



Kings Meadow View, Reading

Transport Assessment

On behalf of **abrdn**



Project Ref: 332110588/003 | Rev: 003 | Date: May 2023

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Document Control Sheet

Project Name: Kings Meadow View, Reading

Project Ref: 332110588

Report Title: Transport Assessment

Doc Ref: 003

Date: May 2023

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Revision	Date	Description	Prepared	Reviewed	Approved
P01	May 2022	Draft Issue	BH	SS	SS
002	May 2023	Draft Issue	RH	SS	SS
003	May 2023	For Submission	RH		

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 ABRDN has commissioned Stantec to undertake a Transport Assessment (TA) to accompany the outline planning application for the Kings Meadow View development, Reading, RG1 3JD.
- 1.1.2 The existing site houses a retail park which will be replaced by a residential led mixed use development which accords with the Local Plan allocation which the site benefits from. The outline applicant for the redevelopment of the site is defined by a series of parameter plans which inform this Transport Assessment and outlines the principles and approach of the proposed development of Kings Meadows View. The TA should be read alongside the Framework Travel Plan (FTP) produced alongside this report.

1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1 The Kings Meadow View is located circa 500m northeast of Reading Town Centre and 650m east of the Reading Railway Station, an 8-minute walk away. The site's location in context with the surrounding road network and the Reading Town Centre is shown in **Figure 1.1**. The site is bounded to the south by Forbury Road and Kenavon Drive, part of the IDR, to the west by office blocks, to the north by a railway track leading to Reading Railway Station and to the east by a continuation of Forbury Retail Park, containing three stores and a McDonalds.

Figure 1.1: Kings Meadow View Site Location



1.3 Existing Site

- 1.3.1 The existing Retail Park site comprises large-scale retail units (predominantly furniture stores), a small drive-thru restaurant (Kentucky Fried Chicken, KFC), a car parking area and a servicing loop around the rear of the units. The site has two access points, both located along

the southern boundary of the site, one on Forbury Road, a left-in, left-out, and an in-only on Kenavon Drive.

1.4 Development Proposals

1.4.1 The development proposals for the Kings Meadow View site are:

'Outline application for comprehensive redevelopment, including demolition of existing structures, comprising a residential-led mixed use scheme of up to 820 units (Class C3) and up to 5,500 sqm (GEA) of commercial uses (Class E) together with ancillary and associated development including new and enhanced pedestrian routes and vehicle access routes, open spaces, hard and soft landscaping, basement, and basement car parking providing up to 200 car parking spaces, and up to 53 car parking spaces serving the commercial uses, up to 860 cycle parking spaces and servicing facilities, sewer diversion and associated works, with details of layout, scale, external appearance and landscaping reserved.'

1.4.2 These development proposals are part of the outline planning application; these are shown in the parameter plans that have been submitted as part of this outline planning application, which have been prepared by Squire & Partners¹, further reserved matters application will follow.

1.5 Pre-Application Discussions

1.5.1 The scope, methodology and assessment contained and presented within this TA and appendices have been informed by scoping and engagement with the local highway authority Reading Borough Council (RBC) as part of a formal and requisite pre-application process.

1.5.2 A detailed transport scoping report was issued to RBC in September of 2021, which included the main principles of the development proposals, calculation of travel demand, and methodology for the transport assessment. The scoping report considered an approximate number of dwellings and floorspace as anticipated at that point in time which was for c.878 and a retail floor area of c.2,000sqm. The final development proposals this TA considers are in line with these previous assumptions, and pre-application discussions are relevant.

1.5.3 A pre-application meeting was held with the RBC highways officer in February 2022 to discuss the contents of the scoping report and the development proposals and to discuss and agree on the principles of the assessment methodology.

1.5.4 There has not been a formal response from RBC on the development proposals and assessment methodology. The following have been discussed with RBC:

- Site is on the town centre's edge and accessible to the railway station and bus stops.
- The site is allocated within the local plan for housing and associated uses. Hence, the principle of this is accepted.
- The site will utilise the existing access points of Forbury Retail Park; this has been agreed upon, along with making the eastern access point two-way in and out.
- The desire to improve the active travel connectivity through the site and across Kenavon Drive to Huntley Wharf.
- The reduced levels of residential parking are welcome and accepted as appropriate in the site's location.

¹ <https://squireandpartners.com/>

- Areas provided to accommodate servicing provisions are welcome.

1.5.5 Whilst formal feedback has been requested from RBC and further engagement with RBC sought pre-application this has unfortunately not proved to be possible. The approach in this TA has therefore been informed by some of the key principles and feedback from the 2022 engagement.

1.6 Report Structure

1.6.1 The remainder of the TA has been structured as follows:

- **Section 2: Policy Context** – This section sets out the various national and local policies and guidance related to this site.
- **Section 3: Site Context** – This section provides an overview of the site location and the historical and existing site uses.
- **Section 4: Sustainable Access** – Sets out the accessibility to the site by walking, cycling and public transport.
- **Section 5: Highway Network** – Local highway network surrounding the site and personal injury collision data review.
- **Section 6: Development Proposals** – Outlines the proposed developments of the site.
- **Section 7: Travel Demand Analysis & Highway Impact** – Provides the sites existing and proposed trip rates and generation for both the commercial and residential sections of Kings Meadow View
- **Section 8: Summary and Conclusion** – This section summarises the finding of the report.

2 Policy Context

- 2.1.1 This section sets out the relevant local and national policy relating to transport and highways for the proposed development.

2.2 National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

- 2.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in 2012, was most recently updated in July 2021. The document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPPF has recently been in consultation until March 2023, the proposed changes to the NPPF are not foreseen to have an impact on this TA.
- 2.2.2 Chapter 9 of the NPPF refers to promoting sustainable transport with respect to development proposals. Paragraph 104 states that "transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
- a) *'The potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
 - b) *Opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage are realised – for example, in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
 - c) *Opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
 - d) *The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects and for net environmental gains; and*
 - e) *Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high-quality places.'*
- 2.2.3 Paragraph 112 refers to the fact that developments should be designed to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements within the scheme and to / from neighbouring areas, and access to high-quality public transport should be facilitated. Paragraph 113 states, "All developments which generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a Travel Plan".
- 2.2.4 Promoting Sustainable Transport section emphasises the need to plan for sustainable travel but also to be pragmatic about the variability of transport options in different communities. This is relevant in the context of the Development, where there is an excellent provision of public transport in proximity to the site.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – Department for Communities and Local Government (March 2014)

- 2.2.5 The supporting 'Planning Practice Guidance' provides a section on 'Travel plans, transport assessments and statements in decision-making. This states that TAs can positively contribute to the following:
- *'encouraging sustainable travel;*
 - *lessening traffic generation and its detrimental impacts;*
 - *reducing carbon emissions and climate impacts;*

- *creating accessible, connected, inclusive communities;*
- *improving health outcomes and quality of life;*
- *improving road safety; and*
- *reducing the need for new development to increase existing road capacity or provide new roads.'*

2.2.6 The guidance also states that TAs should be:

- *'proportionate to the size and scope of the proposed development to which they relate and build on existing information wherever possible;*
- *established at the earliest practicable possible stage of a development proposal;*
- *be tailored to particular local circumstances (other locally-determined factors and information beyond those which are set out in this guidance may need to be considered in these studies provided there is robust evidence for doing so locally);*
- *be brought forward through ongoing collaborative working between the Local Planning Authority/Transport Authority. Engaging communities and local businesses in TAs can be beneficial in positively supporting higher levels of walking and cycling (which in turn can encourage greater social inclusion, community cohesion and healthier communities).'*

2.2.7 The proposed development has been designed to incorporate these principles. This TA follows the guidance set out in the PPG to enable and improve sustainable modes of travel for residents, staff and visitors to Kings Meadow View.

National Guidance

Town and Country Planning Association – 20-Minute Neighbourhoods

- 2.2.8 The concept of a 20-minute neighbourhood is that residents can walk and cycle to all their amenities in the local area within 20 minutes. This enables people to spend more time outdoors and in green spaces and less time in cars. This reduces congestion and air pollution while increasing the level of exercise. This benefits the health of residents and the community, creating a more appealing public realm, facilitating a stronger community, and generating economic activity.
- 2.2.9 The sites' location in the Reading town centre supports the concept of the scheme being within a 20-minute neighbourhood, allowing the residents of the scheme to reach a range of local amenities, including the retail and leisure outlets in the Oracle, Broad Street Mall, and greens spaces such as Christchurch and Kings Meadows. The sites' location also allows commutes to places of employment, including the town centre, within 20 minutes by foot or bike or connections to other modes, including bus stops and Reading Railway Station.

2.3 Local Policy

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (adopted November 2019);

- 2.3.1 The Local Plan provides policies on how Reading will develop up to 2036. Also, vision 2050 has been launched with an aim to make Reading more dynamic, clean, green, healthy, safe, and desirable places to live, work, study, and visit. The Plan states that central Reading "is one of the most accessible locations in the South East". The following six policies considered as part of the proposed development for transport include:

- CC6 – The highest density and largest scale development location taking place in the most accessible location.
- CR13b – The site is part of the wider allocation for a new residential community with additional retail, leisure, and community uses, with new open space and enhancement along with the canal. The site has an indicative capacity for up to 1,840 dwellings, and includes the rest of the Forbury Retail Park on Kenavon Drive, as well as Huntley Wharf. The proposed development has a proposed crossing across Kenavon Drive connecting to Huntley Wharf.
- TR1 – *‘Proposed development should contribute appropriately to meeting the objectives of the most up-to-date Local Transport Plan’. Along with ‘development proposals should make appropriate provision for works and contributions to ensure an adequate level of accessibility and safety by all modes of transport from all parts of a development, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling, in accordance with any agreed transport assessment submitted as part of the application.’*
- TR3 – *‘Developments will only be permitted where:*
 - i. Accesses and works to the highway comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority;*
 - ii. The development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network;*
 - iii. The proposals would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists;*
 - iv. The proposal would not generate regular movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on unsuitable roads or on roads without easy access to the Classified Highway Network; and*
 - v. For non-residential uses or new dwellings on classified roads, off-street servicing would be provided.’*
- TR4 – *It is expected that developments will ‘make full use of opportunities to improve access for cyclists to, from and within the development and to integrate cycling through the provision of new facilities. Development of new facilities for cycling, such as cycle hire points and cycle parking, will be acceptable.’*
- TR5 – *‘Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.’*
- 10% of communal car parking spaces within a residential and non-residential development be provided with EV charging points.

2.3.2 The proposed development has been designed in accordance with the above policies from the RBC Local Plan 2019. The proposals will provide cycle facilities for residents, staff and visitors to the development and the levels of parking provisions will be appropriate given the sites accessible location.

Declared Climate Emergency

2.3.3 RBC declared a climate emergency on 26th February 2019. The Council is developing strategies aimed at achieving net zero carbon by 2030.

- 2.3.4 The Development will be located in an accessible site in Reading by public transport and will provide excellent facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2.3.5 The development proposes residential car parking with a maximum capacity of 200 spaces within the basement car park. This is below the maximum allowed under Reading Borough Council Parking Standards. There will be car club spaces included within the at-grade commercial car park.

Reading Borough Council Third Local Transport Plan, 2011-2026

- 2.3.6 Reading's third Local Transport Plan (LTP3 covering the period 2011 to 2026) was published in April 2012. It will be superseded by the adoption of the Local Transport Plan 4 in 2023.
- 2.3.7 The LTP3 Strategy Plan provides the context for Reading in terms of the economy, environment, and quality of life. The long-term vision for transport in Reading aims to better 'connect Reading' through a transport system that enables people to move around easily, safely, sustainably and in comfort, promoting inclusion, intervention, and innovation. This is reflected in the key LTP objectives, which are:
- To facilitate more physically active travel for journeys in a healthy environment;
 - To improve personal safety on the transport network;
 - To provide affordable, accessible, and inclusive travel options for everyone;
 - To ensure that the transport network operates safely and efficiently to meet the needs of all users;
 - To align transport and land use planning to enable sustainable travel choices, improve mobility, reduce the need to travel and preserve the natural environment;
 - To deliver balanced packages of value-for-money transport solutions and make the best use of existing transport investment;
 - To offer sustainable transport choices for travelling to work, integrating within and between different types of transport;
 - To improve journey times, journey time reliability and the availability of information;
 - To reduce carbon emissions from transport, improve air quality and create a transport network which supports a mobile, affordable low, carbon future.

Reading Borough Council Local Transport Plan 4 2020-36 (LTP4) (Emerging)

- 2.3.8 RBC's LTP4 is currently in consultation, due to be published later this year, and currently has a draft version published and covers the period 2020 – 2036.
- 2.3.9 The LTP4 vision for Reading "is to deliver a sustainable transport system ... that creates an attractive, green and vibrant town with neighbourhoods that promote healthy choices and wellbeing. Future mobility options will enable everyone in Reading to thrive, enjoy an exceptional quality of life and adapt to meet future challenges and opportunities."
- 2.3.10 LTP4 has five objectives:
- *"Provide transport options to enhance quality of life, reduce emissions and improve air quality to create a carbon neutral town".*

- To create healthy streets to assist in active travel and lifestyles by improving accessibility to key destinations in a safe manner.
- Enable sustainable growth for Reading and facilitate connections to communities.
- Promote sustainable transport as part of the transport network that provides an alternative to cars. The network will be fast, affordable, connected, and resilient.
- Using technology to improve the efficiency of the network to allow for informed travel choices for users and “*enabling Reading to become a smart, connected town of the future*”.

2.3.11 The site is located in a highly accessible and sustainable location with public transport nodes being within walking distance, these include bus stops and Reading Railway Station. The site is also within walking distance of Reading Town Centre and the associated amenities. The development will promote sustainable modes of travel to its residents, staff and visitors through measures implemented prior and during occupation of Kings Meadow View

Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020 - 2030 (LCWIP) (adopted November 2019)

2.3.12 The LCWIP has been developed in line with the following objectives. These targets will be agreed upon and quantified through the emerging Local Transport Plan:

- Reducing the number of cars travelling into the town centre.
- Increasing the proportion of adults walking at least 3 times per week.
- Increasing the proportion of adults cycling at least 3 times per week.
- Increasing the number of people walking and cycling to the town centre.
- Reducing the number of cyclists and pedestrians injured on our roads.
- Increasing the number of schools with the Modeshift STARS accreditation to promote children cycling and walking to school.

2.3.13 Section 4.5 outlines the Transport policies based on meeting the objectives set out in the current adopted Local Transport Plan 2011- 2026. Any proposed development must not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network to be permitted as set out in TR3.

2.3.14 TR4 provides guidance on cycle routes and facilities. It states, “*Developments will be expected to make full use of opportunities to improve access for cyclists to, from and within the development and to integrate cycling through the provision of new facilities.*” The proposed development has accommodated the existing and future cycling demand adjacent to the site.

Reading Borough Council Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Parking Document (Adopted October 2011);

2.3.15 The proposed development is located in Zone 3, as such, the parking standards reflect this. **Table 2.1** displays the residential parking standards.

2.3.16 It has been agreed that a lower level of parking is appropriate for this site due to its accessible location for active travel and public transport, that will not have a determinantal impact to highway safety. This is similar to other sites in the Reading town centre area, such as the development of Huntley Wharf and Station Hill.

- 2.3.17 The site will provide accessible parking of 3 disabled spaces or 5% of total capacity for each land use, whichever is greater.

Table 2.1: Reading Borough Council Car Parking Standards

Land Use	Required No. of Parking Spaces
1-2 Bed Flat	1.5 spaces (required)
3+ Bed Flat	2 spaces (required)
Visitor Parking	1 Space per 4 dwellings (required)
Food Retail	1 Space per 30sqm (maximum)

- 2.3.18 The RBC cycle parking standards are displayed in **Table 2.2**.

Table 2.2: Reading Borough Council Cycle Parking Standards

Size	Required No. of Parking Spaces
1-2 Bed Flat	0.5
3+ Bed Flat	1
Food Retail	1 space per 6 staff and 1 space per 300sqm

2.4 Summary

- 2.4.1 The proposed development is located in an area with a high level of accessibility by rail and bus with good walking and cycle access. The parameter plans of the site will provide priority for pedestrians and cyclists and is in line with NPPF objectives.
- 2.4.2 Furthermore, the development proposes residential car parking below the maximum permitted by council parking standards, although car club spaces will be provided.
- 2.4.3 The Development is therefore considered to align well with key local, regional, and national transport policies.