

Job Name: The Old Power Station Vastern Road
Job No: 47500
Note No: TN006
Date: 24th September 2020
Prepared By: Joe House
Subject: RBC Highway 3rd Response & Vastern Road Crossing

Introduction

This technical note has been prepared by Stantec on behalf of Berkeley Homes (Oxford and Chiltern) Ltd to provide a response to Reading Borough Council (RBC) highway comments provided in an email from Darren Cook to Jonathan Markwell dated 15th September 2020.

The comments provided are in response to Stantec Technical Note TN005, RBC Highway 2nd Response dated 9th Sept 2020 and a virtual meeting with RBC on 14th Sept 2020.

For ease of response, the RBC comments are in italics and the Stantec responses in blue.

'Internal Vehicle Access Arrangements'

I still have concerns regarding the turning facility provided within the application site. I would re-emphasise my comments from the meeting that I have no objection to vehicles crossing the footway / cycleway but it is the need for vehicles to reverse over the route that I specifically have concerns about. I reference the following points from Manual for Streets below, to which the application would be at odds with.

6.8.8 Reversing causes a disproportionately large number of moving vehicle accidents in the waste/recycling industry. Injuries to collection workers or members of the public by moving collection vehicles are invariably severe or fatal. BS 5906: 2005 recommends a maximum reversing distance of 12 m. Longer distances can be considered, but any reversing routes should be straight and free from obstacles or visual obstructions.

7.10.3 Routeing for waste vehicles should be determined at the concept masterplan or scheme design stage (see paragraph 6.8.4). Wherever possible, routing should be configured so that the refuse collection can be made without the need for the vehicle having to reverse, as turning heads may be obstructed by parked vehicles and reversing refuse vehicles create a risk to other street users.

I appreciate that the number of servicing movements maybe low but the interaction of vehicles reversing over the pedestrian / cycle route which would be utilised by commuters and leisure users including children would be detrimental to highway safety and cannot be supported.'

We note that RBC does not object to vehicles crossing the shared foot/cycleway, but still has concerns regarding the need for large HGV's to reverse across part of the foot/cycleway to exit the site.

With regard to para 6.8.8 of Manual for Streets, this relates specifically to waste and refuse collection. We have previously noted that there will only be a single refuse collection per week from the development, and that a refuse truck will typically have a driver plus at least 1 (but usually more) operatives. The vehicles also have reversing warnings installed and the other operatives would act as banksmen to assist the driver, should that be necessary.

With regard to para 7.10.3 (again relating to refuse collection), the site has been designed to minimise the need for reversing and there is only one point where refuse vehicles need reverse across the foot/cycleway

and, as noted above, the other refuse operatives would act as banksmen to guide the driver to the collection point.

With respect to other potential HGV trips into the site, this type of higher density residential scheme generates very low numbers of HGVs that may need to undertake a reversing manoeuvre. Stantec Technical Note TN005, RBC Highway 2nd Response set out that between 0 and 1 HGVs per day might be expected including refuse collection. Extrapolating this across a week, this would equate to between 3 and 4 per week including refuse collection.

Furthermore, a larger 10-12m long 'white goods type' HGV delivery lorry (sample photo below) will be able undertake the turn forwards across the foot/cycleway, so will in fact easily be able to check the path is clear prior to crossing it. It will then be 'sat' in the foot/cycleway momentarily before reversing into the turning head to complete the manoeuvre. This will occur for a matter of seconds and is a 'forward facing' manoeuvre in terms of visibility of the foot/cycleway.



DAF 18T box van illustration

Given this very low number, coupled with the good visibility of the crossing point, clear signage that will be in place and the fact that only a weekly refuse truck with banksmen will need to reverse onto the path, we do not believe this represents a risk of significance to highway safety.

'New Pedestrian/Cycle Route through site / Justification for Northern part of the proposed cycle/footway

'.....Given the above it is clear through Policy and design guidance that the development must include a direct north south route and that this is the main priority for the site.'

This matter is being addressed in a separate note dealing with design and planning.

'Design of Access to Southern Towpath

The Council have commenced the process that would permit cycling along the towpath and although this may not have reached a conclusion the scheme should ensure that suitable design standards are included within the site as this would form part of the desirable route to and from the town centre. The route will also become the desire line to NCN Route 5 to the east of the site, as previously identified within previous comments.

The Highway Authority therefore does not agree with the comments provided.'

Stantec Technical Note TN005 sets out the significant improvements in access to the towpath that are being provided as part of the development where none exists currently.

It remains the case that cycling is not permitted along this section of the towpath and the change in levels between the towpath and the site mean that a much shallower ramp connection than that proposed would not be possible within the constraints of the site and masterplan.

In addition, those that are currently cycling unlawfully along the towpath from the west are also much more likely to cycle along DeMontfort Road or Lynmouth Road (both very quiet cul-de-sacs) to gain access to the town centre rather than having to change level and enter the development site.

Those wishing to travel to the east from the town centre/station are likely to continue to follow the existing route via the east facing Norman Place (or alongside the Thames Water building), even though the proposed ramp does enable this movement to be made via the existing bridge ramp.

In addition, the width of the towpath alongside the southern landing of the bridge and to the west of it is too narrow to accommodate a suitable width pedestrian and cycle route.

'Waste Collection Strategy

The submitted information address the concerns regarding Bin store No. 4 but as per previous comments, other bin stores were located in excess of 10m which is the design recommendation and the distance to which RBC refuse collection team work to. It would therefore need to be confirmed what arrangements will be put in place for all refuse stores that exceed the distance to ensure that bins are not left obstructing the surrounding footways.'

It is noted that RBC states that the 10m distance is a design recommendation, rather than a fixed standard or requirement.

The current carry distances from the bin stores to the collection points are as follows based on the refuse access strategy shown on 47500/5500/005A.

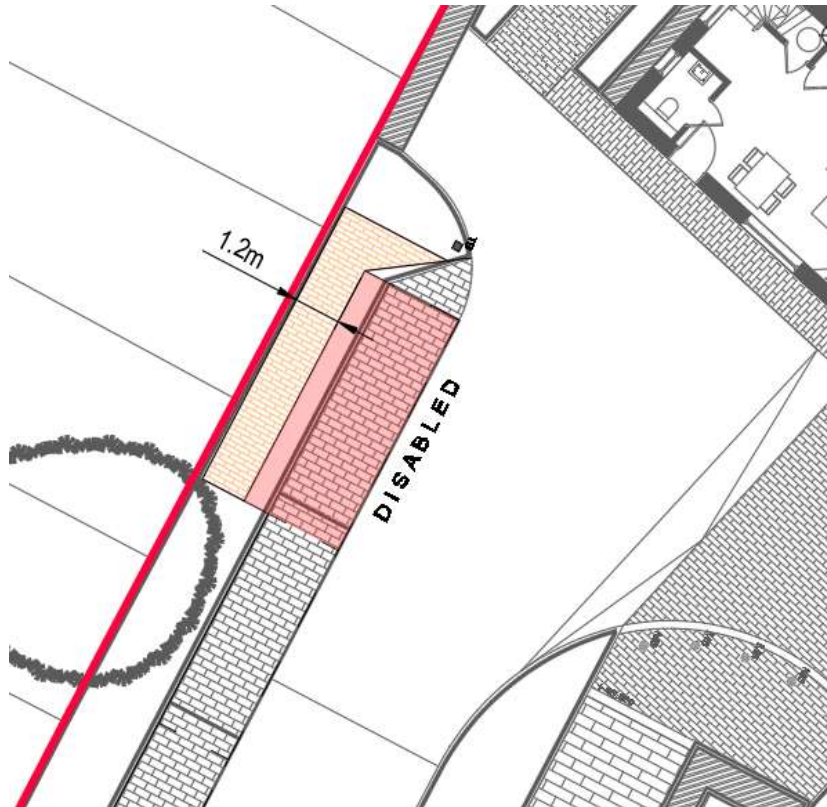
Bin Store 1 (Building EFG) – 11m
Bin Store 2 (Building D) – 3m
Bin Store 3 (Building C) – 7m
Bin Store 4 (Building B, north) – 10m
Bin Store 5 (Building B, south) – 11m
Bin Store 6 (Building A) – 10m

As summarised above, the distance to the bin stores at building EFG and B (south) are only 1m over the recommended distances for operatives. Given that this is only a minor and likely un-noticeable distance in reality, we do not believe it is necessary to alter the collection arrangements.

'Disabled Parking Bays

In principle I am happy that the location of the disabled bays are acceptable but the development must include locations where pedestrians can access the surrounding footways and this should be included on revised plans.'

The verges adjacent to the on street disabled bays will be modified to provide an area of accessible hardstanding to facilitate access as illustrated below. This approach will apply to both on street disabled bays.



'Cycle Store Design

It has been stated that in addition to the 2.35m headroom that is provided at Building D, there is an additional 0.5m headroom provided as part of the service area. At the location of the cycle store this will remain clear and as such provide an overall headroom of 2.85m and suitable for the josta style racks. I am happy that this would be acceptable but section drawings should be provided confirming this.

I must also stress that access locations for Blocks C and D are still to be addressed.'

A section drawing is attached (448.PL.D.300A) to demonstrate the required headroom of 2.6m for josta stands is achieved.

The cycle store positions/access points have been revised for blocks B, C and D to further improve ease of use and security. The amended drawings for Blocks B, C (448.PL.BC.100C) and D (448.PL.D.100B) are attached showing the cycle store locations and improved access points.

Vastern Road Crossing

Stantec has reviewed the potential to provide a new pedestrian/cycle crossing on Vastern Road to connect the station/town centre area to the river/Caversham for people wishing to walk/cycle through the site.

DfT Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20 recommends that new cycle crossings are not 'staggered' in the way they used to be. The recommended approach is given in the example provided in Fig 10.9 that also includes 'straight across' pedestrian crossings.jo

Our proposed layout is shown on attached drawing 47500/5500/SK030.

TECHNICAL NOTE



It is acknowledged that a new crossing in this location may deliver some benefits to the development, but in the main, this crossing would be used by existing people travelling between Caversham and Reading station/town centre. In addition, occupiers of the planned new developments immediately north of Reading station would also benefit significantly from such a crossing.

The estimated cost for the crossing shown on drawing 47500/5500/SK030 is between £100,000 to £150,000.

The proposed £50,000 contribution by Berkeley Homes is therefore felt to be more than proportionate relative to the use generated by the development.