

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Emmer Green

App Ref: 221842/FUL

Address: Service Station, 184 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LW

Proposals: Creation of a charging zone, erection of EV chargers, erection of canopy, substation enclosure, and associated forecourt works.

Case Officer: Mr David Brett

Applicant: Motor Fuel Group

Date received (valid from): 08/12/2022

Target Decision date: 31/05/2023, extension of time agreed on decision from 02/02/2023

1. INTRODUCTION

The proposal site consists of a service station located to the north side of Henley Road, Emmer Green. The surrounding area is considered to be predominantly residential, with a mix of semi-detached and detached two storey dwellings. Henley Road is an arterial road, linking Caversham District Centre with the northeast side of the borough. Directly west of the proposal site is a pub at 180 Henley Road, whilst 186 Henley Road to the east is a dwelling.



Fig 1. 184 Henley Road. Image retrieved from Google Street View on 23/05/2023 (image captured in November 2022)

The proposal site is located within an Air Quality Management Area, and located upon contaminated land.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposed development seeks the following:

- Creation of electric vehicle charging zone for five vehicles.
- Canopy over the proposed vehicle charging zone.
- Erection of a Substation with enclosure.
- Reconfiguration of forecourt such as the relocation of air, water and vacuum facilities.

Plans considered (plans with double strikethrough denote superseded plans):

- Block Plan - 13664-BP-FS204
- Location Plan - 13664-LP-1-204
- ~~Existing Site Layout - 13664-P01-204~~
- ~~Proposed Site Layout - 13664-P02-FS204~~
- EV Canopy Detail - 13664-P03-FS204

- Substation Elevations - 13664-P04-FS204
- A/W and Vac Details - 13664-P05-FS204

Received on 08/12/2022

- Existing Site Layout - 13664-P01-204 Rev A
- ~~Proposed Site Layout - 13664-P02-FS204 Rev A~~

Received on 20/02/2023

- Tree Survey / Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- ~~Proposed Site Layout - 13664-P02-FS204 Rev B~~
- ~~Noise Impact Assessment - 425.064698.00001 Ver 1~~

Received on 06/03/2023

- ~~Proposed Site Layout - 13664-P02-FS204 Rev C~~
- ~~Detail of Acoustic Fencing System - 06-J7/01043~~

Received on 29/03/2023

- ~~Proposed Site Layout - 13664-P02-FS204 Rev E~~

Received on 04/04/2023

- Proposed Site Layout - 13664-P02-FS204 Rev E
- Noise Impact Assessment - 425.064698.00001 Ver 2

Received on 11/04/2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

880249/FUL - PROVISION OF A CAR WASH - Application Refused on 23/11/1988

910570/ADV - Pole sign, canopy edge 'Elf' logo, pump island 'Totem' signs - Application Permitted on 18/04/1991

010207/ADV - 2 x single sided freestanding advertisement display units. - Application Permitted on 05/02/2002

040359/TEL - Installation of a base station in the form of 12.5 metre slimline column supporting 3G antennae, a ground based street furniture equipment cabinet with ancillary development thereto. - Application Withdrawn on 01/04/2004

111394/TEL - 12m high Hutchinson T2 lamppost column (overall height 13.38m) supporting 6 antennas in shroud and ground based equipment cabinet and ancillary development - Granted Prior Approval on 12/05/2011

151493/TEL - Replacement of the existing 13.8m high lamp post with a new 15m high lamp post; installation of 1 no. proposed equipment cabinet unit; plus ancillary works - Granted Prior Approval on 15/10/2015

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The following addresses were consulted by letter.

Function Room, The Travellers Rest Ph, 180 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading - No response received.

2, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.

3, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.

4, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.
5, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.
6, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.
7, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.
8, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.
9, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.
10, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.
11, Marlow Court, All Hallows Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LL - No response received.
The Travellers Rest Ph, 180 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5DL - No response received.
186 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5LN - No response received.
Flat 1, The Travellers Rest Ph, 180 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5DL - No response received.
Flat 2, The Travellers Rest Ph, 180 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5DL - No response received.

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control - Response received on 16/12/2022.

- There are no Transport objections to this application, the proposed works do not change or impact the current parking or access arrangements.

Reading Borough Council, Environmental Protection - Response received on 19/12/2022.

- Noise arising from development.

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Response received on 07/02/2023.

- The proposal appears to potentially also require the removal of one of the small trees/bushes on the rear boundary for the substation, which is potentially within the RPA of the neighbour's tree as well - the application form appears incorrect on this point in that it indicates there are no trees potentially impacted.
- The loss of the open green space, with no landscaping offered in an attempt to mitigate the significant change of soft to hard, or to mitigate the negative impact on the streetscene does not sit well with policy requirements.
- The lack of tree information is not acceptable and clarity on vegetation loss and on the RPA of the neighbour's tree should be provided prior to a decision. Landscape proposals should also be provided, in principle at least, to help show how the development meets with policy EN14 and aims of our adopted Tree Strategy. Tree planting should be included where feasible taking into account any below ground infrastructure that may be present.
- Currently the proposal is not supported in tree and landscape terms.

Reading Borough Council, Natural Environment - Further response received on 06/02/2023 upon review of revised plans.

- The arb document highlighted significant issues with the original layout and suggested a design alteration to resolve this and provided tree protection measures based on this amended design. I note that this amendment is shown on the revised Site Layout hence the proposals are now acceptable subject to securing the recommended tree protection measures. Whilst the Arb document isn't entitled 'arboricultural method statement', one is included within the document, along with a TPP hence no further document is required. Condition L7A is required to secure development in accordance with the document.
- In relation to landscaping, I note that the Proposed Site plan shows one fastigate tree in front of the proposed charging zone, which is positive - details of this can be secured through condition.

A site notice was sent to the agent on 14/12/2022 to display on site. No further responses have been received.

5. EQUALITY ACT 2010

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CC2 Sustainable design and construction

CC7 Design and the public realm

CC8 Safeguarding amenity

EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodland

EN15 Air Quality

EN16 Pollution and Water Resources

EN17 Noise Generating Equipment

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 Design

The proposed development consists of the installation of the installation of a 5 bay electric vehicle charging station with canopy, and the erection of a substation with associated enclosure.

The vehicle charging bay is proposed to be located to the east of the site, towards the side boundary with 184 Henley Road. The canopy above the vehicle charging stations is to be 3m high, and simply cover the charging stations. The layout of the proposed charging station within the services station is considered acceptable and would not disrupt the flow of traffic or vehicle manoeuvres within the site.

The proposed substation will be located to the rear of the site, within a 2.8m high enclosure, which would be enclosed by a 2.4m high close boarded timber fence. As the substation is located to the rear of the site, with its appearance softened by the timber enclosure, it is considered that the substation and enclosure would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area.

The overall proposed layout of the service station, including the removal of the existing air, water and vac units, with the erection of a combination model, is considered to be acceptable and characteristic of a service station. Therefore, the proposed development is considered in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

7.2 Safeguarding Amenity

Concerns have been raised by the Environmental Protection Team with regards to noise arising from the vehicle charging stations. The amended Noise Impact Assessment report concludes that the development would represent an improvement over the existing noise levels generated from the site. The proposed site layout includes measures to reduce the impact of noise from the substation and charging stations through the erection of a canopy to the charging stations, and the enclosures to the substation. As the development represents an improvement of the existing situation in terms of noise generated from the site, the development is not considered harmful in terms of noise impact.

The development has been considered against the other assessment criteria listed under Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and is considered acceptable with regards to its impact on neighbouring amenity. The proposed development is therefore considered in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

7.3 Natural Environment

An arboricultural impact assessment and arboicultural method statement have been submitted to support this application. The details of which have been agreed by the Council's Natural Environment Team and will be secured via condition to any approval of this application.

With regards to soft landscaping, a Fastigate tree has been proposed towards the front of the site along the side boundary to 186 Henley Road. Given the scale and nature of the development, the proposed soft landscaping is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

7.4 Air Quality

This proposal has been considered against Reading Borough Local Plan policy EN15, as the proposal site is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). As demonstrated in the policy, this proposal does not meet the requirements for an Air Quality Assessment (AQA) and is considered not enough of a detrimental impact air quality to warrant such an assessment due to the size and scale of the proposal.

8. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed and the proposed works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and planning permission can be granted.

9. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

10. CONDITIONS

TL1: Time Limit (Standard)

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

AP1: Approved Plans

The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- Block Plan - 13664-BP-FS204
- Location Plan - 13664-LP-1-204
- EV Canopy Detail - 13664-P03-FS204
- Substation Elevations - 13664-P04-FS204
- A/W and Vac Details - 13664-P05-FS204

Received on 08/12/2022

- Tree Survey / Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Received on 06/03/2023

- Proposed Site Layout - 13664-P02-FS204 Rev E
- Noise Impact Assessment - 425.064698.00001 Ver 1

Received on 11/04/2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

M3: Materials (As Specified)

The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of this development shall be as specified on the plans and unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

L1: Landscaping Small Scale (To Be Approved)

Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, details of the proposed tree planting, specifying species, stock size and tree pit specification shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and must include a maintenance programme detailing all operations to be carried out in order to allow successful establishment of planting. Planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s) or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interest of ensuring that the landscaping of the development enhances the visual local environment and in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

L7A: Arboricultural Method Statement (As Specified)

Protective measures, including fencing, ground protection, supervision and working procedures shall be carried out in accordance with the Arboricultural Report and Method Statement / Tree Protection Plan prepared by Alltree Consultancy Ltd dated 27/02/2023. Any deviation from the works prescribed or methods agreed in the report will require prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In order to ensure that reasonable measures are taken to safeguard trees in the interests of local amenity and the enhancement of the development itself in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

11. INFORMATIVES

Standard Informatives