

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 13th November 2019

Ward: Whitley

App No: 190591

Address: 127a Loverock Road

Proposal: Demolition of 2 number existing single storey buildings, removal of telecoms plant. Replacement with new single unit for B1c, B2 and B8 use classes with ancillary offices including associated service areas, car parking and landscaping. Modified access onto Wigmore Lane.

Applicant: SHP Opportunity Fund General Partner Ltd

Date validated: 9 April 2019

Major Application 13 week target date: 9 July 2019

Planning Guarantee 26 week target: 8 October 2019

Extended deadline: 27 November 2019

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to completion of a Section 106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed by the 27th November 2019 (unless the assessing officer on behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agrees to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The legal agreement to secure the following:

1. Traffic Order - £5000
2. Employment Skills Plan for the construction phase and employment phase of the development in accordance with the Council's SPD to be submitted and approved or a financial contribution of £9,689.48 at least one month prior to works commencing.

Conditions to include:

1. Time limit for implementation (3 years)
2. Materials
3. Approved plans
4. Works to be carried out in accordance with the precautionary measures given in Section 5 of the submitted bat survey report
5. Site Characterisation (Contamination assessment)
6. Submission of Remediation Scheme
7. Implementation of Approved Remediation Scheme
8. Reporting of Unexpected Contamination
9. Control of Noise and Dust - CMS to be submitted
10. Hours of Working - Construction and Demolition Phase
11. Construction Method Statement to be submitted (Transport)
12. Vehicle Parking space provided in accordance with approved plans
13. Vehicle access provided in accordance with approved plans
14. Bicycle Parking - plans to be approved
15. Delivery and Servicing Plan

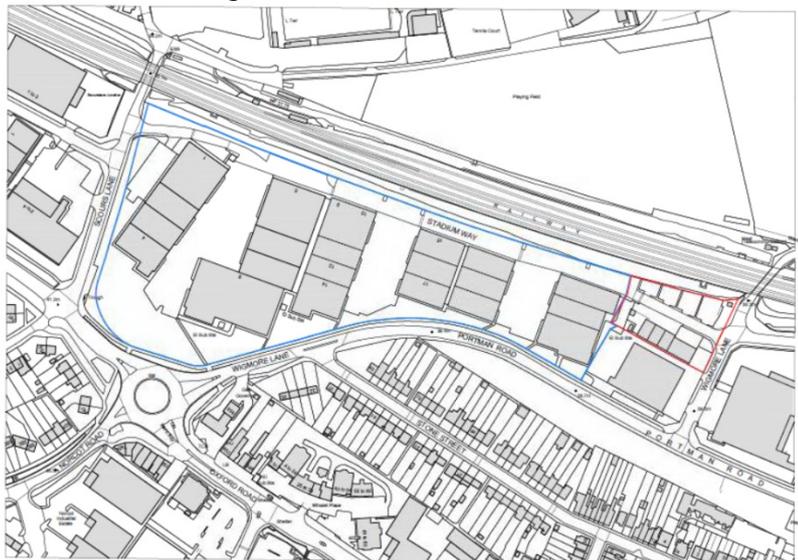
16. Sustainable Drainage - details to be submitted
17. Sustainable Drainage - completed in accordance with approved details
18. Hard & Soft Landscaping details to be submitted
19. Hard & Soft Landscaping - carried out in accordance with approved details
20. Planted materials maintained for 5 years
21. Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan to be submitted
22. Full details of Photovoltaics and solar water heating to be submitted and approved in writing by RBC before commencement
23. BREEAM pre-estimator report achieving a level of 'excellent' or otherwise agreed in writing; to be submitted and approved by RBC before commencement
24. Pre-occupation BREEAM completion certificate

Informatives to include:

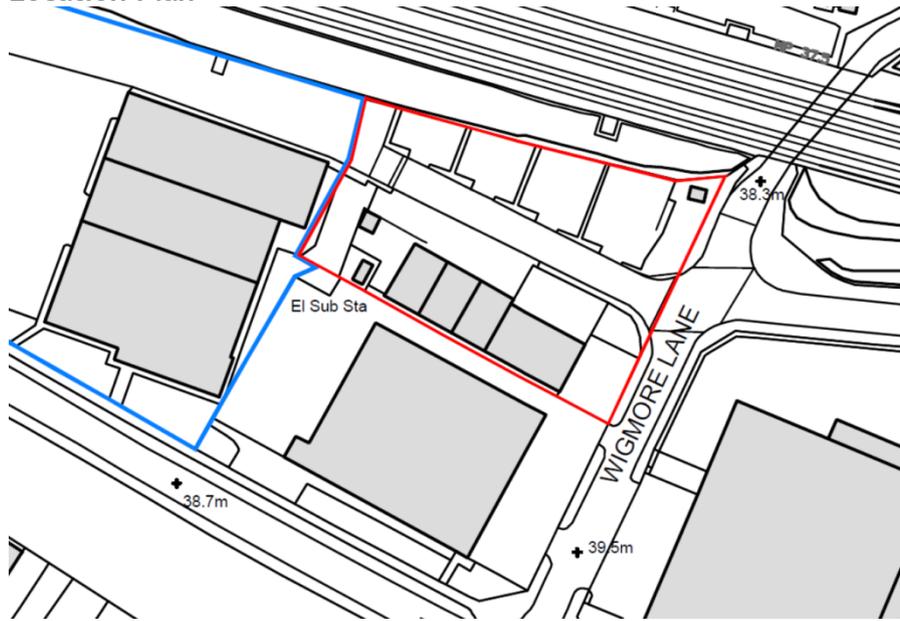
1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Terms and conditions
3. Need for building regulations
4. Bonfires
5. Highways
6. Clarification over pre-commencement conditions
7. S106 Heads of Terms
8. CIL (not liable)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site is located in the defined Portman Road Core Employment Area and Flood Zone 2. The closest residential dwellings are located approximately 110m south of the site at Stone Street.
- 1.2 The site occupies a prominent corner location at the junction of Stadium Way and Wigmore Lane. The site comprises four adjoining units within Stadium Way Industrial Estate. The site straddles Stadium Way, with an area of hardstanding located to its northern side, previously used for vehicle parking. Further hardstanding is located forward of the units. To the western end of the site is located a Vodafone communications tower and plant. The units are currently individually leased, in use variously for car repair and maintenance. The site is bounded to the north by the mainline railway embankment.
- 1.3 Industrial buildings are located to the south, east and west of the site.



Location Plan



Block plan

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The proposal is for the demolition of three existing single storey buildings, as well as the removal of a telecoms plant. Two of these buildings make up four small industrial business units. The new building would comprise one unit consisting of Use Classes: B1c (Light industrial), B2 (General industrial) and B8 (Storage & Distribution) with ancillary offices. The proposal also includes associated service areas, car parking and landscaping, as well as a modified access onto Wigmore Lane.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

Reference No.	Address	Detailed Description	Outcome
92-00924-CLP (920584)	127 Loverock Road	Refridgerated storage, distribution and offices. Certificate of Lawfulness for a Proposed Use.	Application Withdrawn on 25 Jan-93
92-00579-FUL (920966)	127 Loverock Road	Erection of garage for maintaining cars.	Application Permitted on 24 Sep-92
93-00043-FUL (930577)	127 Loverock Road	Change of use to refrigerated storage, and distribution and offices (Use Class B8)	Application Permitted on 8 Apr-93
95-00932-FUL (950508)	127 Loverock Road	Increase in height of existing door opening.	Application Permitted on 23 Jan-96
020161	127a Loverock Road	New MOT testing bay and new roller shutter door.	Application Permitted on 4 Sep-02
030594	127b Loverock Road	Use of site for private taxi hire.	Application Permitted on 11 Jun-03

030619	127b Loverock Road	Private hire company and car hire premises.	Application Refused on 1 Apr-03
150789	Land adjacent to Comtek Ltd. 127d Loverock Road	Telecommunications Prior Approval application for alterations to existing mast including an increase in height from 17.5 metres to 18.2 metres and installation of 6no. Replacement antennas, and ancillary works.	Prior Approval Notification - Approval on 15 Jun-15
181293	"Stadium Way Industrial Estate", Stadium Way.	Demolition of industrial warehouse and removal of plant, erection of replacement industrial warehouse	Pre-app Observations Sent on 4 Oct-18

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Statutory:
None

4.2 Non-statutory:

Natural Environment

4.2.1 The site is within a 10% or less canopy cover area, as defined by our Tree Strategy, hence is one in which tree retention and planting is a priority. The development therefore needs to demonstrate a net increase in tree number to comply with Policy DM18 and the Tree Strategy.

The AIA shows that there are limited trees within the site boundary; those being a group of False acacia and a single Birch both of which were originally to be retained and can be successfully retained subject to agreeing works within RPAs. As you are aware, further discussion with the arb consultant has led to agreement to fell the False acacia on the basis of their poor condition and to replace these. A brief Arb Method Statement will need to be secured for works within the RPA of the Birch.

The Landscape proposals currently indicate the planting of 9 new trees, 2 Turkish hazel (*Corylus colurna*) and 7 Amelanchier, predominantly on the Wigmore Lane frontage - this will need to be amended to reflect the agreement to fell the False acacia and replace these with large canopy species. The extent of current tree planting is acceptable and subject to replacement of the False acacia, this will remain the case, however I question the use of multi-stem Amelanchier on the southern boundary of the car park in a fairly narrow strip. It would seem prudent to consider a single stem tree that could be crown lifted above the height of the cars rather than a multi-stem tree that is likely to expand outside the planting bed. An alternative species may be appropriate.

The Maintenance notes on the Landscape plan are not wholly acceptable, specifically in relation to watering. 6 Maintenance visits annually are specified with additional watering visits allowed for during periods of drought. In order to successfully establish the trees (and other plants), weekly watering is likely to be

required during the growing season (Apr-Oct) and trees should be provided with a sufficient amount of water (approx. 80 litres weekly for a 16-18cm girth tree). Insufficient watering is the most common cause of tree failure therefore the specification is of vital importance.

An amended landscape scheme could be submitted prior to a decision, otherwise the following conditions are prudent: L2a, L2b, L3, L6a.

Environmental Protection & Nuisance

- 4.2.2 The developer is responsible for ensuring that development is safe and suitable for use for the intended purpose or can be made so by remedial action.

The development lies on the site of an historic works which has the potential to have caused contaminated land and the proposed development is a sensitive land use.

The phase II investigation submitted with the application was carried out in 2009 and is not specific to this proposal. The investigation also recommends that further investigation is required if the site is to be redeveloped. An investigation specific to the proposed development should be completed and submitted to ensure that the risk of contaminated land at the site is known and dealt with appropriately.

Investigation must be carried out by a suitably qualified person to ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed use or can be made so by remedial action.

Conditions are required to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.

Transport

- 4.2.3 This site is located within a Core Employment Area (SA12h: Portman Road) as stated in the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD). These Core Employment Areas (CEA) are the main location for industrial and warehouse uses, and a high proportion of the traffic using the road is commercial traffic ranging from light vans to articulated lorries. There is high demand for parking in the area.

The site currently comprises four units currently occupied by vehicle repair and maintenance companies accommodating a floor area of 586sqm including garage facilities, ancillary office and hardstanding, in addition to associated parking areas on the northern edge of the site.

The development proposals comprise the demolition of all existing structures on site to be replaced by a single unit under Use Class B1c / B2 / B8 with a gross external floor area totalling 1,667sqm.

The red line area includes Stadium Way where it joins Wigmore Lane and Loverock Road and forms a through route to Scours Lane. The site will retain access from Wigmore Lane, however, the proposal would prevent 'through' access to Scours Lane from Wigmore Lane, and vice versa. All other units located along Stadium Way will be accessed from Scours Lane only with no access to Wigmore Lane or Loverock Road.

It should be noted that the entire length of Stadium Way is a private industrial road and is not adopted highway. In the past, access controls were in place on Stadium Way to prevent vehicles 'rat running' between Scours Lane and Loverock Road. However, the access controls have not been in operation for a number of years and the industrial estate is frequently used by non-industrial traffic to cut through the

site. Once the development is constructed, vehicles accessing other units located along Stadium Way will have to enter and leave via Scours Lane.

The site will retain access from Wigmore Lane, via a reconstructed bellmouth junction in broadly the same position as the current junction with Stadium Way. The access will be gated and provided to a 13.65m width. The access arrangements are illustrated on appended plan 18132/TA/001 Rev B along with junction visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m onto Wigmore Lane.

The Transport Assessment submitted with the application includes swept path analysis diagrams. At pre-app stage, the applicant was requested to design the access to accommodate the full two-way movements of maximum articulated HGVs. However, given the anticipated daily movements by HGV's, the access has been designed to allow an HGV entering the site to pass a stationary HGV waiting at the access opposed to the free flow of two-way movements.

The area experiences high levels of on-street parking including on the junction Wigmore Lane and Loverock Road (which can be seen on Google Ariel and street view images). Therefore, HGV's would be unable to swing onto the opposite side of the carriageway to manoeuvre into the site if a HGV was waiting at the access. The revised swept path diagram demonstrates that a 16.5m articulated vehicle can access the site, passing a stationary HGV waiting at the access noting the presence of parked vehicles on the eastern side of the road. However, this is likely to lead to multiple manoeuvres at the site access in order to be in a position to reverse into the delivery and service bays. Given that the proposal would prevent 'through' access to Scours Lane from Wigmore Lane and increase HGV movements on Wigmore Lane, the applicant is, therefore, requested to pay towards a review of the existing parking regulations in the area with the view to implement no waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) on the junction of Wigmore Lane and Loverock Road. This process involves changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and approval by the Traffic Management Sub Committee (TSUB). Changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will be subject to statutory consultation which is under separate legislation to the Planning Act. Any costs associated this process and on-street signage and markings would have to be paid upfront by the applicant. Therefore, a S106 contribution of £5,000 is requested.

The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities. In accordance with the adopted SPD, B1(c) Light Industrial and B2 General Industrial uses require one car parking space per 100sqm whilst B8 Storage and Distribution use requires one car parking space per 150sqm.

The development will be provided with a total of 23 car parking spaces, equivalent to 1 space per 76sqm (inclusive of 2 disabled parking spaces) which is excess of the adopted Parking Standards. However, it is acknowledged that there is significant congestion within the vicinity of the site caused by an excess of private cars parking on the public highway.

The proposed parking provision seeks to ensure that demand for on-site parking does not create 'overspill' parking on the surrounding highway network which will intensify the existing on-street parking situation further. In view of this, the parking provision is acceptable.

In accordance with Reading Borough Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development should provide 1 cycle parking space per 250sqm based on

the 'Light Industrial' category, equating to a supply of 7 spaces across the site. It is stated that cycle parking spaces will be located within an accessible, lit, covered and secure storage area either internally or externally on the building perimeter. Full details should therefore be submitted, however, I am happy to cover this by condition to ensure the cycle parking provisions meet the Council's requirements in terms of layout.

4.2.4 Ecology

The application site comprises a number of buildings where it is proposed to remove two of the existing buildings and the telecom plant, and to erect a replacement unit with offices, service areas and a car parking, with associated landscaping.

The bat survey report (Greengage, March 2019) has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and states that the buildings have a number of features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats - gaps in the brickwork, loose roofing membrane and rotten wooden fascia boards. A subsequent endoscope inspection of the features was undertaken, and no bats or evidence of bats was found. The report concludes that, since no evidence of bats was found during the endoscope inspection, it is very unlikely that bats will be affected by the proposals. However, the report recommends a number of precautionary measures (Section 5) to ensure that bats are not harmed or killed during the works. Implementation of these measures should be secured via a planning condition, wording is given below.

In summary, subject to a condition, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

4.2.5 Thames Water

Waste Comments

There are public sewers crossing or close to your development. If you're planning significant work near our sewers, it's important that you minimize the risk of damage. We'll need to check that your development doesn't limit repair or maintenance activities, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes. <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Planning-your-development/Working-near-or-diverting-our-pipes>.

Thames Water would advise that with regard to waste water network and waste water process infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application, based on the information provided

With regard to surface water drainage, Thames Water would advise that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water we would have no objection. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. Should you require further information please refer to our website. <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Apply-and-pay-for-services/Wastewater-services>

Water Comments

On the basis of information provided, Thames Water would advise that with regard to water network and water treatment infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application. Thames Water recommends the following informative be attached to this planning permission. Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes.

The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

If you are planning on using mains water for construction purposes, it's important you let Thames Water know before you start using it, to avoid potential fines for improper usage. More information and how to apply can be found online at thameswater.co.uk/buildingwater.

4.2.6 Archaeology

In accordance with Paragraph 128 of the NPPF the applicant has submitted with their application an 'Archaeological Desk Based Assessment' (AOC Archaeology, March 2018). This document presents the archaeological background to the application area, assesses its archaeological potential and considers the likely impacts of the development proposal on buried archaeological remains.

In summary the assessment concludes that the site has a low potential to contain buried archaeological remains. There are few known monuments or finds spots within the vicinity of the site and very few archaeological investigations have taken place nearby. The site was under agricultural use until the later 20th-century when the current industrial units were constructed. There is no geotechnical data for the application area but other data nearby indicates modern 'made ground' between 1m and 2m deep elsewhere within the Stadium Way industrial estate.

It was not included in the assessment report but it can also be noted that at the adjacent site of 62 Portman Road geotechnical data recorded modern 'made ground' deposits of between 3m and 4.5m deep above natural geology.

In view of the modest size of the site area, the geotechnical data from around the site, the impacts of the construction of the current buildings, services and hard standings on the site, the construction of the adjacent GWR railway line, the original route of Wigmore Lane across the application area (AOC, figs 6, 7 and 8) and the unclear archaeological potential of the site, Berkshire Archaeology is satisfied that further archaeological investigation would not be proportionate in this instance, should this application be permitted. No further action is therefore required as regards the buried archaeological heritage. This is consistent with our advice for similar proposals nearby.

4.2.7 SUDs

No objections subject to a couple of conditions.

4.2.8 Policy

The Policy Team have reviewed the evidence supplied by the applicant with relation to demonstrating the acceptable loss of the small units.

The Policy Team has confirmed that this evidence is acceptable.

4.3 Public consultation:

4.3.1 A site notice was displayed and the application was advertised in the local Press. Three letters of representation were received (all from the occupants of the existing small units within the application site), which raise the following concerns:

- loss of jobs
- loss of businesses
- Landlord never told about his intentions before the current businesses moved in

- The other available premises in the area are all too big, too small, or not within a suitable price bracket

5. RELEVANT LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is now in one document - the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019), which fully replaces the Core Strategy, the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Reading Central Area Action Plan. The relevant policies are:

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
 CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
 CC3: ADAPTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE
 CC4: DECENTRALISED ENERGY
 CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
 CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
 EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK
 EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND
 EN15: AIR QUALITY
 EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES
 EN17: FLOODING AND DRAINAGE
 EM1: PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT
 EM2: LOCATION OF NEW EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT
 EM3: LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND
 EM4: MAINTAINING A VARIETY OF PREMISES

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Reading Borough Council’s Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD
 Reading Borough Council’s Revised Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
 Employment, Skills & Training SPD

- 5.2 In the context of the current application the policy direction remains very similar with the large majority of the relevant policies carried forward to the emerging New Local Plan. However the one area where there is a significant change is with regard to sustainability. Emerging Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) of the New Local Plan enhances the BREEAM standards sought for development. This policy now requires that, where possible, all major non-residential development should meet a BREEAM standard of ‘Excellent’.

6. APPRAISAL

Main Issues

- 6.1 The main issues are considered to be:
- (i). Principle of development
 - (ii). Design and appearance
 - (iii). Transport and parking
 - (iv). Residential amenity

- (v). Landscaping and ecology
- (vi). Flood risk/SUDS
- (vii). Equality
- (viii). Sustainability
- (ix). Employment, Skills and Training
- (x). Other Matters

(i) Principle of Development

- 6.2 Policy EM4 of the Reading Local Plan (November 2019) states, “A range of types and sizes of units should be present in the Borough, and proposals should maintain or enhance this range. In particular, the overall level of start-up and grow-on space should be maintained and, where possible, increased, and any loss of small units should be offset by new provision. Proposals should maintain the overall level of storage and distribution uses in the South of Basingstoke Road (EM2c).

Subject to these considerations, proposals for redevelopment of older industrial units for more flexible employment premises will be acceptable”.

- 6.3 The Policy seeks to ensure that adequate space for small-and medium-sized enterprises are maintained, in order to safeguard the future prosperity of Reading’s economy. This is a core component of Reading’s Community Strategy. There is a need for the continued development of start-up/incubator and grow-on space within the Borough, and opportunities to provide this should be sought. Whether units are suitable for start-up, businesses will depend partly on management arrangements and lease terms.
- 6.4 This Policy ensures that enough small units are available to be capable of acting as start-up space. In terms of implementation of this policy, small units are industrial or warehousing units of up to 150m² (gross external area). Where proposals anywhere in the Borough would lead to a reduction in this type of space, this will need to be offset by new premises elsewhere.
- 6.5 Move-on accommodation is more difficult to define, particularly in terms of space, but a reduction in the range of units of 150 - 500m² (g.e.a.) should only occur where it is demonstrated that there is a surplus of such space.
- 6.6 The proposal involves the loss of four units which have a gross external floor area measuring a total of 586 square metres. These four units are proposed to be replaced by a new single unit for B1c, B2 and B8 use classes with ancillary offices, which will have a gross external floor area of 1551.6 square metres.
- 6.7 The evidence submitted by the applicant included a letter from Sharps Commercial (a company specialising in the sale, letting and development of industrial/warehouse space in Reading and across the Thames Valley). Their letter concludes that Reading is in shortage of modern, good quality units over 20,000 square feet (1858 square metres) with a higher eaves height and self-contained yards; which has led to existing Reading based companies looking to relocate or expand outside of Reading.
- 6.8 Further evidence was supplied in the form of a vacant nursery warehouse/industrial accommodation audit. This was produced by Chartplan Ltd. and identified thirty-two small industrial units which are currently vacant in Reading. Further to this, it identified nine potential occupiers for the proposed development.

- 6.9 This evidence has been reviewed by Reading Borough Council's Policy Team who have confirmed that it is sufficient to confirm that the loss of the small units is acceptable in this case. As such although the proposal does not retain smaller units as described by Policy EM4, it does help to ensure that a range of types and sizes of units are present in the Borough, so overall complies with Policy EM4.
- 6.10 Policy EM1 of the Reading Local Plan (November 2019) states, "*Provision will be made for an additional 53,000-119,000 sq m of office floorspace and 148,000 sq m of industrial and/or warehouse space in Reading Borough for the period 2016 to 2036*".
- 6.11 The proposed scheme will result in an increase of industrial/warehouse floor space, as the existing site contains 586 square metres of floor space, and the proposed scheme will provide 1758 square metres (increase of 1172 square metres). As such the proposed scheme is considered to be compliant with Policy EM1.
- 6.12 Policy EM2 of the Reading Local Plan (November 2019) states, "*Other major employment uses, including industrial and storage and distribution will be located in the A33 corridor or in the Core Employment Areas*". The application site is situated within Core Employment Area EM2h: Portman Road; and therefore is compliant with this Policy.
- 6.13 As identified above, the proposed scheme is compliant with Policies EM1, EM2 and EM4 of the Reading Local Plan (November 2019); and therefore it is considered that the principle of the development is acceptable.

(ii) Design and appearance

- 6.14 Policy CC7 requires that all development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is situated.
- 6.15 The existing buildings are reasonably old and are of poor quality - both from an occupiers and an environmental/visual standpoint. The proposed building will be more modern, and will be of a much higher quality than the existing structures.
- 6.16 Whilst the proposed structure will be considerably larger than existing, it will not be unattractive and will fit in with the character of the surrounding area, which is a core employment area and home to many industrial units of all shapes, sizes and designs.
- 6.17 The proposed scheme is considered to be compliant with Policy CC7 of the Reading Local Plan (November 2019).

(iii) Transport and Parking

- 6.18 The proposal involves the Stadium Way being made into a cul-de-sac served from Scours Lane. The access for the new unit will be direct from Wigmore Lane utilising the existing access, which is to be slightly modified.
- 6.19 The entire length of Stadium Way is a private industrial road and is not adopted highway. In the past, access controls were in place on Stadium Way to prevent vehicles 'rat running' between Scours Lane and Loverock Road. However, the

access controls have not been in operation for a number of years and the industrial estate is frequently used by non-industrial traffic to cut through the site.

- 6.20 The area experiences high levels of on-street parking including on the junction Wigmore Lane and Loverock Road (which can be seen on Google Ariel and street view images). Therefore, HGV's would be unable to swing onto the opposite side of the carriageway to manoeuvre into the site if a HGV was waiting at the access. The revised swept path diagram demonstrates that a 16.5m articulated vehicle can access the site, passing a stationary HGV waiting at the access noting the presence of parked vehicles on the eastern side of the road. However, this is likely to lead to multiple manoeuvres at the site access in order to be in a position to reverse into the delivery and service bays. Given that the proposal would prevent 'through' access to Scours Lane from Wigmore Lane and increase HGV movements on Wigmore Lane, the applicant is, therefore, requested to pay towards a review of the existing parking regulations in the area with the view to implement no waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) on the junction of Wigmore Lane and Loverock Road. This process involves changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and approval by the Traffic Management Sub Committee (TSUB). Changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will be subject to statutory consultation which is under separate legislation to the Planning Act. Any costs associated this process and on-street signage and markings would have to be paid upfront by the applicant. Therefore, a S106 contribution of £5,000 is requested.
- 6.21 In accordance with the adopted SPD, B1(c) Light Industrial and B2 General Industrial uses require one car parking space per 100sqm whilst B8 Storage and Distribution use requires one car parking space per 150sqm. The development will be provided with a total of 23 car parking spaces, equivalent to 1 space per 76sqm (inclusive of 2 disabled parking spaces) which is in excess of the adopted Parking Standards. However, it is acknowledged that there is significant congestion within the vicinity of the site caused by an excess of private cars parking on the public highway. The proposed parking provision seeks to ensure that demand for on-site parking does not create 'overspill' parking on the surrounding highway network which would worsen the existing on-street parking problems. In view of this, the parking provision is acceptable.
- 6.22 In accordance with Reading Borough Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development should provide 1 cycle parking space per 250sqm based on the 'Light Industrial' category, equating to a supply of 7 spaces across the site. It is stated that cycle parking spaces will be located within an accessible, lit, covered and secure storage area either internally or externally on the building perimeter. Full details should be submitted and an appropriate condition to ensure the cycle parking provisions meet the Council's requirements in terms of layout is recommended.
- (iv) Residential Amenity
- 6.23 Policy CC8 states that development will only be permitted where it would not be damaging to the environment through air, land, noise or light pollution and seeks to protect residential amenity.
- 6.24 The proposed development is located in an established industrial/warehousing area; and is currently operational. The nearest residential properties are located to the south of the site on the other side of Portman Road.

- 6.25 The new building layout has been carefully considered and is oriented so as to shield the service area from the houses. It will also act as a buffer to railway noise from trains which run at high level along the embankment to the north.
- 6.26 The residential properties to the south are considered to be a reasonable distance away and are unlikely to be impacted as a result of the development. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy CC8.

(v) Landscaping and Ecology

- 6.27 Policy EN14 states, *“Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading’s vegetation cover will be extended. The quality of waterside vegetation will be maintained or enhanced.”*

New development shall make provision for tree planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change”.

- 6.28 The consultation comments from the Natural Environment department can be viewed in the consultations section of this report (above). To summarise, the site is within a 10% or less canopy cover area, as defined by Reading Borough Council’s Tree Strategy, hence is one in which tree retention and planting is a priority. Whilst there are some concerns, these can all be overcome with appropriate conditions.
- 6.29 It is considered that with appropriate conditions in place, the proposed scheme complies with Policy EN14.

(vi) Flood risk /SuDS

- 6.30 Policy EN17 states, *“All major developments must incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as appropriate and in line with the Government’s Technical Standards”.*
- 6.31 The application was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Cole Easdon Consultants. This concluded that, *“Providing the development adheres to the conditions advised in this Report, it can be accommodated without increasing flood risk within the locality in accordance with objectives set by Central Government and the EA”.*
- 6.32 The SuDS consultation response has confirmed that there are no objections with the addition of a couple of conditions.

(vii) Equality

- 6.33 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

6.34 There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or would have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics, it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

(viii) Sustainability

6.35 Policies CC2 and CC3 seek that new development demonstrates how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. Policy CC4 seeks that in addition to meeting the required BREEAM standards, Major developments should consider a form on-site decentralised energy provision. As referred to earlier in this report, Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) of the New Local Plan now carries significant weight and enhances the BREEAM standards sought for development. This policy now requires that, where possible, all major non-residential development should meet a BREEAM standard of 'Excellent'.

6.36 An Energy and Sustainability Statement has been submitted with the application. The Statement considers the inclusion of an on-site combined heat and power plant (CHP) or a biomass-fuelled heating scheme as a form of decentralised energy provision yet concludes that neither forms of energy provision are suitable for this scheme. However, two technologies were identified as possibilities, which are 1) Photovoltaics (PVs) - commonly referred to as 'solar panels'; and 2) solar water heating. The applicant's agent has confirmed these can be secured via condition.

6.37 The applicant has advised that the development would meet a BREEAM standard of 'Very Good'. This is one level below the desired target level of 'excellent' to meet Policy. The applicant has agreed to BREEAM conditions, which will require a detailed BREEAM pre-estimator report to be submitted and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. The target BREEAM level sought by the condition will be 'excellent'.

(ix) Employment, Skills and Training

6.37 In accordance with Reading Borough Core Strategy Policy CC9: Securing Infrastructure and the Council's SPD 'Employment, Skills and Training' the developer is required to provide for a Construction Employment and Skills Plan which identifies and promotes employment opportunities generated by the proposed development, or other developments within Reading, for the construction phase of the proposed development. This or an equivalent financial contribution in accordance with the adopted SPD, calculated to be £9,689.48 is to be secured within the S106 legal agreement.

(x) Other Matters

6.38 As previously mentioned above in the consultations section, a few comments were received from the current occupiers of the existing units. These objected to the application on the following grounds:

- loss of jobs
- loss of businesses
- Landlord never told about his intentions before the current businesses moved in

- The other available premises in the area are all too big, too small, or not within a suitable price bracket
- 6.39 It is considered that the proposed scheme will likely provide more jobs than the existing businesses. The application form estimates the total number of existing employees as 10; and the proposal will provide 25 jobs. This is an increase of 15.
- 6.40 The existing businesses may be lost, but there is always the possibility of relocation into other available units; the latter of which seems the most likely. One of the comments mentioned that the owner was hoping to see the business out to retirement (which is coming up); and this indicates that losing this specific business is inevitable.
- 6.41 The landlord is not under an obligation to make aware his intentions for the site to tenants. The planning statement mentions that all tenants are on contracts with a maximum of three years; and the landlord is within his rights to apply to develop his own land. If granted, the planning permission will last three years until it lapses; which by this time will mean the contracts of the existing tenants will have expired, and as such the site will be vacant.
- 6.42 The evidence provided by the applicant suggests that there are other vacant industrial units in Reading, which are available for these businesses to relocate to.
- 6.43 Whilst the frustration of the existing tenants can be sympathised with, they do not amount to material considerations and the above report sets out that there are no planning reasons that would support refusing this application.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 With the addition of appropriate conditions, the proposed development is considered to not have a detrimental impact upon employment, the character of the area, nor will it have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties. Further to this, no concerns are raised with regards to flooding, ecology, landscaping or transport. As such planning permission is recommended for approval.

Case Officer: James Overall

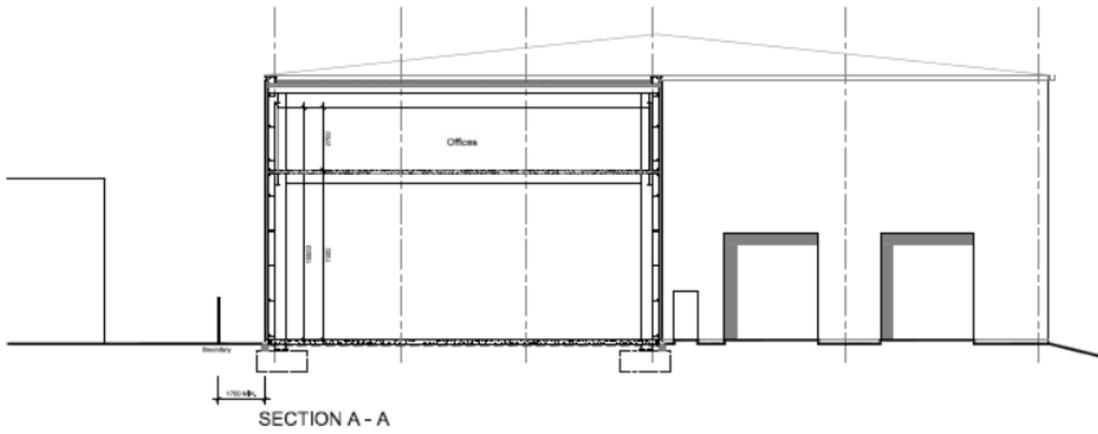
Plans:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Date Received
Location Plan		182.01.01 Rev B	10 Apr-19
Elevations	Existing	182.01.04	10 Apr-19
Block Plan	Proposed	182.01.15	10 Apr-19
Ground Floor Plan	Proposed	182.01.16	10 Apr-19
First Floor Plan	Proposed	182.01.17	10 Apr-19
Roof Plan	Proposed	182.01.18	10 Apr-19
Sectional Plan	Proposed	182.01.20	10 Apr-19
Front/Rear Elevations	Proposed	182.01.21	10 Apr-19
Side Elevations	Proposed	182.01.22	10 Apr-19

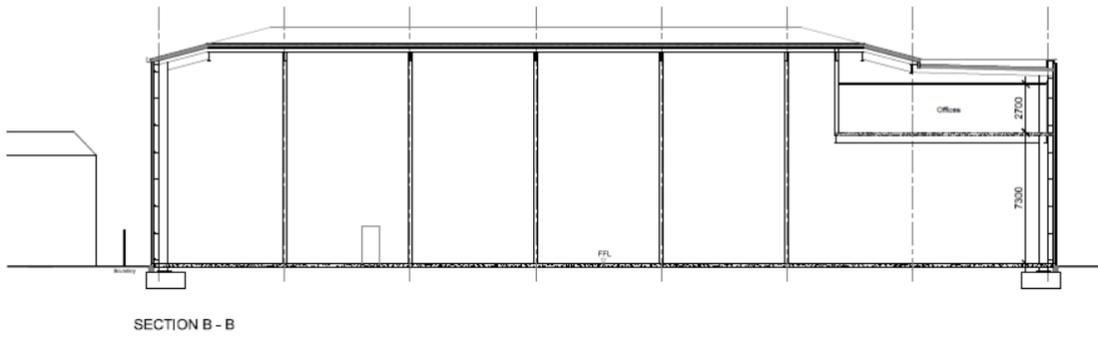
Swept-Path Analysis	Articulated Vehicles at Site Access	18132/TA/TK01 Rev C	3 Jun-19
Swept-Path Analysis	Max Legal Articulated Vehicle	18132/TA/TK03 Rev C	3 Jun-19
Landscape Planting	Proposed	PM - 1812 - 01 Rev B	10 Apr-19



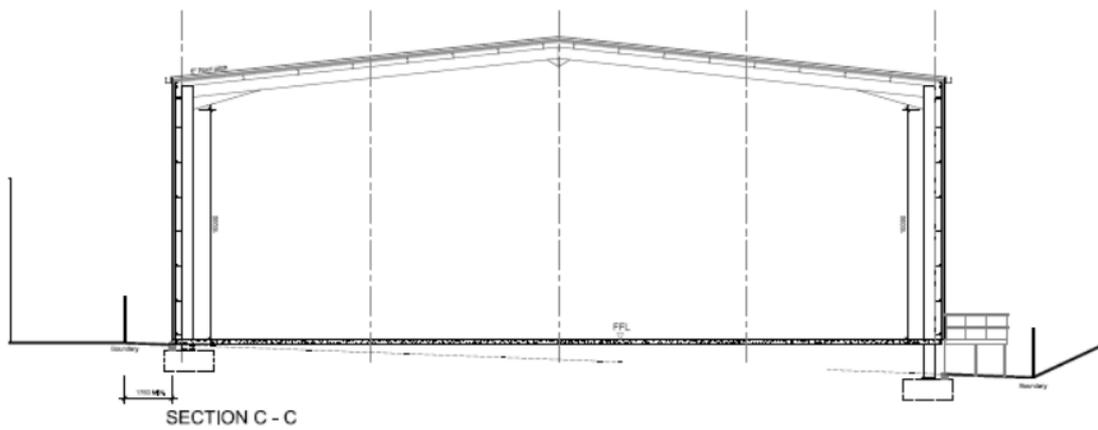
Proposed Block Plan



Proposed Section A-A



Proposed Section B-B

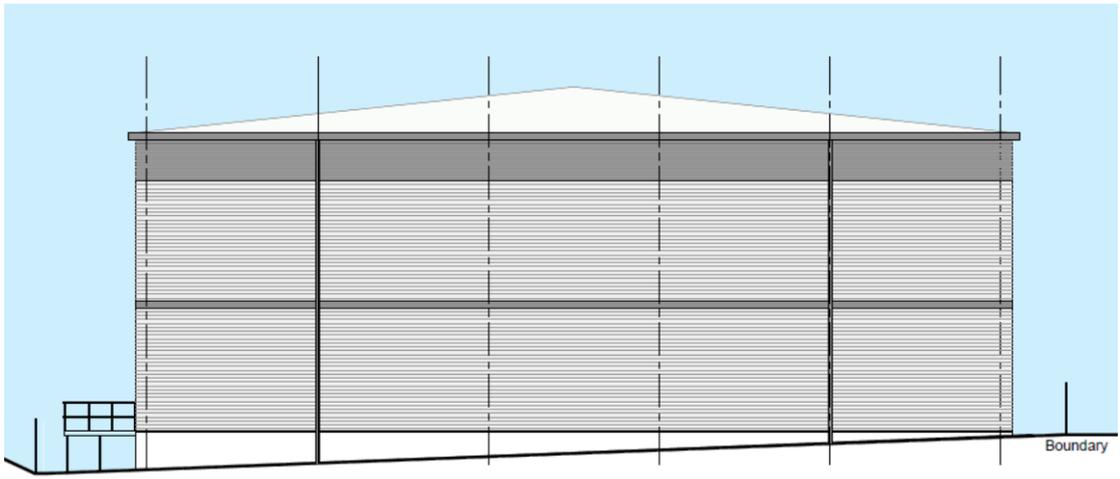


Proposed Section C-C



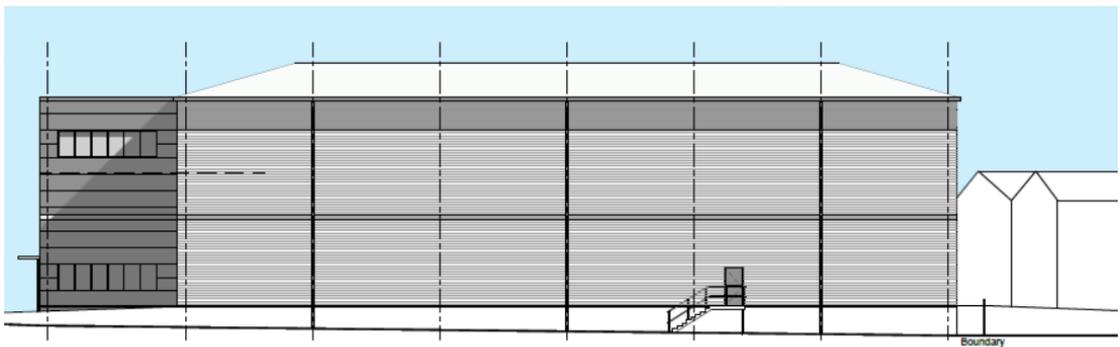
FRONT ELEVATION 1 - 1

Proposed Front Elevation



REAR ELEVATION 2 - 2

Proposed Rear Elevation



SIDE ELEVATION, NORTH 3 - 3

Proposed Side Elevation (North)