



Crime Impact Statement



On behalf of:
Industrials REIT

In respect of:
Rose Kiln Court
Rose Kiln Lane
Reading
RG2 0BY

Date:
February 2022

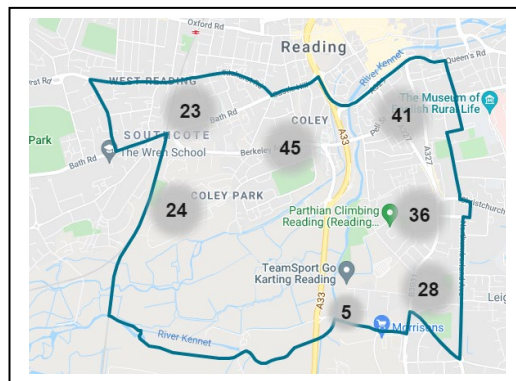
Reference:
MA/IND/001-4/R003

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Crime Impact Statement (CIS) has been prepared by Aylward Town Planning Ltd (ATP) on behalf of our client; Industrials REIT in support of a planning application submitted by them as landowner to meet the requirements of future opportunities to deliver modern multi-let industrial units to meet the needs of ingoing tenants for employment use.
- 1.2 The application site comprises an area of tired employment buildings and underused land. This includes a vacant office building and associated structures, with the land to the south being given over to extensive parking. The building had been designed in the early 1990s to allow for a range of uses and sub-division, but it has been in sole occupation by Thames Water until their recent decision to relocate at the end of their lease.
- 1.3 The purpose of this CIS is to evaluate the risk of crime and disorder in the vicinity of the application site and assess the proposal's likely effect on the area.
- 1.4 The implementation of any further specific targeting measures will be determined through consultation with Thames Valley Police Architectural Liaison Unit as part of the planning process with appropriate control through the use of planning conditions.
- 1.5 The CIS outlines how design solutions which will achieve appropriate design solutions which will achieve an appropriate standard of security and help reduce the proposal's vulnerability to crime through design layout, uses, management and maintenance.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Whilst the Home Office Crime Statistics does not provide a broad analysis of Reading's central area, street level crime map information is available which demonstrates that based on available data, the level of crime and anti-social behaviour in the Reading local authority area is higher than the average for the Thames Valley force.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this statement, the table below outlines the monthly crime levels on an annual basis for a Force area aligned to the screenshot below from December 2019 onward.



Year	Reported Crime Incidents (All Crime and ASB)
December 2021	202
December 2020	233
December 2019	153

Figure 1- Target Area

Table 1- Reported Crime Rate

- 2.3 The Home Office crime data also allows for an evaluation of crime by type to provide a finer grain assessment of crime issues and trends pertinent to that area south of Reading town centre either side of the A33.

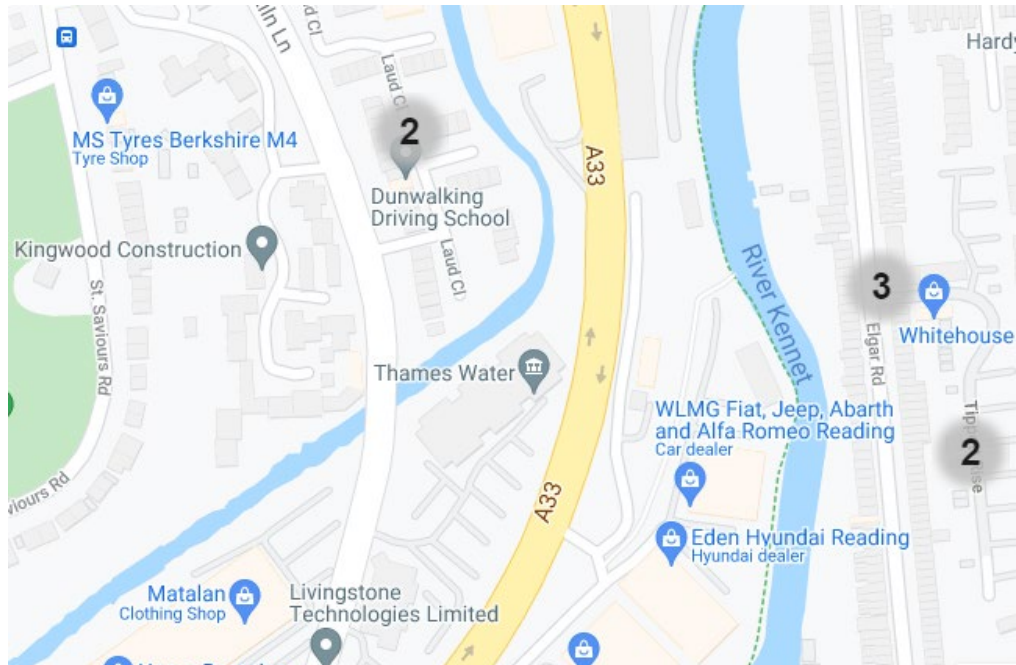
DATE	ASB	Vehicle Crime	Violent Crime	Public Disorder	Shoplift	Criminal Damage	Other Theft	Drugs	Other Crime	Burglary and Theft from Person
Dec 2021	21	14	74	21	1	17	19	7	7	21
Dec 2020	25	20	78	26	1	23	21	8	7	24
Dec 2019	20	21	39	6	8	12	17	10	5	15

Table 2 Crime Statistics (source: www.police.uk)

- 2.4 The table above demonstrates the type of crime which currently affects the local area and how this has changed over recent time (from December 2019).
- 2.5 The predominant recorded crimes in all years is violent crime and then other key categories (anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and various forms of theft). There has been a fall in recorded crime to December 2021 from the 2020 peak, but it is still higher than the base figures from 2019.

2.6 We do note the very considerable uplift in the recorded figures for violent crime from 2019 to 2020 onward and reflect our understanding of changes to crime recording during this period that could have some relevance to such a stark change over this relatively short period.

2.7 The plan overleaf shows a much tighter area focused on the Rose Kiln Court area:



2.8 For the above area, it is clear that there are localised hotspots but there have been zero crimes recorded on or near the Rose Kiln Court site itself.

Comparable Crime Data

2.9 The following table illustrates that Reading has, at borough level, slightly lower crime levels as compared to the rest of Berkshire and also below the national average. The subject site falls within Minster ward. As would be expected, this borough average encompasses hot spots of high crime and this ward has considerably lower crime rates which are comparable to the county and national averages.

Geographic Area	Reported Crime Rates per 1000 (All Crime and ASB)
Minster	51
Reading	70.5
Berkshire	75
England	77.6

Table 3: Reported Crime Rates (source: www.police.uk/thamesvalley)

- 2.10 The data demonstrates that there is considerable variation at local level, but it is evident that the Minster ward is an area of lesser concern albeit that we note that there has been a marked increase in overall recorded crime since 2019 levels.

3.0 Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 The accompanying Planning Statement provides a comprehensive summary of the relevant planning policy. This section summarises those planning policies directly relevant to design and crime.

National Guidance- NPPF

- 3.2 The NPPF was adopted in April 2012 and supersedes all previous Planning Policy Statements. The document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It has most recently been updated in July 2021.
- 3.3 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This will be achieved through economic, social and environmental means. One of the principle aspects is good design guidance is provided on how planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments '*create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion*'.

Development Plan

- 3.4 The Reading Borough Local Plan was adopted by the Council in November 2019. The Local Plan provides the overarching strategic policy document in the Development Plan framework and guides the location and level of development in the borough.
- 3.5 There are no specific Development Plan policies concerned solely with crime or community safety, but the topic does feed into a number of policies such as Policy CC7. Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) states as follows in terms of these matters:

All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form...will also be assessed to ensure that they: -

...Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion..."

Crime and Disorder Act

- 3.6 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act places a duty on the Local Authority to have regard to the likely effect on and the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. Layouts should seek to avoid features which could increase the risk of crime i.e. Long narrow unlit passages between buildings as recommended in Circular 5/94.

4.0 **Proposed Development and Crime Prevention Methodologies**

- 4.1 The development proposal seeks full planning permission for the erection of flexible employment units, along with associated external storage, landscaping, boundary treatments and car parking.
- 4.2 The development will be suitable for occupation under a range of uses from light industrial (Now Class E(G)(iii)) as well as B2/B8. The scheme will also provide improved screening to the northern and southern boundaries of the site. Access will be taken from the south-west onto Rose Kiln Lane, which is an existing access point on the network.
- 4.3 The scheme delivers two blocks of built form each of which provide flexible accommodation over two floors. The site covers 0.64 hectares and will support 11 units with 4080m² total floorspace for mixed commercial use. These new units range from 256m² – 526m² individually, delivering flexible employment space with areas available for turning and parking.
- 4.4 Full details of the proposal with regard to use, amount, layout, scale, appearance, and access are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. The proposals can however be summarised and broken down as follows:
- 11 no. employment units;
 - Units ranging from 256m² – 526m²;
 - Overall floorspace of 4080m²;
 - 86 parking spaces including accessible provision, plus cycle parking;
 - Space for turning movements and deliveries by commercial vehicles; and
 - Other associated works.

Potential Risks

- 4.5 In the first instance it is important to recognise that the site has been in active employment use and has served as office accommodation for an extended period. Whilst we would agree that the character of movements to a multi-let employment scheme do differ from an office use, in reality the extent of visitation and natural surveillance will increase considerably.
- 4.6 In the absence of mitigation or planning, the following potential risks have been identified as those which could be associated with the proposed development:
- Criminal damage to non-residential properties;
 - Theft from non-residential properties;
 - Robbery and attacks on employees; and
 - Unauthorised access to private space and buildings

- 4.7 In consideration of the above risks, a number of design features have been considered and form part of this planning application. In consideration of the above risks, design features form part of this planning application. These include:
- Lighting;
 - CCTV coverage,
 - Boundary fencing;
 - Site secured outside core trading hours; and
 - Secure cycle parking.
- 4.8 Whilst the site can be used by occupiers on a 24 hour basis, the gated access is secured outside core trading hours (0800-1800) with boundary fencing and pin-coded site gates at the point of access/egress. If a third party did wish to access the site outside core hours it would require criminal damage. Any such criminal damage or other trespass (on foot) would be captured by CCTV, alarms and security lighting.
- 4.9 It is extremely important to the landlord and their tenants that the risk of criminal damage or theft is mitigated as it would otherwise impact confidence in the business location which is a cornerstone of the business model. As may be considered necessary, the implementation of these physical measures can be managed by way of planning condition.
- 4.10 Crime prevention principles will be a central consideration as will be the opportunity to use target hardening measures upon the scheme in conjunction with the end occupiers. The scheme will seek to incorporate such measures and consider any additional recommendations made by the Architectural Liaison Unit to minimise further potential for crime and criminal damage. As may be considered necessary, these can be developed through dialogue and managed by planning condition.

5.0 Safer Places Analysis

5.1 In consideration of the identified crime risk within the local area, the following attributes have been considered through the design of the proposals, in accordance with the guidance set out in the Government's *Safer Places* manual. The applicant is also aware of the 2009 consultation document "Safer Places: A Counter Terrorism Supplement". The key principles on this respect are set out at bullet 13 of the consultation document and are:

- Deter
- Detect
- Delay

5.2 It is confirmed that these effectively reinforce the wider Safer Places principles and we think it appropriate to continue to use this framework.

Access and Movement

Places with well-defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security

5.3 The proposals provide multi-let accommodation within a secured site that has a well-established and visible movement network with a singular point of access/egress. The site entrance will be well signed and clarify that this is a private space discouraging access other than by tenants or those visiting the site in connection with business needs of those tenants.

5.4 The access point has existing gating which is closed outside core business hours. The site boundary is already fenced and has CCTV coverage, which will be improved through implementation of the proposed scheme as well as more extensive lighting.

5.5 The siting of buildings and boundary treatments alongside the circulation routes will ensure that the buildings and spaces are well-defined. The proposed use, management and enhancements to the site will ensure visitation and the enhanced intervisibility should have a marked effect on both incidence and fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour in this area. Through increased activity and the reassurance provided by strong boundary treatments and effective lighting, this ensures that the fear of crime for end users is significantly reduced.

Surveillance

Places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked

5.6 Well-designed site layouts create well-overlooked places. Surveillance can either be 'natural', organised, or electronic. At the application site, the design approach has sought to encourage

surveillance and reducing the number of places for loitering, which will discourage offenders.

- 5.7 The scheme has been designed to ensure that the units are overlooked and have the benefit of additional lighting which will provide effective surveillance at night (as may be required and subject to other considerations) and to send out a positive message about the management of the site. This will also reduce the fear of crime and help end occupiers feel safer in the immediate environment.
- 5.8 The car park provides dedicated spaces for staff within the site. It will be well-lit and lined, with appropriate enclosure provided through boundary treatments which define spaces and crossing points without obscuring views or providing hiding places for any offenders.

Ownership

Places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community

- 5.9 The Safer Places guidance states that places which are well looked after and have a strong sense of ownership tend to be less vulnerable to crime. The scheme provides effective boundary treatments and other measures to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

Physical Protection

Places that include necessary, well-designed security features

- 5.10 A key method of preventing crime is to make a property as secure as is reasonably possible. The proposed car park will be protected through target hardening measures such as using secure fencing, lighting and CCTV coverage. The specification of the boundary fencing and lighting are clarified through the submitted details.
- 5.11 In addition to these physical security measures, the additional built from will support a greater number of businesses and through this and the design approach.
- 5.12 The scheme has an existing point of access/egress and this is secured outside core trading hours save for pin-coded entry for tenants who will be able to access the site on a 24 hour basis in the knowledge that this is a secure environment. This point of access will have CCTV coverage as well as a wider system within the site itself.
- 5.13 In addition to fencing and lighting, the scheme will take the opportunity to provide planting as appropriate to soften the development. However, it is imperative that the planting strategy does not impede the crime prevention objectives so therefore will comprise low level planting that will ensure natural surveillance through species choice and planting density.

Activity, Management and Maintenance

Places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times. Places that are designed with management and maintenance in mind, to discourage crime in the present and the future

- 5.14 The Safer Places guidance states that places which are well looked after and have a strong sense of ownership tend to be less vulnerable to crime, with clear distinctions between public and private spaces. In this way, the scheme provides a sense of management and seeking to ensure that the vulnerability of adjacent properties has been considered and mitigated.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The proposals are consistent with the principles set out in governing policy and guidance, and promote an inclusive and safe development, with safe and accessible environments where crime does not undermine community cohesion.
- 6.2 In the first instance it is important to recognise that the site has been in active employment use and served as office accommodation for an extended period. Whilst the scheme will deliver investment and greater range of uses than has previously been supported, the new character of use will likely result in greater visitation and natural surveillance. In terms of benchmarking, we also note that crime evidence suggests that the Rose Kiln Court site itself is subject to very little crime.
- 6.3 This Statement has shown that the proposals will both meet the requirements and contribute to the objectives of governing policy and the guidance set out within Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention (2004).