

Delegated Application Report

Extended Target Date: 08/09/2021

Address: 171 Basingstoke Road, Reading

Application No: 210997/FUL

Proposal: Change of use to vehicle rental premises (sui generis) to include part demolition of existing building and erection of modular building and rental vehicle wash bay, parking and associated works

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application site is located on the eastern side of Basingstoke Road close to the junction with Longbarn Lane and Canterbury Road. The site currently comprises a former car dealership with hardstanding to the front. Vehicular access is provided from the Basingstoke Road. Application 210997 is proposed to demolish the existing building and to replace it with an Enterprise Rent-A-Car office and car rental.

It is in an AQMA area, with contaminated land polygons.



It has not been possible to visit the site due to the current pandemic however photographs were submitted as part of the application and along with Google Maps and Google Streetview Officers were able to assess the application fully in context with its neighbouring properties.

Proposal:

The proposal is for a vehicle rental premises (sui generis) (Enterprise Rent-A-Car UK Ltd) to include the part-demolition of the existing building and erection of a modular building and rental vehicle wash bay, Car club scheme, parking and associated works. The modular building is located in the centre of the site and measures approximately 109.5 sqm. A wash bay for washing and light maintenance of the rental vehicles is proposed to the rear of the site. The existing former car showroom site is being split into two business units to form 171 and 171B Basingstoke Road.

The proposal includes approximately 30-35 parking bays for the storage of rental vehicles. Some spaces are available for staff and visitor parking however the covering letter submitted with the application states Enterprise's staff will not normally require parking as they regularly move rental vehicles around Enterprises local network of branches which means

they arrive and leave in rental vehicles. Enterprise do not allow customer parking on site as customers are either picked up and dropped off by other means.

The existing access from Basingstoke Road will remain, with existing boundary treatments remaining and proposed new fencing at the rear of the site between the division of the existing site between 171 and 171B Basingstoke Road to the east. New bollards, 'hooped bollards' and a new swing gate are proposed to secure the vehicle rental premises outside of its operating hours and to delineate the Car Club bays (which require 24/7 access) and the Enterprise rental facility.

Lighting columns will be provided and will only operate during opening hours when it is dark. The lighting and signage will be controlled by timer and light sensors. Advertising consent is currently under consideration.

Opening hours will be 0700 to 1900 Monday to Friday, 0800 to 1700 on Saturday and 1000 to 1800 Sunday and Bank Holidays albeit this includes 1 hour either side of the branch being open to the public to allow for car preparation, administration and opening/closing the branch securely.

The proposal also includes two car parking spaces at the front of the site which will be used for Enterprise's Car Club Scheme. The Car Club provides members with 24/7 access.

Nine full time staff will be employed.

Plans Submitted:

The agent submitted the following plans and information:

Application letter

Site Location Plan (ref. ERAC001)

Site Layout Plan - existing (ref. ERAC002)

Demolition Plan (ref. ERAC004)

Lighting Plan (ref. ERAC007)

Sign Location Plan (ref. ERAC010)

Modular Building Floor Plan and Elevations (ref. 19666masterA)

Wash Bay General Arrangement (ref. ECR-WB-SK01 rev 4)

Wash Bay General Arrangement - Elevations and Sections (ref. ECR-WB-SK02 rev 4)

Drainage Connection Specification (ref. 800341-6)

39689 Basingstoke Road, Reading - Signage Specification prepared by Brand 05612 Transport Statement, PJA, June 2021

J10-12388A-10 A/1/F1 Air quality Assessment, June 2021

CIL

As received 18 June 2021

21-8158 Noise impact assessment, Syntegra consulting, June 2021

Email dated 06/07/2021 confirming signage will only be illuminated when it is dark during operational hours.

As received on 6 July 2021

Construction method statement
ERAC003 Proposed site Plan V2

As received 31/08/2021

Relevant Planning History:

141311 Change of use from a storage and distribution centre to a car show room, including internal alterations, new cladding to all elevations, windows and some minor external works. Permitted 12 December 2014

162189 Sign A 4.5m high internally illuminated double sided pylon, Sign B internally illuminated wall mounted brand and dealer name clip, Sign C wall mounted internally illuminated, free flying oval, Sign D double sided internally illuminated dealer name and services sign, Sign E internally illuminated arched entrance feature. Permitted 20 January 2017

162294 Non-Material Amendment to permitted application 141311 Permitted 27 January 2017

210998 One T-shaped pylon sign (comprising two signs), one free-standing sign, three fascia signs and one moveable trolley sign. Under consideration

Consultation Responses:

Neighbour notification letters were sent to 63a Kiln Road, 169, 173, 200, 202, 204, 206 and 208 Basingstoke Road and no comments have been received. A site notice was displayed on 15 July 2021.

Development Control - Transport advised that in principle there was no objection to the proposal subject to conditions for a construction method statement and cycle storage provision. A reworded condition for an unused access to be reinstated within 3 months of occupation was agreed to provide more flexibility for the applicant.

The Transport Statement indicates that the proposals will retain the existing vehicular access arrangements on Basingstoke Road to the north-west corner of the site and remove the existing vehicular crossover located to the south-west corner. However, the proposed site plan ERAC003, Appendix C, indicate that both dropped kerb accesses are to be retained. The applicant has stated that they wish to retain the southern access for potential / occasional use or should their requirements change in the future. However, this is unacceptable and the provision of a dropped kerb should not be retained unless it is necessary to the operational requirements of the business. Given that parking bays will obstruct the use of the access, the footway must be reinstated to line and level. If approval is granted, this should be covered by condition.

Alternatively if the access has a purpose and is not obstructed in any form (by parking bays, fencing, bollards) then it could be retained, otherwise access should be reinstated within 3 months of occupation.

Delivery and servicing vehicles will enter the site via the site access and loop around the site, to exit the same way. Vehicle swept path analysis are provided in **Appendix D** demonstrating how delivery and servicing vehicles would access the site. The largest vehicle tracked is a refuse vehicle. The applicant confirm that no vehicle deliveries will be made by car transporter and they are happy to accept a condition as per the previous Ford dealership permission (ref; 141311).

Local parking standards are set out in the RBC, Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which takes into account the accessibility of the site. However, there are no specific parking standards for vehicle rental businesses. Therefore, an application of this type is likely to be considered on its own merits considering business operations and local circumstances.

The Transport Statement states that a total of 34 parking spaces will be provided within the site, with the majority used for the storage of rental vehicles rather than for customers or staff. The applicant has stated that the significant majority of customers utilise Enterprise's pick-up / drop-off service or Enterprise will pick-up and drop-off their vehicles at their customers' homes or places of work. However, it is probable that some customers will choose to be dropped/collected to the site in order to pick up the vehicle from the branch. It is stated that some spaces are available for staff and visitor parking (including a disabled space) directly to the front of the proposed modular building during operational hours, however, no customer parking is available for extended periods to avoid third party vehicles being left on site.

In respect of staff parking, the Transport Statement states that there is limited demand for staff car parking, as the staff routinely move Enterprise's rental vehicles between branches at the beginning and end of each working day, and therefore use those rental vehicles to get to and from work. It is stated there will be sufficient space available within the site on the very rare occasion that a member of staff might need to use their own vehicle to get to work as the majority of rental vehicles will be in circulation and not at site.

Policy TR5 outlines the requirements for car and cycle parking. The applicant has indicated that in practical terms staff will not require cycle parking as the staff routinely move rental vehicles between branches at the beginning and end of each working day. However, in order to comply with policy TR5 cycle parking must be provided which I am happy to cover by condition to provide cycle storage for two cycle (1 space per 4 FTE staff).

A total of two car club spaces are illustrated on the proposed site plan ERAC003, Appendix C. The applicant has confirmed that the two car parking spaces will be dedicated to Enterprise's Car Club scheme. The Car Club provides members with 24/7 access to a choice of new cars and vans parked locally to where they live, work and study. The car club vehicles will utilise that northern part of the site and will be parked within the area outside of the secured site to provide 24/7 access.

A total of four electric vehicle charging (EVC) spaces are proposed, equating to 12% of the total parking provision which is acceptable.

There are no transport objections to this application subject to the conditions below;

Conditions

C2 CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT (TO BE SUBMITTED)

DC1 VEHICLE PARKING (AS SPECIFIED)

DC6 CYCLE PARKING (TO BE APPROVED)

No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until the vehicle details of an electric vehicle (EV) charging Scheme comprising a layout plan and detailed specification for a minimum of ten percent of all vehicle parking spaces to be provided with electric vehicle charging points has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No building/extension shall be occupied until the electric vehicle (EV) charging spaces have been fully provided in accordance with the approved details. The spaces shall be maintained for vehicle charging in accordance with the approved Scheme at all times thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of environmentally sustainable transport in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

No deliveries shall be undertaken to the site by means of a car transporter.

REASON: In the interests of road safety in accordance with Policy TR1 and TR3 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

Revised transport condition to reinstate the unused access

The existing southern access to the site as shown on the Proposed Site plan ERAC003 shall be stopped up and abandoned within 3 months of occupation of the site. The footway(s) and verge shall be reinstated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of road safety and maintenance of the highway in accordance with Policy TR1 and TR3 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

Informatives

IF3 Highways

I29 Access construction

Environmental Health The compressor for the jet wash is going to be housed in a cupboard 60m metres away from the nearest residents. The noise assessment shows that noise associated with this activity meets our criteria and will not adversely affect them. I am satisfied with this conclusion.

The only other EP related issue with this application is noise during development. This can be controlled with the usual construction and demolition conditions.

Thames Water

Thames Water had no objections and provided the following feedback:

Waste Comments:

Thames Water recognises this catchment is subject to high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. The scale of the proposed development doesn't materially affect the sewer network and as such we have no objection, however care needs to be taken when designing new networks to ensure they don't surcharge and cause flooding. In the longer term Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering the sewer networks.

Thames Water recognises this catchment is subject to high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. The developer should liaise with the LLFA to agree an appropriate sustainable surface water strategy following the sequential approach before considering connection to the public sewer network. The scale of the proposed development doesn't materially affect the sewer network and as such we have no objection, however care needs to be taken when designing new networks to ensure they don't surcharge and cause flooding. In the longer term Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering the sewer network.

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. Management of surface water from new developments should follow Policy SI 13 Sustainable drainage of the London Plan 2021. 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>.

Thames Water would advise that with regard to WASTE WATER NETWORK and SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application, based on the information provided.

Water Comments:

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.

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.

Summary of discussions with applicant/agent:

There have been detailed discussions with the agent and the Council's Transport officer to discuss the need for a construction method statement, cycle storage provision plans and access reinstatement. The applicant agreed to accept the pre-commencement conditions outlined above.

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.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance and Legal 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 Planning Policy Framework**Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019):**

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change

CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

EN15: Air Quality

EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

EN17: Noise Generating Equipment

EN18: Flooding and Drainage

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Supplementary Planning Document - Sustainable Design and Construction (December 2019)

Reading Borough Council's Tree Strategy for Reading (June 2010)

APPRAISAL

The main issues are considered to be:

- (i) Principle of development
- (ii) Design and impact on the character of the area
- (iii) Impact on neighbouring properties
- (v) Parking
- (vii) Community Infrastructure Levy

- (i) Principle of development

The application site is located on the eastern side of Basingstoke Road close to the junction with Longbarn Lane and Canterbury Road. The closest residential properties are over 20m away. There are no relevant policies that specifically restrict the use of the site and it has previously been in commercial use as a car showroom, as such the principle of development is acceptable in this instance, subject to addressing relevant policies.

(ii) Design and impact on the character of the area

The proposal involves a modular building located within the site and a covered wash bay located to the rear of the site. Parking spaces will be located around the site with new bollards, gate and fencing to the rear of the site to the east. The proposal includes a Car Club Scheme which will be accessed from the front of the site. A lighting scheme is proposed and secured by condition.

The surrounding area is commercial/industrial and residential in nature. The application site is also in an Air Quality Management Area and an Air Quality Assessment was submitted on 18 June 2021 which concluded the proposed development would not have a significant impact on air quality. This report was reviewed by the Council's Environmental Health officer and found acceptable which removed the need for the suggested condition for an air quality assessment. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policies CC7, EN14 and EN15 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

(iii) Impact on neighbouring properties

The site is located on the Basingstoke Road and close to Canterbury Road, there are commercial/industrial areas nearby although there are residential properties in the vicinity. A noise assessment was submitted and the proposal was considered a sufficient distance from these residential properties. Basingstoke Road is a busy road and the proposal is not considered to have any impact on neighbouring properties/units when considering the existing use of the surrounding area. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

(v) Access / Parking

The site is serviced via an access point from Basingstoke Road. The Transport Statement indicates that the proposals will retain the existing vehicular access arrangements on Basingstoke Road to the north-west corner of the site and remove the existing vehicular crossover located to the south-west corner. However, the proposed site plan ERAC003, Appendix C, indicate that both dropped kerb accesses are to be retained. The applicant has stated that they wish to retain the southern access for potential / occasional use or should their requirements change in the future. However, this is unacceptable and the provision of a dropped kerb should not be retained unless it is necessary to the operational requirements of the business. Given that parking bays will obstruct the use of the access, the footway must be reinstated to line and level. If approval is granted, this should be covered by condition.

Alternatively if the access has a purpose and is not obstructed in any form (by parking bays, fencing, bollards) then it could be retained, otherwise access should be reinstated within 3 months of occupation.

A transport statement has been submitted. The 2 car parking spaces for the car club are positioned by the main site entrance. This will enable access to the Car Club vehicles when the site itself is closed to the public. It should be relatively quiet and it would be expected that people collecting or dropping off a vehicle would take caution.

Transport have no objection with the number of vehicle spaces.

(vi) Community Infrastructure Levy

The Council implemented its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1st April 2015 and planning applications decided after the 1st of April 2015 may be liable to pay the levy. This proposal would be liable to pay the levy. An appropriate informative would be added.

(vii) Other matters

Thames Water have stated no objections to the application.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

Conditions to include:

1. Time limit - 3 years
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials (as submitted)
4. Hours of opening (to the public)
5. Vehicle Parking (as specified)
6. Car transporter
7. Cycle parking
8. Construction Method statement
9. Hours of opening
10. Hours of construction
11. Lighting Scheme
12. Luminance
13. Access
14. Demolition
15. EV charging points

Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Building Regulations
3. Complaints about construction
4. Contaminated land
5. CIL
6. Highways
7. Access construction
8. Planning consent
9. Positive and proactive