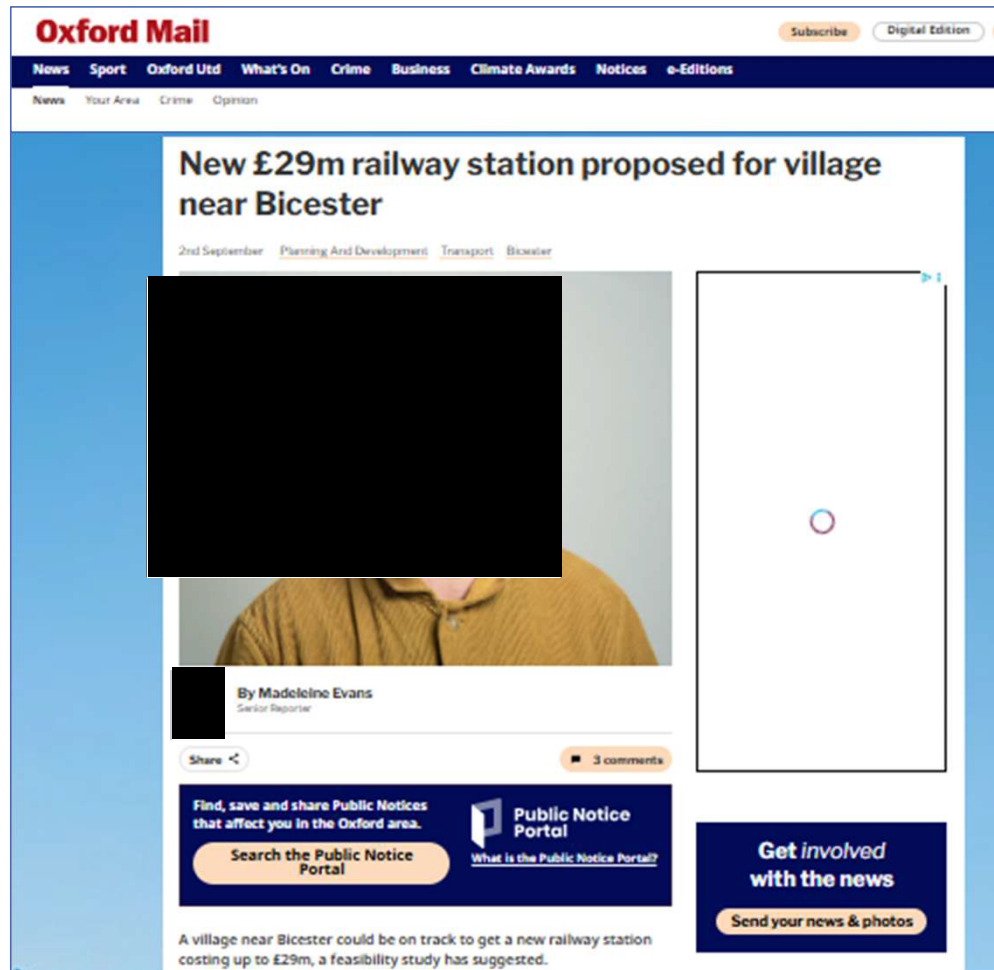
AI disclosure: Artificial intelligence was used for transcribing presentation audio and for editing the transcript.



Stations need trains!

9th September 2026



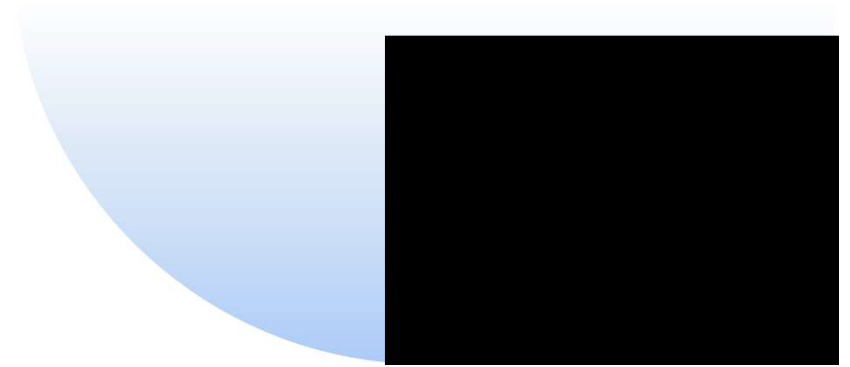


"This latest study, which we commissioned, has shown that a station at Ardley could significantly enhance rail access for nearby communities currently reliant on road travel. It could also serve a wider catchment area with appropriate infrastructure, mitigating the effects of wider proposed growth and transport changes."

Councillor Gareth Epps,
Oxfordshire County Council
Cabinet Member for Transport

3

What would a new Ardley station need to look like?



It needs to be
genuinely *useful* for
our area



It needs to have
(frequent) trains



**It needs to have lots
of passengers**

4 How does that look in practice?

Useful Chiltern Line station

Example: Haddenham and Thame Parkway

- Direct to London at 06:05, 06:30, 06:42, 07:11, 07:30, 08:03, 08:17, 08:40, 09:06, 09:12, 09:34, or 10:03

Why?

- Serves a wide area (including A418/M40 access)
- 432 parking spaces
- 889,000 passengers per year

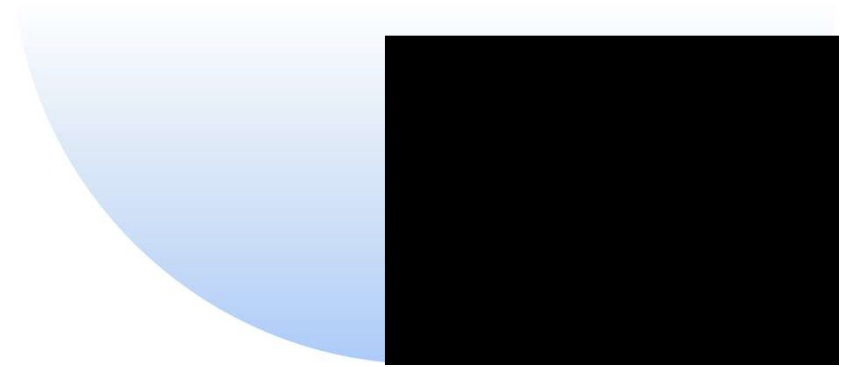
Less-useful Chiltern Line station

Example: King's Sutton

- Direct to London at 06:19 or 10:11

Why?

- Serves the local village
- 23 parking spaces
- 82,000 passengers per year



5 What it looks like...

Useful Chiltern Line station

Example: Haddenham and Thame Parkway



Less-useful Chiltern Line

Example: King's Sutton



6

How will Ardley Station get to 1,000,000 passengers per year?



What

Ardley passenger numbers

Residents within walking or cycling distance
(e.g. Ardley, Fewcott)

Very low

Local employers within walking or cycling
distance (Inbound)

low

Area residents within 2-10 miles driving distance
(e.g. Brackley, Croughton, Lower Heyford)

Medium – Requires **ample parking
(100-200 spaces)**

Puy du Fou (Not yet approved)

High – Requires **shuttle busses**

M40/A43 commuters (towards London or Birmingham)

Very high – Requires **large park-and-ride
(600-800 spaces)**

***Few
trains***

***Frequent
trains***



8

“Ardley, we have a problem...”

*“An initial simple station concept includes two platforms, accessible facilities and '**modest**' parking, with an estimated cost range of between £24million and £29million.”*

Oxford County Council press release, 4 September 2026

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/study-shows-potential-benefits-of-new-railway-station-at-ardley/>

9

The OxSRFI proposal leaves no space!



- No parking spaces at Ardley Station
- No bus access to Ardley Station

Conclusions

- *In order for Ardley passenger station to be useful, it must have excellent bus access, and a large park-and ride*
- *The current County Council proposal foresees only “modest” car parking – **This assumption must be changed***
- *The OxSRFI proposal would block the space required for a park-and-ride, and for bus access – **Not acceptable!***



What a Useful Ardley Passenger Station Should Look Like

Hi, my name is Philip Norstrand, and I am the founder of the Stop the Trojan Horse community group. In this video, I want to explain what a genuinely useful Ardley passenger station would look like, and why the current proposals fall well short of what the area actually needs.

In my previous video, I debunked the media spin suggesting that Ardley passenger station is linked to the proposed Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange. One of the key points I made was that, if the warehouse development goes ahead, there will be very little room left to build a viable passenger station. The developers claim they can squeeze a small station onto the site of the original 1960s station, and that also appears to be the option the County Council has been considering. Unfortunately, that would be completely inadequate.

The recent County Council feasibility study is encouraging because it recognises the potential benefits of reopening Ardley station. However, success is not simply about building a platform and declaring victory. The station has to be useful enough to attract frequent train services and become a genuine transport hub for the surrounding communities.

A station only succeeds if trains stop there regularly, and trains only stop regularly when there are enough passengers to justify the service. If most trains continue straight through to Bicester North without stopping, the station will have very limited value. Passenger numbers are therefore the foundation of any successful proposal.

The contrast between Haddenham & Thame Parkway and King's Sutton illustrates this perfectly. Haddenham & Thame Parkway enjoys frequent direct services into London because it serves a large catchment area, offers around 432 parking spaces, and handles close to one million passengers each year. King's Sutton, by comparison, has only around 23 parking spaces, roughly 82,000 passengers annually, and far fewer direct trains. The difference in passenger numbers translates directly into a different level of service.

That is the lesson Ardley needs to learn. If we build only a small village station with limited parking, we will end up with limited train services. If we want frequent trains to London, Birmingham, High Wycombe and beyond, the station has to attract passengers from a much wider area.

The former station site from the 1960s simply does not provide enough space for that. A modern station needs parking, bus connections, safe access roads, and room for future growth. Those are exactly the facilities that would become much harder—or impossible—to provide if the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange occupies the surrounding land.

So where would the passengers come from? Local residents in Ardley and Fewcott would certainly use the station, but they would not generate enough demand on their own. Some local employers could attract inbound commuters, but that would also be relatively modest.

The real opportunity lies in serving the wider area. Communities such as Brackley, Croughton, Lower Heyford and surrounding villages could all use Ardley as a park-and-ride station. People could drive a short distance, park their cars, and then take direct trains into London or Birmingham instead of driving long distances by road. To make that work, the station would need around 100 to 200 parking spaces simply to serve those nearby communities.

There is another significant opportunity if the proposed Puy du Fou leisure park is approved. Like Bicester Village today, it would benefit enormously from rail access. Visitors could arrive by train and transfer by shuttle bus directly to the attraction, creating substantial passenger numbers throughout the year and helping secure the station's long-term viability.

Beyond that, there is an even larger opportunity. Thousands of commuters currently travel along the M40 and A43 towards London, often spending two hours or more on the journey. If they could park at Ardley and reach London by train in around an hour, rail would become an extremely competitive alternative. That would require a much larger park-and-ride facility, perhaps 600 to 800 spaces—comparable to Oxford Parkway—but it demonstrates the scale of the station's potential if it is planned properly.

The crucial point is that all of these supporting facilities need space. The County Council's own press release refers only to "modest" parking, which immediately raises an important question: where will the passenger numbers come from if parking remains modest? The answer is that they probably will not.

The current proposals focus on the small footprint of the former station because the freight interchange would occupy most of the adjoining land. Yet the fields beyond the bridge, which are currently available for parking, bus access and supporting infrastructure, would disappear beneath the warehouse development. The result would be a station boxed into a tiny site, with little room for buses, transfers or meaningful expansion.

When you compare the scale of the proposed warehouses with the tiny passenger station site, the imbalance becomes obvious. How would buses reach the station? Where would passengers park? How would the surrounding transport network function? Those questions have not been properly answered.

The conclusion is straightforward. If Ardley passenger station is to become genuinely useful, it must include excellent bus access, a substantial park-and-ride facility, and enough

surrounding infrastructure to generate the passenger numbers needed for frequent train services. The current assumption of only modest parking risks delivering only modest rail services.

The Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange would occupy much of the land needed to create those facilities, and the proposal contains no credible plan for integrating a viable passenger station into the wider development. It is also difficult to justify a freight interchange whose employees would largely arrive by private car while the neighbouring passenger station would lack sufficient parking for commuters. That approach is fundamentally backwards.

Ardley has the potential to become a genuinely valuable transport hub for Oxfordshire, but only if it is planned with the space, access and infrastructure needed to support the level of service local communities deserve.

AI disclosure: Artificial intelligence was used for transcribing presentation audio and for editing the transcript.