

UPDATE REPORT:

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: ITEM NO. 14

Ward: Caversham
App No.: 180869/VARIAT
Address: Hills Meadow Car Park, George Street, Reading
Proposal: Proposed development of un-used land adjacent to Hills Meadow Car Park to provide a hand carwash and valeting operation with associated public toilet facilities, refreshment servery, and waiting area without complying with Condition 2 of planning permission 141841 (temporary three year permission). This application seeks a further five year temporary permission [amended description].

RECOMMENDATION (AMENDED):
GRANT temporary planning permission (five years).

Conditions to be adjusted as follows:

2. Approved landscaping scheme, to include the details set out below
3. Landscaping maintenance strategy to be as submitted, to include the details set out below

1. LANDSCAPING

- 1.1 The Recommendation in the main Agenda report requires the submission of a satisfactory mitigating landscaping scheme, before officers can recommend approval of the application.
- 1.2 The applicant supplied a landscaping plan yesterday (4 September) and a landscaping maintenance plan today. The plan indicates a replacement Willow tree and re-planting of the border across the site frontage. The applicant claims that the originally planting was stolen prior to CCTV being installed. The landscaping scheme has been accompanied by a 'landscaping implementation statement'
- 1.3 The Natural Environment Team (Tree Officer) has considered the details this morning and finds them generally acceptable, although there are gaps and inconsistencies in the information submitted. Officer advice on the Tree Officer's comments is supplied below:
 - The original plan included retained shrubs and a swale behind the recycling containers - this is not there and not included. *The swale was omitted from later plans as there was a concern for trapping suds, etc. and harming the hedge. Although some shrubs have been removed, officers are content not be require further planting in this area.*
 - With regards to the replanting of the shrub bed in front of the fencing, given that BS3882: 2015 Specifications for topsoil says the overall planting depth for shrubs should be 600mm, I think the specification should confirm this. It's not clear

whether the '600mm deep landscape border' reference might be to the planting depth or the width of the bed? *The bed is not 600mm wide, so this must be the depth of the bed. Can clarify in condition.*

- The Landscape Implementation Statement states (in relation to the new tree) that it is '*To be supplied root balled, 10-12cm girth, 3 - 3.5m tall*' but then goes on immediately to say (as does the plan) that the tree will be 2-3m in height and 8-10cm girth and bare root. Information should be consistent. I would suggest that 10-12cm girth and 3m height minimum and root-balled stock would be appropriate. *Agree. This was a statement tree and taller sapling is preferable.*
- Tree pit detail fine. *Noted and the plan can be conditioned.*
- Maintenance says nothing about watering or much else so is not acceptable. Tree should be watered weekly from approx. April-Oct for the first two growing seasons following planting providing 20-25 litres at each watering (allowing for weather conditions). Shrubs should be watered weekly too. All mulch should be topped up annually and tree ties/stake checked annually, removing them after 3 years if the tree is established. Replacement planting for anything that fails to thrive should be ongoing over the period of the approval. *Agree to all of these maintenance points.*

1.4 The landscaping measures would need to be undertaken in the next planting season (November-March). The applicant is aware of the above officer comments and has indicated he is content for these matters to be covered by condition.

2. OTHER MATTERS

2.1 The Council's s106 Monitoring Officer has now confirmed that all outstanding monies in respect of the RUAP contribution for permission 141841 have now been paid.

2.2 There are no further responses to the consultation to advise you of.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Whilst the car wash itself has been well-run and managed through its current temporary period, little attention has been paid to landscaping and the design of the building and its outward accessibility to the public are not as approved. The applicant has now updated the submitted plans and details to attend to these concerns.

3.2 Whilst the main Agenda report advises that applying for a second temporary permission is against Government advice, on balance, officers consider that the proposal has in the main been run well, but nevertheless remains a poor quality installation in a sensitive landscaped area and members will need to give consideration to its continued retention given the issues set out in these reports. Permission is recommended for a limited temporary period only and the suggested further time period is five years.

Case Officer: Richard Eatough

Amended elevations/plans: 15039/02 Rev. B

Block plan (landscaping layout plan) 13/039/02 Rev. C

Tree Pit Section 14/039/05

Landscaping Implementation Statement