

# READING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS PARK

## TRANSPORT TECHNICAL NOTE

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**VELOCITY**  
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

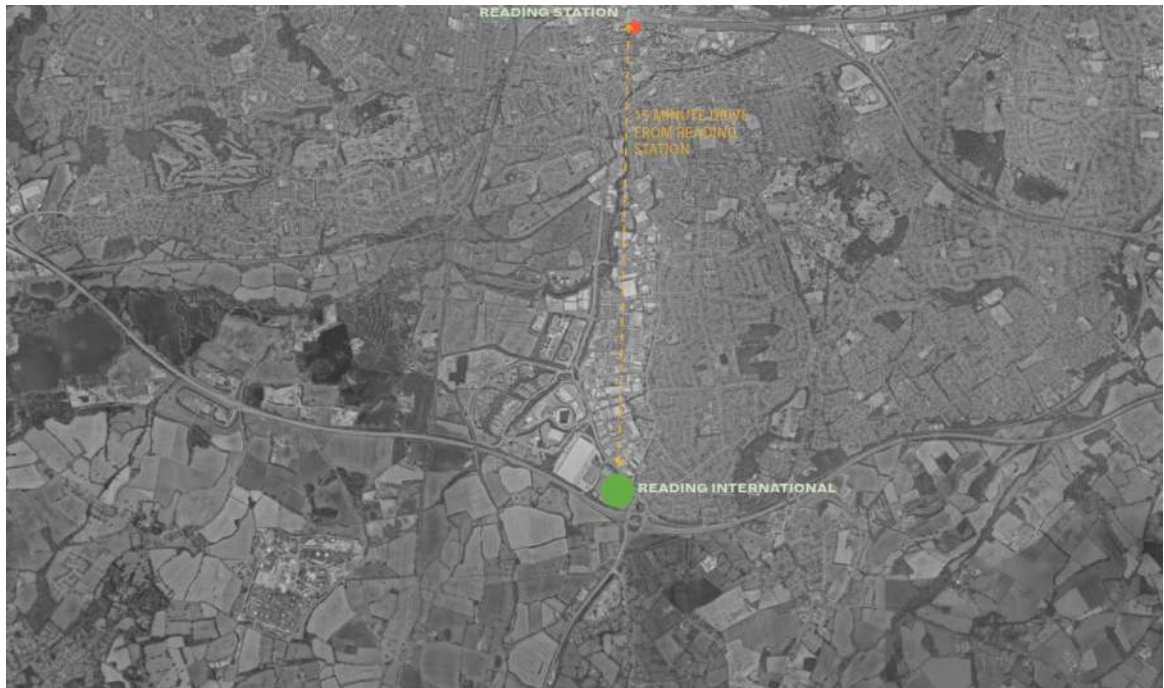
- 1.1.1 Velocity Transport Planning has been appointed by Tristan Capital Partners to prepare a Transport Technical Note in support of proposals to upgrade the existing office accommodation at Reading International Business Park (hereafter referred to as RIBP or the 'Proposal') within the borough of Reading.

## 1.2 THE SITE

- 1.2.1 RIBP is located at Junction 11 of the M4, providing excellent connectivity to the national motorway network, and central Reading. It comprises a large single office building extending to circa 380,000sqft (35,000sqm) of commercial and ancillary floorspace within 6 connected blocks along with a number of ancillary freestanding buildings in the same grounds.
- 1.2.2 The office floorspace was originally designed to operate as either a single headquarters, or a multi-let office campus. Although the building was originally the headquarters for Worldcome (who became Verizon), over the years they have reduced their occupancy such that the building is now home to a number of different companies.
- 1.2.3 Despite the site's very prominent gateway location, vacancy rates have increased and currently stand at around 170,000sqft (16,000sqm). This is due to a number of factors, but primarily due to the office space having not been modernised so that it is no longer categorised as 'Category A'. It also lacks good quality amenity provision. As a consequence, RIBP finds it difficult to compete with the higher quality office accommodation elsewhere in Reading and in particular at nearby Green Park.
- 1.2.4 The office floorspace is supported by a number of ancillary uses in the main building including food and beverage outlets on the ground floor and a private gym facility located at basement level.
- 1.2.5 There are also three additional standalone buildings within the red line boundary. 'The Dot', which acts as the main workplace cafeteria for office workers, the Grade II listed 'Little Lea Farmhouse' (the Farmhouse) which has been used for various uses but most recently for informal storage by Verizon, and the Busy Bees creche which is located to the rear of the site and operates separately from the rest of the property.
- 1.2.6 It is understood that the lawful use of the entire site is Class E (as of 1st September 2020, subject to the outcome of the recent legal challenge to the changes to the Use Classes Order, and B1 before this date).
- 1.2.7 The Business Park is accessed from the A33, which runs from the southeast to the northwest of the site as shown in **Figure 1–1**. The Business Park is within Reading Borough Council's (RBC's) administrative area.



Figure 1–1: Site Location and Local Context



### 1.3 THE PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS TO THE BUSINESS PARK

- 1.3.1 The Applicant is in the process of acquiring the Site and plans to fund significant improvement works next year to the tune of some £25m, with the intention of creating an exemplary commercial offering in terms of occupier satisfaction, sustainability and wellness.
- 1.3.2 In this context, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the growing shift towards employee health and wellness and the proposed works seek to ensure that the commercial floorspace, and the ancillary uses provided, are of the highest quality and suitable for the post COVID working environment. The applicant has recently been in conversation with the International WELL Building Institute regarding 'Well' Certification and the measures that could be introduced to achieve this accreditation.
- 1.3.3 There are a number of alterations proposed to the building as explained in The Design and Access Statement (DAS) provided in support of planning application. The DAS provides an overview of the design and rationale behind the proposed changes to the buildings, however, for ease of reference planning permission is being sought for the following:
- ⦿ Changes to the external façade;
  - ⦿ New entrance and lobby area to provide a more prominent and welcoming reception area to create a greater sense of arrival;
  - ⦿ New expanded gym facility adjacent to an improved, covered and secure cycle parking area including electric cycle charging points, lockers, changing facilities and showers;
  - ⦿ A comprehensive hard and soft landscaping scheme which seeks to improve the amenity of the site for formal and informal use by employees;
  - ⦿ Re-purposing of The Dot to provide both office space and a multi-function space for use by all tenants along with changes to its external appearance;



- ⦿ Bringing back the Farmhouse into beneficial use including minor alterations for which Listed Building Consent is being sought;
- ⦿ Revisions to the parking layout to facilitate the various alterations and accommodate displaced parking, including an amended bus layby, improved servicing and consolidated waste management and collection arrangements;

1.3.4 As part of the site wide enhancements for which planning permission is not required it is also intended to:

- ⦿ Improve the overall sustainability of the site, secure a reduction in energy loss, introduce heat pump technology, provide electric vehicle charging points and seek both WELL accreditation and a BREEAM Excellent rating.
- ⦿ Introduce a package of improvements to greatly enhance sustainable transport/accessibility to site and promote travel by non-car modes (including by way of a consolidated cycle parking facility, increased cycle parking provision including folding bikes/enlarged cycles/EV cycles, EV charging, car share bays, dedicated travel plan network, future proofed cycle docking station to promote access to the town centre/Green Park station, funding commitments to the Greenwave Bus, bus stop improvements, and provision of better travel information);

1.3.5 **Appendix A** shows the existing ground and basement floor arrangement plans and **Appendix B** shows the Proposed reconfigured ground and basement floor plans.

1.3.6 The intention is to commence works during the early part of 2021.

1.3.7 In summary, **Application 1** seeks permission for the following:

- ⦿ Upgrade of existing office building comprising the construction of a new entrance, reconfiguration of the car parking and basement level employee ancillary facilities (provision of new gym and end of journey facilities) and improvements to the hard and soft landscaping (including provision of meeting pods), consolidated waste management area, external alterations to 'The Dot' and internal works to the Listed Little Lea Cottage and the recolouring of the existing terracotta tiles under Permitted Development Rights"

1.3.8 **Application 2**, promotes further refinements to the parking layout and

- ⦿ A Decked Car Park to the rear of the site and associated amendments to the parking layout at grade.

1.3.9 This document should be read in conjunction with the Travel Plan, Delivery and Servicing Plan and Waste Management Strategy also submitted in support of the applications.

## 1.4 CONSULTATION

1.4.1 Prior to the submission of this document, a pre-application meeting was held with Reading Borough Council (RBC) through the pre-application process. RBC's formal written response was dated 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020. A summary of RBC's comments on transport matters are as follows:

- ⦿ Acknowledgment that the original outline consent permitted provision of up to 1,260 spaces with in-principle no objections to an increase in parking to the previously consented level.



- ⦿ Acknowledgment that the consented permission would have included a parking ratio greater than the parking requirement specified in the Council's current Parking SPD (1 space per 50m<sup>2</sup>) and therefore the Highway Authority could not agree to an increased provision above this consented level.
- ⦿ RBC cannot agree to parking levels that may be required for the short term only and COVID-19 has progressed opportunities for remote working and flexible working further than was previously the case and this would also help drive down the needs for car parking.
- ⦿ Any proposal should not exceed 1260 spaces, should this have previously been consented.
- ⦿ The increased number of car parking spaces should include a provision of electric charging points in line with the Local Plan provision and include accessible bays in accordance with the Council's Parking SPD.

#### 1.4.2

Additionally, the planning officer provided the following comments:

- ⦿ The Reading Borough Local Plan, including policies TR1, TR3, TR4, and TR5 seek to ensure the Council's transport objectives are achieved. Policy TR1 also states: "Planning permission will not be granted for major development proposals unless there is a commitment to implement measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities, such as through provision to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; and through agreed travel plans, safe routes to local facilities and services, including schools and parks, and similar measures". Policy TR5 states: "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." The policy is also supported by the Council's SPD "Revised parking standards and design" (2011).
- ⦿ The applicant is requested to clearly show the approved amount of office floor space associated with the site to inform what should be the policy compliant level of on-site parking.
- ⦿ The original outline approval (97-0595-OA) included a condition which stated: "The number of car parking spaces, provided to serve the B1 use hereby permitted, excluding the service space bays to be agreed in condition 23, shall not exceed 1260 spaces in total.
- ⦿ Through the reserved matters application full plans were provided and approved thereafter, which included the current provision of carparking. This was implemented and approved with the current layout (1,199) spaces. As such, although the outline application could have allowed for up to 1260 parking spaces, the now implemented permission (the reserved matters permission) approved less than this.
- ⦿ As the outline approval timeframe for submitting reserved matters applications (i.e. 3 years) has passed, the only way to increase the on-site parking provision would be through a planning application (currently proposed through Application 2). There should be no implied permission for 1,260 parking spaces as limited by the outline permission.
- ⦿ In the absence of strong evidence based on long term trends (i.e. not relying on current Covid-19 related trends) to support the provision of additional parking spaces on a site where parking spaces are already above the Council's adopted standards the proposed level of increase would not be supported by officers.



- 1.4.3 The points raised have been duly noted and are addressed in this document.

## 1.5 REPORT PURPOSE

- 1.5.1 This document follows the structure of a Transport Statement, but on the basis the application relates to internal changes to the building, the enhancement of ancillary facilities and external landscape/parking works which in their own right don't generate additional traffic beyond what is consented, the document is referred to as a Transport Technical Note.
- 1.5.2 This document is prepared in accordance with the requirements of National Planning Practice Guidance and sets out details of existing transport conditions, on-site facilities, forthcoming local public transport improvements, provides an assessment of personal injury accident data, reference to relevant planning policy, details of existing vehicle/cycle parking, access and servicing, details of the proposals (access, vehicle and cycle parking, servicing), parking justification, and proposals to implement significant investment in promoting sustainable transport.



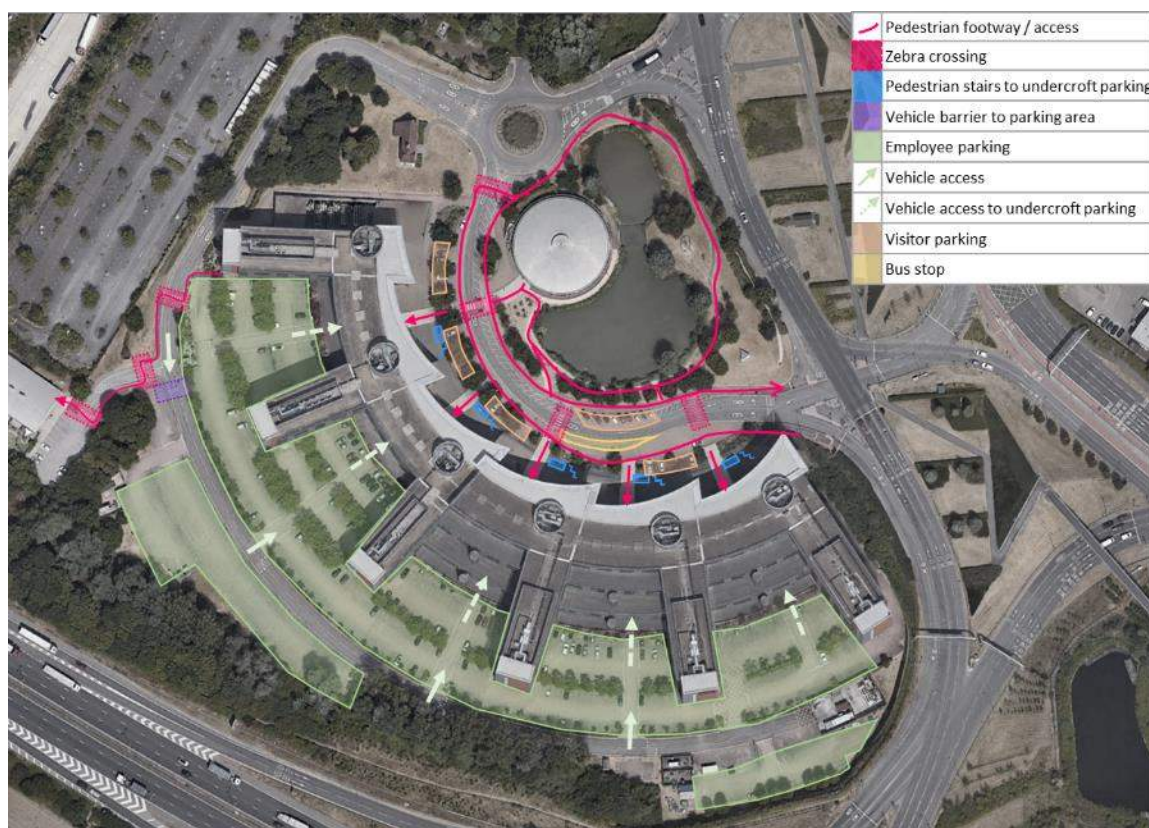
## 2 EXISTING SITE

2.1.1 The main building of RIBP provides 380,000sqft net of floorspace over six floors split into six 'spurs'. The building has a maximum potential occupancy of up to 4,000 staff (eg 1:100 sq ft), though at the time of writing occupancy levels are lower than this due to high vacancy rates. The current occupants of the Business Park are:

- ⊙ Verizon UK Ltd.;
- ⊙ Investec Bank;
- ⊙ Aspentech;
- ⊙ Mavenir; and
- ⊙ Accenture

2.1.2 From 1 December the day to day management of RIBP will be operated by Savills. The layout of the business park, including parking areas, bus stop location, and footways and zebra crossing locations is displayed at **Figure 2–1** below. Some businesses operate 24/7 from the building, and while all businesses have 24/7 access, most businesses operate a more typical 09:00 - 17:30 arrangement. The food court (Dot) is open 07:00 - 15:00 and the gym is open 07:00 - 19:00.

**Figure 2–1: Reading International Business Park - existing access and layout**



## 2.2 EXISTING ACCESS

### VEHICLE ACCESS

- 2.2.1 Vehicles can access Reading International Business Park via the A33, which runs from Reading in the north to Basingstoke in the southwest. The A33 connects to Highways England's Strategic Road Network motorway system by Junction 11 of the M4, which lies around 300m to the southeast of the site and provides access to London and Wales.
- 2.2.2 Access to the site from both carriageways of the A33 is shown in **Figure 2–2** and **Figure 2–3**.

**Figure 2–2: Access to RIBP from northbound carriageway of the A33**



**Figure 2–3: Access to RIBP from southbound carriageway of the A33**



## 2.3 PARKING

### VEHICLE PARKING

- 2.3.1 Car parking within RIBP is currently managed by the estate management team and is allocated to tenants accordingly.
- 2.3.2 Visitor parking is provided to the front of the site, along with a servicing bay in front of the Dot. Parking to the rear of the site is currently regulated by automatic barriers controlled by swipe cards issued by site management.
- 2.3.3 Due to the current level of vacant floorspace within RIBP, if tenants exceed their parking allowance employees are currently permitted to park in the other unoccupied areas.
- 2.3.4 A total of 1,199 spaces were permitted at reserved matters stage, with a total of 1,200 marked out as per the exiting site layout plan. However, the use of some of the spaces is restricted by the arced layout of the parking and the proximity of some of the columns to the spaces; meaning spaces are not all to a standard size.

### CYCLE PARKING

- 2.3.5 There is currently no formal visitor cycle parking provided at the front of the RIBP. All cycle parking is contained at basement level and provides cycle parking for staff only. There is direct access from the undercroft to the front entrance to the building via stairs. Cycle parking is provided in the form of 2 x cages and 2 x unsecure zones of Sheffield stands and provides space for a total capacity of 64 bicycles. Current cycle parking is considered to be inadequate.

Figure 2–4: Existing secure and sheltered cycle parking within car park undercroft area



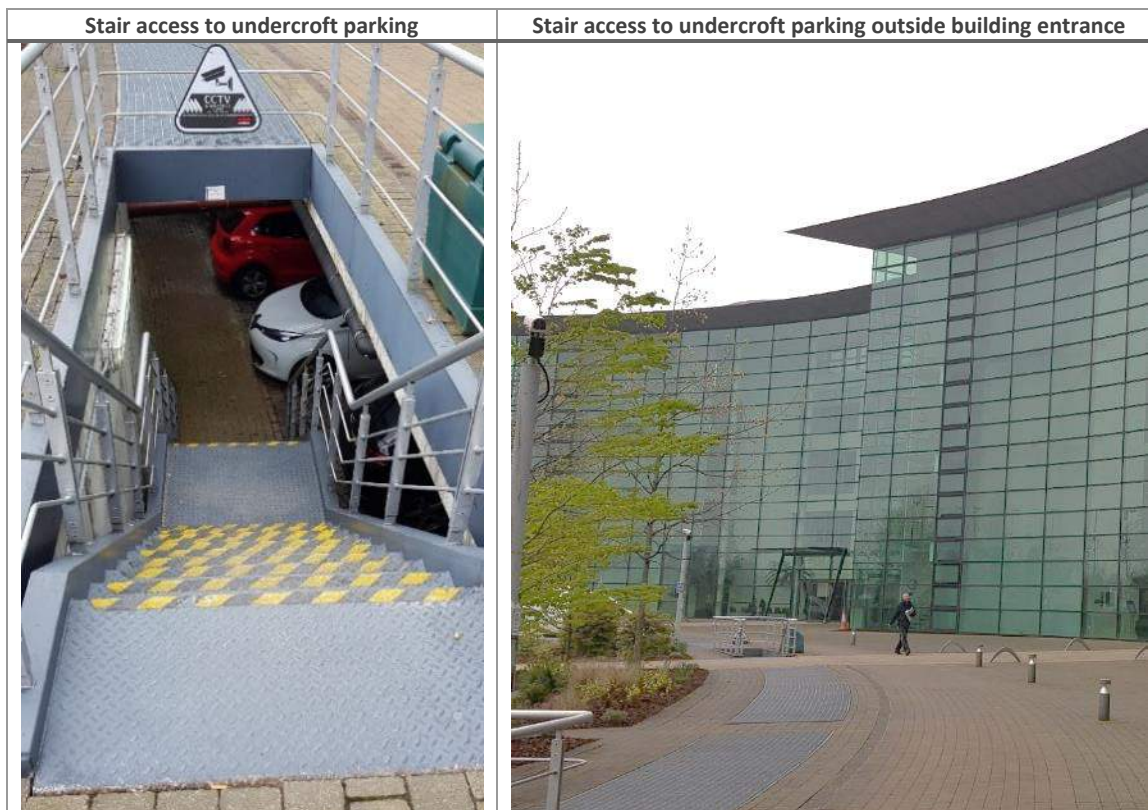
- 2.3.6 Motorcycle parking is currently designated informally in front of one of the cycle parking cages within the undercroft parking area.

**Figure 2-5: Area reserved for motorcycle parking (in front of cycle store) within car park undercroft area**



- 2.3.7 Pedestrian access to the undercroft parking area is via 5 sets of stairs that are located at the front of the building. An example of these stairs is shown in **Figure 2-6** below. Additionally, lift access is provided within the building to basement level.

**Figure 2-6: Stairs to undercroft parking**



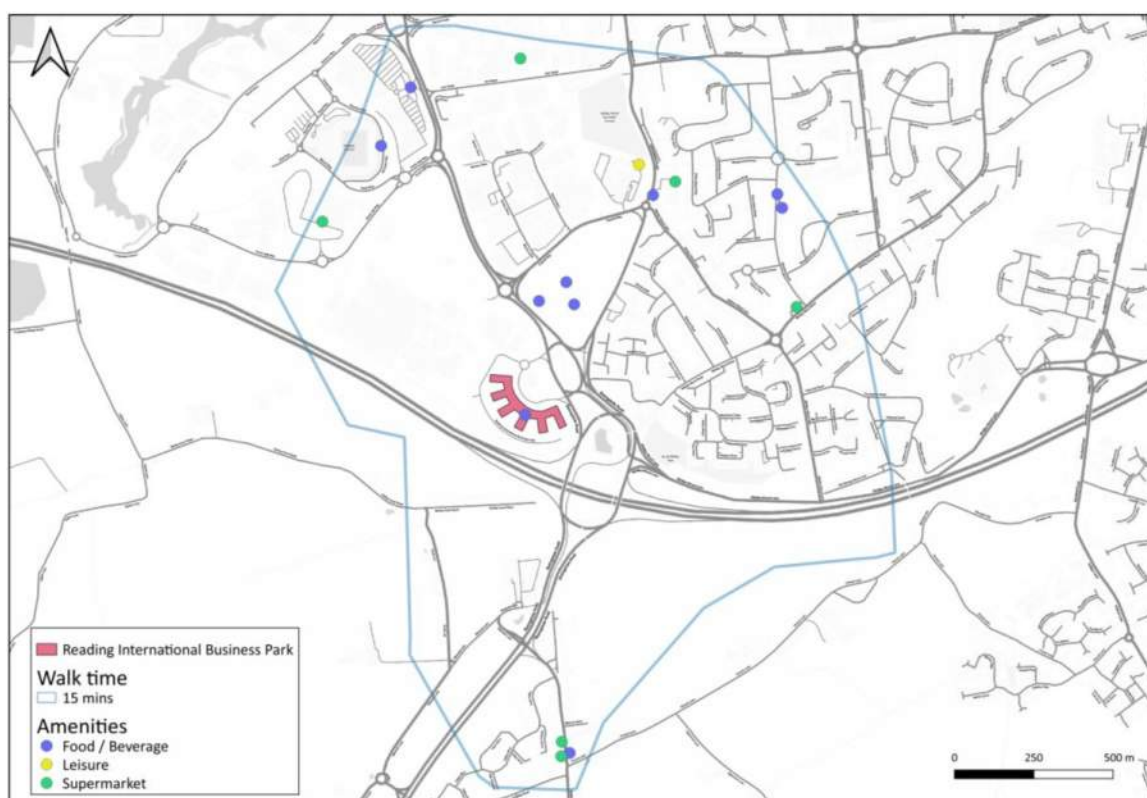
## 2.4 CAR PARK ENTRANCE BARRIER

- 2.4.1 The RIBP staff parking area and loading bay at the back of the site is controlled by an access barrier, just past the junction with Busy Bees nursery.

## WALKING

- 2.4.2 The Chartered Institute for Highways and Transportation's (CIHT) 'Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot', advises that a distance of 2km is a 'preferred maximum distance for commuting, accessing local amenities and sight-seeing journeys'. As is shown in **Section 4** in the baseline mode share results and below, there is a wide local residential area within 2km and thus which is accessible on foot for commuting to work. Furthermore, Whitley and Madejski Stadium/Green Park have a number of local amenities, retailers and restaurants, as shown in **Figure 2-7**, which can be accessed within a 15 minute walk of the site.

- 2.4.3 **Figure 2-7: Local amenities and facilities**



- 2.4.4 As such, there are opportunities for members of staff to use modes other than the private car, such as walking, cycling or bus for both commuting, lunchtime and business-related trips.
- 2.4.5 Pedestrians can access the RIBP site via footways on either side of the A33. The footways are connected by a large island in the centre of the junction, which can be reached by signalised crossing points on either side of the carriageway.
- 2.4.6 All local roads within the vicinity of the site have footways on both sides of the carriageway. The local area is provided with well-maintained footways, street lighting and pedestrian crossings with dropped kerbs and tactile paving in the majority of locations.



- 2.4.7 All pedestrian crossing facilities within RIBP are controlled ‘zebra’ crossings, all of which are provided with dropped kerbs and tactile paving, as shown in **Figure 2–8**.

**Figure 2–8: Example of one of three controlled pedestrian crossings at the front of the site**



- 2.4.8 Footways in the surrounding area of RIBP are shown in **Figure 2–11**.

#### Cycling

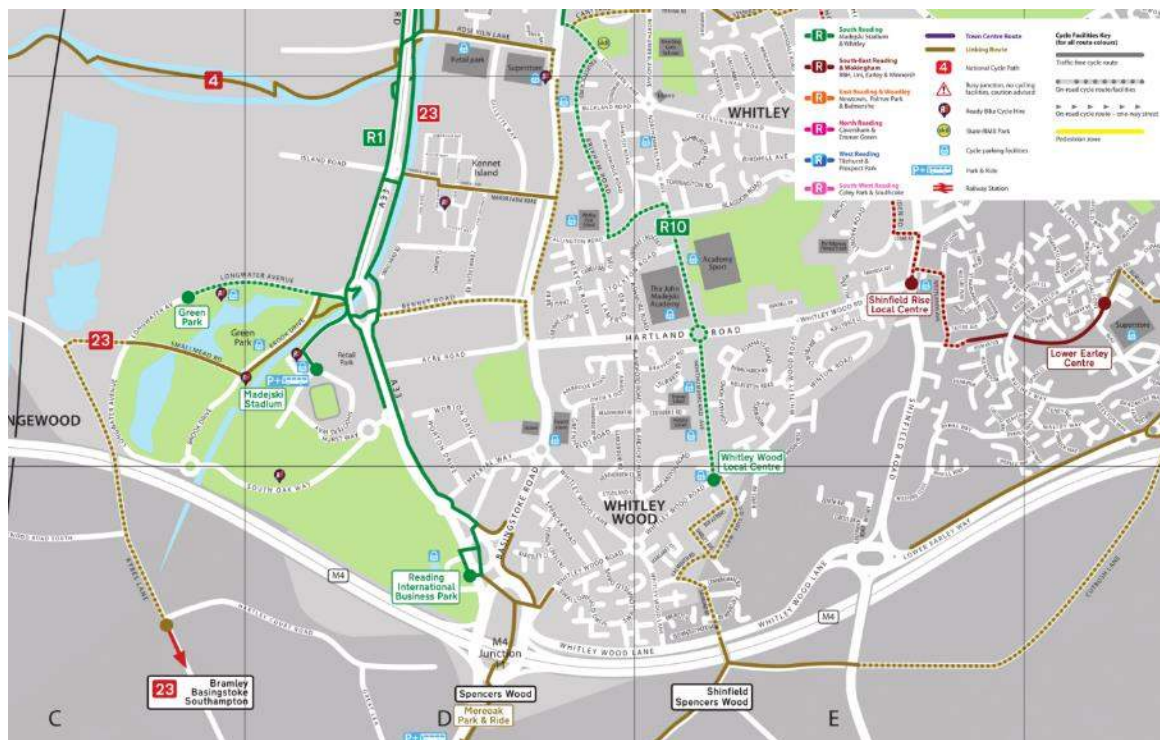
- 2.4.9 Cycling has the potential to substitute for short car trips, particularly those less than five kilometres in length, however, many more confident cyclists will cycle longer distances. Although there are no segregated cycle lanes near to RIBP, cyclists are able to use unsegregated shared use routes adjacent to both carriageways of the A33 and B3031 Basingstoke Road.

**Figure 2–9: Cycle ramp across the A33**



- 2.4.10 Cycle routes in the vicinity of RIBP are shown in **Figure 2–10**.

Figure 2–10: Cycle network in proximity to RIBP



- 2.4.11 A potential off-street cycle route from RIBP to the proposed Green Park station, is shown in **Figure 2–11**, an approximate 13 minute cycle. It is understood that additional cycle parking facilities will be installed at the station upon its completion, estimated to be in late 2020.
- 2.4.12 This will provide improved accessibility to the site by public transport, either for those that have a bicycle, or potentially should cycle docking stations be provided at both the station and RIBP following completion of the station.



Figure 2–11: Active travel routes to surrounding areas



#### ACCESSIBILITY BY BUS

##### 2.4.13

There is a bus stop within RIBP, shown in the photo below. The bus stop consists of a lay-by that allows for buses to pull out of the general traffic and allow safe boarding/alighting in close proximity to the building entrance. The bus stop has a flag, but no shelter, seating or real time information. Our proposals intend to improve that situation.



Figure 2–12: Bus stop outside the front of the building



2.4.14 All routes are served by 'Greenwave' Compressed Natural Gas buses, owned by RBC and operated by Reading Buses. The RIBP bus stop normally serves between 6,000 and 7,000 people per month, based on discussions with RBC.

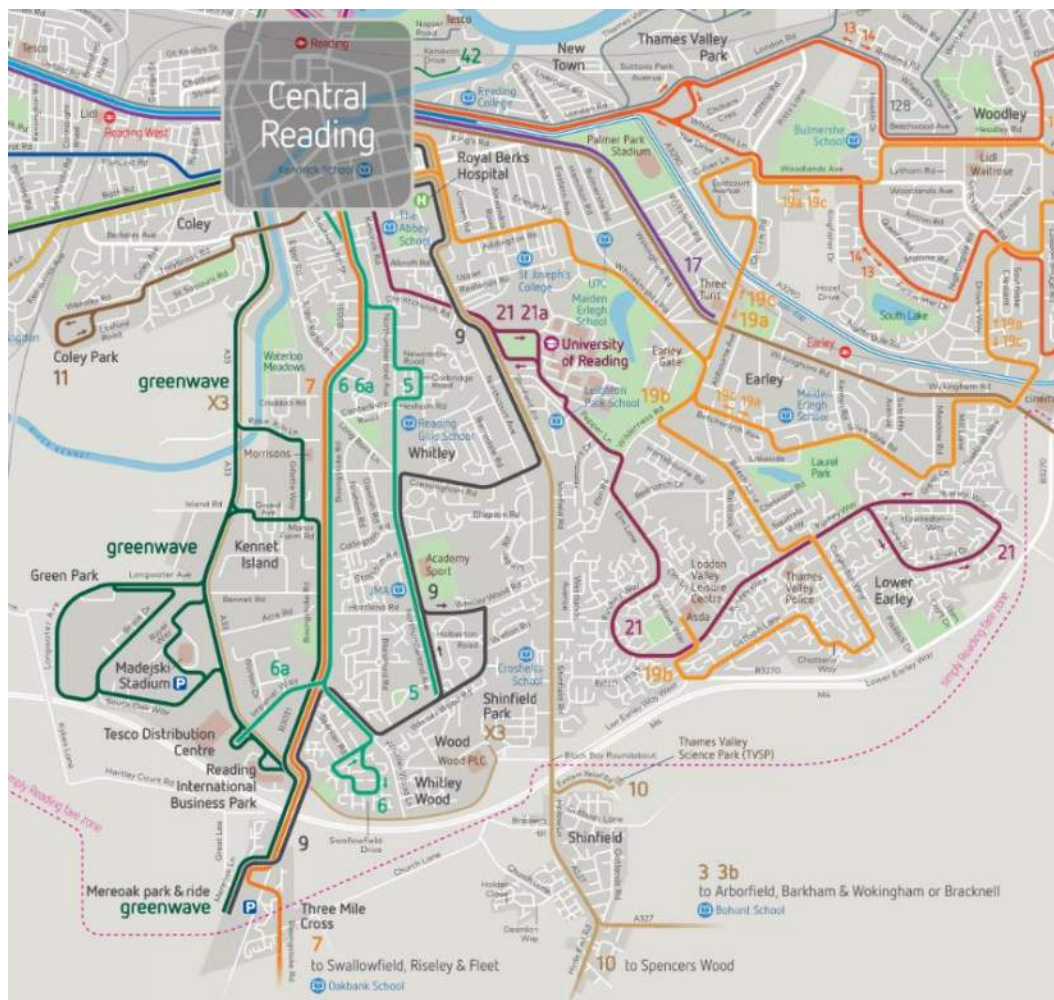
The Greenwave provides excellent connectivity to Reading town centre and onward connections to Reading train station, where the journey time in either direction is between 15-20 minutes. While we understand the Greenwave timetable and routes are subject to change, **Table 2-1** provides details of the frequency of existing bus services and **Figure 2–13** highlights the local routes that these bus route serve.

Table 2-1: Frequency of Greenwave buses Serving RIBP

| Service No. | Route                                           | Peak Hour Frequency<br>(services per hour) |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 60          | Mere oak Park and Ride - RIBP - Reading Station | 3                                          |
| 60a         |                                                 | 3                                          |
| 60m         |                                                 | 2                                          |



Figure 2-13: Existing public transport network



- 2.4.15 Bus route 7 connects Reading with Swallowfield, Riseley, and Fleet to the south. However, the nearest bus stops to RIBP are at the Meroeak Park & Ride station (6-minute bus to RIBP) or to the north of RIBP outside the holiday Inn (13-minute walk to RIBP).

#### ACCESSIBILITY BY TRAIN

- 2.4.16 Reading railway station is the second busiest interchange station outside London, and provides Great Western Railway, Cross Country and South Western Railway services to London Paddington, Bristol Temple Meads, Cardiff, Birmingham and Southampton. The frequency and operators of services calling at Reading are shown in **Table 2-2**.



Table 2-2: Frequency of trains serving Reading

| Operator              | Destination           | Peak Hour Frequency<br>(services per hour) |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Great Western Railway | London Paddington     | 13                                         |
|                       | Bristol Temple Meads  | 2                                          |
|                       | Cardiff Central       | 2                                          |
| South Western Railway | London Waterloo       | 4                                          |
| CrossCountry          | Oxford                | 5                                          |
|                       | Birmingham New Street | 2                                          |
|                       | Bournemouth           | 1                                          |
|                       | Gatwick Airport       | 1                                          |

- 2.4.17 Reading West station is located around 1.6km from Reading Town Centre and serves local routes (to Basingstoke and London) operated by Great Western Railway. The main destinations and frequencies of trains serving Reading West station are shown in **Table 2-3**.

Table 2-3: Frequency of trains serving Reading West, Great Western Railway

| Destination | Peak Hour Frequency<br>(services per hour) |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Reading     | 5                                          |
| Basingstoke | 2                                          |
| Newbury     | 2                                          |

## 2.5 FUTURE PUBLIC TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS

### READING GREEN PARK STATION

- 2.5.1 Reading Green Park station (location shown in **Figure 2-11**) is intended to serve the Green Park Village residential development, the existing Green Park Business Park and the Madejski Stadium and had been planned to open in March 2020.
- 2.5.2 Following a meeting with RBC, we are advised that the station is now most likely to open in late 2020. At present, the closest major rail station to RIBP is Reading station, which is located in the town centre. The opening of the Green Park Station would allow occupants and visitors to access RIBP by rail more easily.
- 2.5.3 Once built, the station will become a new stop on the existing Reading to Basingstoke line, with two trains per hour. Travellers will be able to reach Reading in six minutes, Basingstoke in 20, Paddington in 40 (via Reading), Canary Wharf in 60 (once the Crossrail is in place), and Southampton in 60 (via Basingstoke). This would, therefore, make travel to RIBP by rail more attractive, without having to travel beyond RIBP and north to the town centre, before making a part-return journey back south to RIBP by bus.

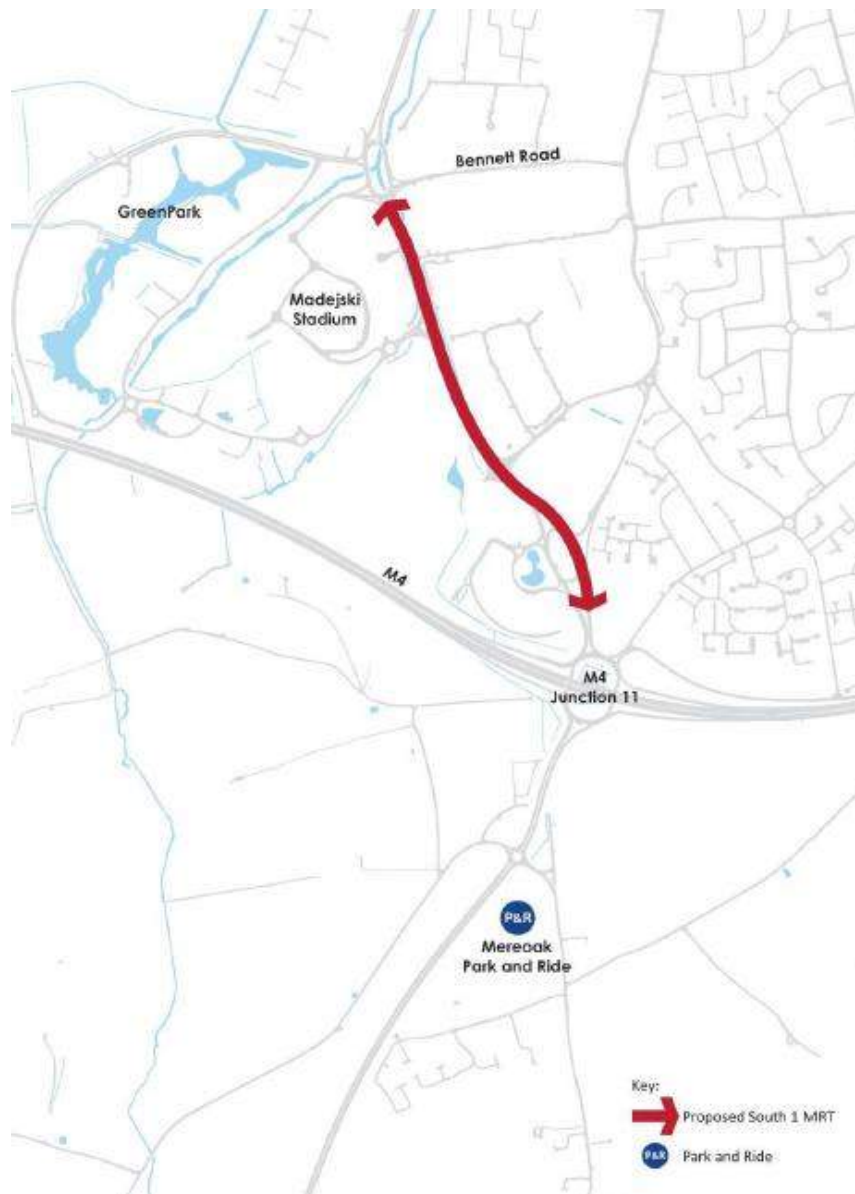
### SOUTH READING MASS RAPID TRANSIT

- 2.5.4 South Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) is a scheme proposed for implementation that will provide a series of bus priority measures on the A33 between Reading town centre and the Mere Oak Park and Ride facility south of the M4 junction 11. The scheme would reduce congestion and journey times, improving public transport reliability on the main corridor into Reading. This scheme is included within the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal.



2.5.5 The MRT will connect the Mere oak Park & Ride facility south of M4 junction 11 to existing businesses and business parks, the planned Green Park railway station, further commercial development, Madejski stadium, new additional residential development, central Reading and Reading Station. Phase 1 of the scheme runs between M4 junction 11 to A33 junction with Longwater Avenue (Green Park) as shown in **Figure 2–14**.

**Figure 2–14: Reading MRT Phase 1 - Location Plan**



2.5.6 As part of the MRT project and the nearby proposed Worton Grange residential development improvements a new bus stop may be introduced on the A33 opposite RIBP (between Imperial Way and Basingstoke Road). The A33 improvements will be complete before this bus stop is implemented, including a new bus lane and mid-link stop on the A33. It is understood that this bus stop will be implemented and served by the MRT within the next 18 months.



## 2.6 EXISTING SAFETY RECORD

2.6.1 Personal injury collision (PIA) data was obtained from RBC for the most recent five-year period available (December 2013 to December 2018) of the key arterial routes the lead to RIBP. The full dataset cannot be included in this report for data protection reasons, however, the study area and collision locations by severity are displayed graphically in **Figure 2–15**.

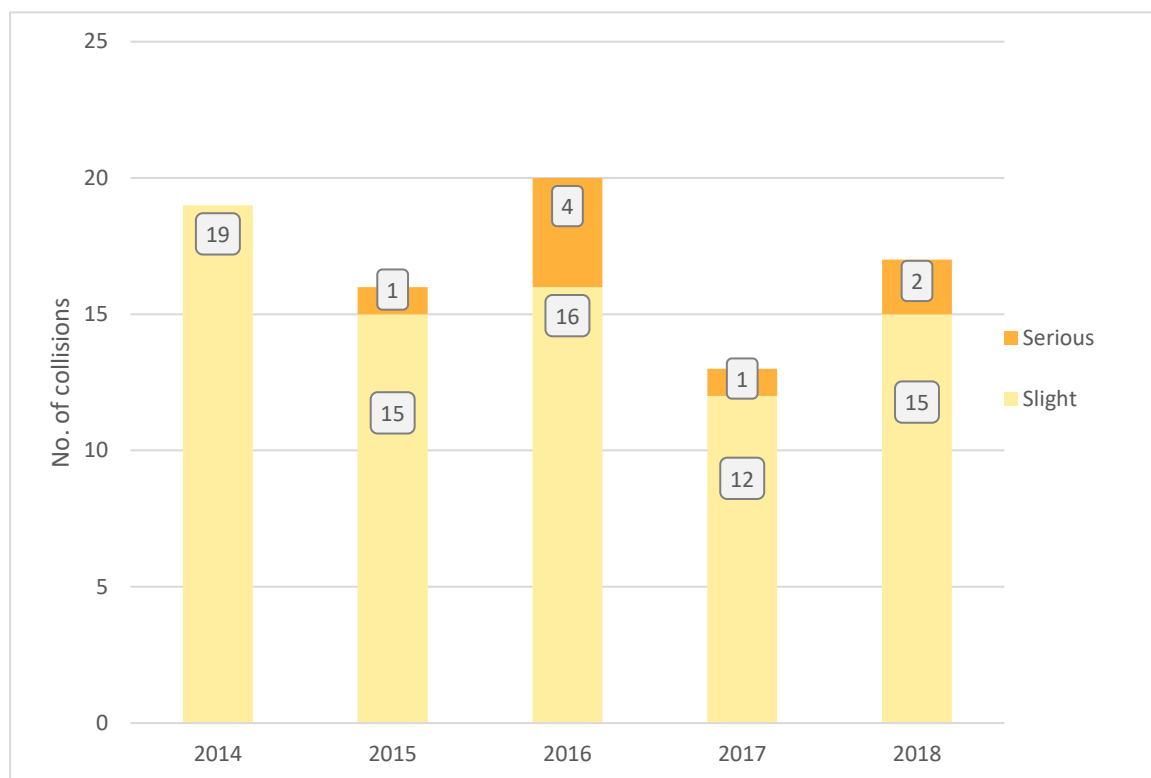
**Figure 2–15: RIBP Personal Injury Accident Analysis Plot**



2.6.2 A review of the total number of collisions by severity is outlined in **Figure 2–16**. Of 85 collisions in the 5-year period, 8 'serious', 77 'slight' and no fatal injuries were recorded.



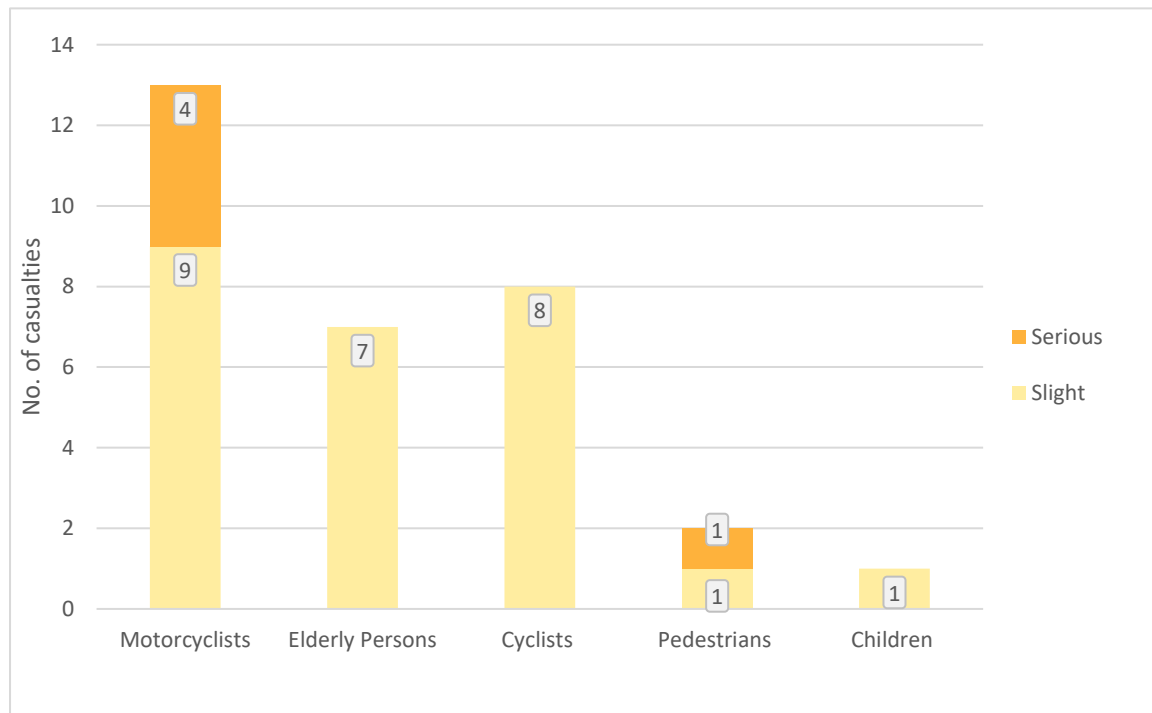
Figure 2–16: Collisions by severity



- 2.6.3 Over the past five years, eight serious and 77 slight collisions occurred in the study area shown in **Figure 2–15**. On average, the number of collisions has decreased year-on-year.
- 2.6.4 The type of vulnerable road users involved in the collisions have been analysed and outputs are summarised in **Figure 2–17**. In total, 25% of all recorded casualties were vulnerable road users (i.e. motorcyclists, elderly persons, cyclists, pedestrians and children).



Figure 2–17: Collisions by vulnerable road user



- 2.6.5 The majority (42%) of vulnerable road user casualties were motorcyclists; the next-largest group was cyclists, who accounted for 26% of vulnerable road user casualties in the area.

## 2.7 READING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS PARK - ACCIDENT REVIEW

- 2.7.1 No collisions were recorded within the boundaries of RIBP; however, 85 collisions occurred within the study area shown in in **Figure 2–16**.
- 2.7.2 A further review of the type and causation factors of collisions in the area has been undertaken, focusing on vulnerable road users and key junctions surround RIBP.

### VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

#### CYCLISTS

- 2.7.3 In the road network surrounding RIBP, eight 'slight' collisions involving cyclists were recorded in the period. All but one collision occurred between a single car and pedal cycle; of these, five resulted from a car driver failing to look properly. Four of these collisions occurred at roundabouts - three on the A33 (two at Imperial Way and one at Bennett Road), and another occurred on South Oak Way near the Madejski Stadium. Two collisions resulted from a cyclist failing to stop at a junction; one of these was at a signalised crossing, and another occurred whilst a cyclist was travelling along a footway.

#### MOTORCYCLISTS

- 2.7.4 Thirteen collisions involving motorcycles were recorded in the period; four of these were reported to be 'serious', the rest were classified as 'slight'. Of the 'serious' collisions, two involved a motorcycle only, and two occurred between a single car and a motorcycle.



2.7.5 Of the motorcycle-only collisions, one occurred when a rider lost control during wet weather conditions and the other occurred when a rider skidded on a turn and fell. Of the collisions involving a car, one occurred when a car failed to stop at a roundabout and struck a motorcyclist, and the other occurred when a motorcyclist overtook an LGV and struck a car making a U-turn in the road.

2.7.6 Of the nine 'slight' collisions recorded, seven involved a single car and a motorcycle. Five of these resulted from a car changing lane without looking properly, striking a motorcyclist. One collision occurred when a car driver struck the back of a motorcyclist who was waiting to enter a roundabout. Another occurred when a motorcyclist failed to look when changing lanes and struck the side of a car. Of the two collisions that did not involve cars, one was caused by an HGV pulling out of a junction without looking properly, and the other occurred when a motorcyclist swerved to avoid a pedestrian in the carriageway.

### PEDESTRIANS

Two collisions involving pedestrians were recorded in the surrounding road network in the last five years. One 'serious' collision occurred when a car failed to stop at a signalised crossing on the Northern Approach / A33 roundabout and collided with a pedestrian. One 'slight' collision occurred on South Oak Way roundabout when a turning car struck an operative working in the road.

### ADJACENT READING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS PARK

2.7.7 Two collisions were recorded on the northbound carriageway of the A33 adjacent to RIBP. Both collisions occurred in 2018, one at the entrance of RIBP from the A33 and the other at the exit of RIBP to the A33. The former occurred during dry, night-time conditions, when a cyclist using a signalised pedestrian crossing point collided with a car. The second collision occurred in dry conditions, when a motorcyclist attempted to turn right at the roundabout using the left-hand lane and collided with a car travelling northbound.

### A33 / IMPERIAL WAY ROUNDABOUT

2.7.8 Twelve collisions were recorded at the A33 / Imperial Way roundabout to the northwest of the site; all were reported to be 'slight'. six were between cars, two between a motorcycle and car, two between a cyclist and a car, one between a bus and a car and one between an HGV and car. Of the six collisions involving cars only, two resulted from overtaking, two occurred when a vehicle hit the rear of a stationary vehicle waiting to enter the roundabout, and two resulted from vehicles failing to give way.

2.7.9 Both collisions involving a car and cyclist occurred when a driver failed to give way to a cyclist without lights at the roundabout. One of the collisions between a motorcycle and car occurred when the car failed to stop and struck the motorcyclist waiting to enter the roundabout. The other collision occurred when a car changed lane without looking and collided with a motorcycle.

2.7.10 The collision between a bus and car occurred when the bus driver failed to look properly whilst entering the roundabout and collided with a car on the roundabout. The collision between an HGV and car occurred as a result of the HGV following the car in front too closely, causing a collision when the car stopped to enter the roundabout.



### A33 / B3270

- 2.7.11 14 collisions occurred along the B3270 road, which runs parallel to the M4 before merging with the A33 at Junction 11 of the M4. Two of these were classified as 'serious'; one resulting from a motorcycle overtaking an LGV and colliding with a car making a U-turn in the road, and another caused by a car attempting to overtake an immobilised HGV and colliding with an oncoming vehicle. Of the 'slight' collisions, five resulted from cars ignoring automatic traffic signals, five were rear-end shunts and two were caused by cars travelling along the wrong side of the road.

### A33 / SOUTH OAK WAY

- 2.7.12 Seven collisions occurred at the A33 / South Oak Way roundabout to the north-west of the Business Park. Two of these were 'serious' collisions; one caused by a car losing control at speed and striking an HGV, and another resulting from a car swerving and leaving the carriageway. No other vehicles were involved in these collisions. All five 'slight' collisions involved only one vehicle; two of these were caused by cars losing control, one was caused by a motorcyclist swerving to avoid a pedestrian in the road and two have unknown causes.

### M4 J11 (EXC. B3270)

- 2.7.13 28 collisions occurred at or on the approach to Junction 11 of the M4, to the southeast of RIBP. Three of these were classified as 'serious'; all were caused by a motorcycle losing control during wet weather conditions.

### SUMMARY

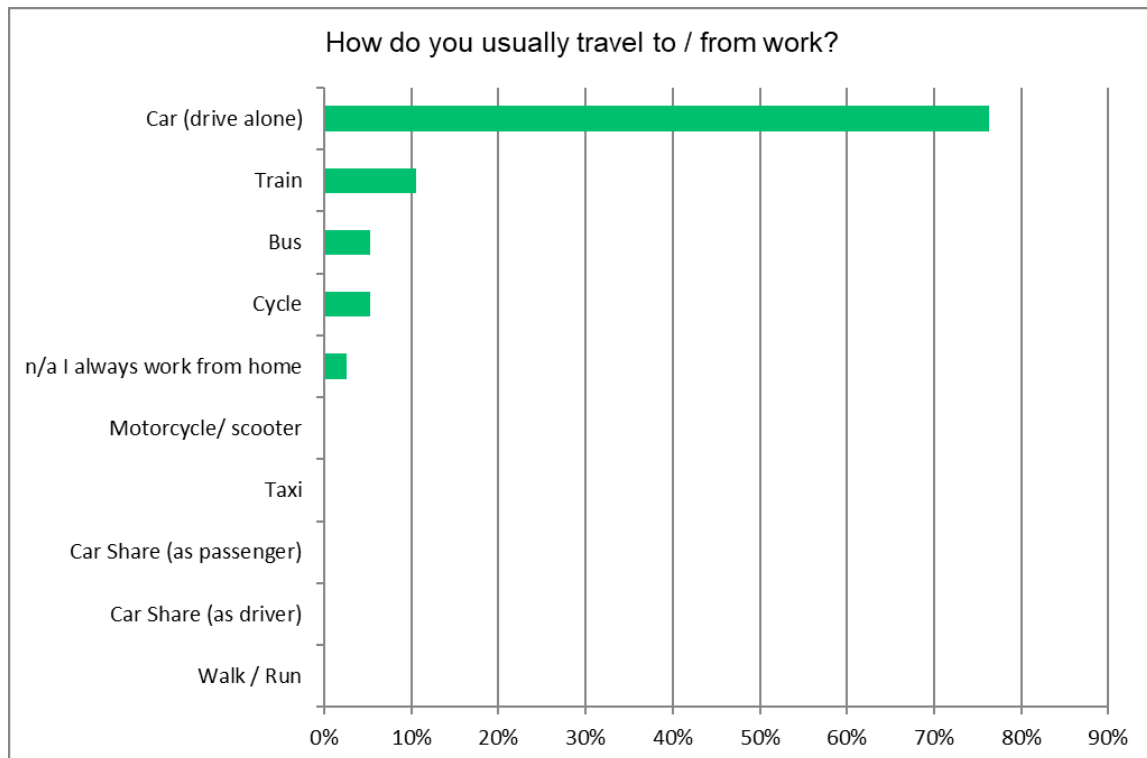
- 2.7.14 On average, the number of collisions in the area surrounding RIBP has decreased year-on-year. Given the extent of the survey area, the flow of traffic on these roads and the speed limits the number of collisions does not highlight a particular road safety issue or that there are any inherent issues with the existing design of the local highway.
- 2.7.15 Cyclists were involved in eight collisions, and pedestrians in two collisions. Whilst these numbers are a small proportion of the overall collisions it may also be the case that the high speeds and traffic volumes in the vicinity of RIBP currently deter people from walking or cycling in the first place. As part of the sustainable transport strategy, one of the measures as referenced in the accompanying Travel Plan will be an audit of the key walking and cycling routes to determine any improvements that might encourage more walking and cycling by improving safety perceptions for these users.

## 2.8 TRAVEL MODE SHARE

- 2.8.1 As part of the travel mode share survey of existing tenants (and reported in more detail in the accompanying Travel Plan), respondents were asked how they usually travel to and from work (highlighting the mode used for the longest part of their journey). The results are shown in **Figure 2-18**.



Figure 2–18: Staff travel profile



- 2.8.2 A total of 77% of respondents declared that they travel to and from work by car, out of which all drive alone. 10% take the train, 5% use the bus, and 5% cycle to work. With an existing building occupancy of approximately 933 workers, RIBP generates an existing demand of circa 718 vehicle trips.
- 2.8.3 A total of 15% of all respondents use public transport which is a low mode share. It is likely that with the opening of the new Green Park Rail Station in 2021, more staff members will be able to access site by public transport.



# 3 PLANNING POLICY

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 This section considers relevant transport policy/guidance to this application:

- ⊙ National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- ⊙ Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019), and
- ⊙ Reading Borough Council Revised parking standards and design SPG (2011)

## 3.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2019)

3.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in July 2018, updated in February 2019 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied and provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. At its heart the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11).

3.2.2 The NPPF promotes sustainable transport. It notes that transport issues should be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals.

3.2.3 Chapter 9 of the revised NPPF sets out the requirements for promoting sustainable transport advising that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. The NPPF advises that planning policies should support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.

3.2.4 The NPPF does not set parking standards but notes in Paragraph 105 that parking policies should consider:

- a) *the accessibility of the development;*
- b) *the type, mix and use of development;*
- c) *the availability of and opportunities for public transport;*
- d) *local car ownership levels; and*
- e) *the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.*

3.2.5 In Paragraph 108 the NPPF sets out that when assessing applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) *appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be or have been taken up, given the type of development and its location;*
- b) *safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and*
- c) *any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.*

3.2.6 The Proposed Reconfiguration supports the NPPF by:



- ⦿ Promoting sustainable transport by providing significant investment in sustainable transport provision including EV charge points, car share bays, a significant uplift in long-stay cycle parking (of various types), covered short stay cycle parking, electric bicycle charging, showers and lockers all of which in isolation and in combination is in excess of local minimum standards.
- ⦿ Identifying that by the nature of the Proposed Reconfiguration there will be no significant impacts on the highway network in terms of road safety, capacity or congestion.
- ⦿ Allowing for safe goods delivery using Goods Vehicles, with improved and increased provision for loading/unloading/waiting on-site and away from the public highway.

3.2.7 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”* and in this context that planning applications should:

- a) *give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second so far as possible to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;*
- b) *address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;*
- c) *create places that are safe, secure and attractive which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;*
- d) *allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and*
- e) *be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.*

3.2.8 The Proposed Reconfiguration supports the NPPF through the internal layout of the site which gives priority to pedestrian and cycle movements.

3.2.9 This document demonstrates that efficient delivery goods has been considered by provision of appropriate improved loading provisions, and the planning applications are supported by a Delivery and Servicing Plan and Waste Management Strategy.

3.2.10 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF requires all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement to provide a Travel Plan. While the nature of the development will not generate additional development traffic, it is nonetheless supported by a comprehensive estate wide Travel Plan.

### 3.3 READING BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN (2019)

3.3.1 The Local Plan for Reading is the document that contains the policies for how Reading will develop up to 2036. It identifies the amount of development that will take place, the areas and sites where development is expected to be accommodated, and where it will be restricted, and sets out policies for how planning applications will be decided.

3.3.2 Policy TR1 also states:



*“Planning permission will not be granted for major development proposals unless there is a commitment to implement measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities, such as through provision to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; and through agreed travel plans, safe routes to local facilities and services, including schools and parks, and similar measures”.*

3.3.3 Policy TR3 of the Local Plan relates to Access, traffic and highway-related matters, and states that:

*“Development will only be permitted where: For non-residential uses, or new dwellings on classified roads, off-street servicing would be provided.”*

3.3.4 The servicing strategy for RIBP is compliant with Policy TR3 as all servicing activity will be able to take place off-street.

3.3.5 Policy TR4 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. Development of new facilities for cycling, such as cycle hire points and cycle parking, will be acceptable. The cycle routes identified in the most up-to-date Cycling Strategy will be maintained, enhanced and added to or extended. Development will not detrimentally affect an identified cycle route. Where opportunities exist, improvements to that route, including the provision of connecting routes, and/or cycling facilities will be sought within developments or through planning contributions.”*

3.3.6 Policy TR5 seek to ensure the Council’s transport objectives are achieved and states:

*“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.” The policy is also supported by the Council’s SPD “Revised parking standards and design” (2011).*

## 3.4 READING BOROUGH COUNCIL REVISED PARKING STANDARDS AND DESIGN SPG (2011)

3.4.1 Reading Borough Council’s ‘Revised Parking Standards and Design’ Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 2011 gives minimum and maximum standards for cycle, motorcycle, car and disabled parking.

The Revised Parking Standards and Design SPG specifies maximum standards for loading bays by land use. For a B1 office use, the SPG specifies a maximum of 3 loading bays for developments of 1,500m<sup>2</sup> and above. Three such loading bays are provided, including a two further loading bays and as such the servicing strategy for RIBP is compliant with the abovementioned document.



# 4 PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION AND MITIGATION STRATEGY

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The Applicant is in the process of acquiring the Site and plans to fund significant improvement works next year, with the intention of creating an exemplary commercial offering in terms of modern office accommodation with a strong focus on occupier satisfaction, sustainability and wellness.

4.1.2 In summary, **Application 1** seeks permission for the following:

- ⦿ Upgrade of existing office building comprising the construction of a new entrance, reconfiguration of the car parking and basement level employee ancillary facilities (provision of new gym and end of journey facilities) and improvements to the hard and soft landscaping (including provision of meeting pods), consolidated waste management area, external alterations to 'The Dot' and internal works to the Listed Little Lea Cottage and the recolouring of the existing terracotta tiles under Permitted Development Rights"

4.1.3 **Application 2**, promotes further refinements to the parking layout and

- ⦿ A Decked Car Park to the rear of the site and associated amendments to the parking layout at grade.

4.1.4 This document should be read in conjunction with the Travel Plan, Delivery and Servicing Plan and Waste Management Strategy also submitted in support of the applications.

## 4.2 LANDSCAPING AND PARKING

### FRONT LANDSCAPE

4.2.1 Churchman Thornhill Finch has prepared a comprehensive proposal for alterations to hard and soft landscaping which seeks to improve the amenity of the site for formal and informal use by employees. As part of the landscape proposals, a number of innovative initiatives are proposed including employee allotments, the introduction of a number of meeting pods within the landscape, and walking and running routes around the lake by The Dot, including a trim trail.

4.2.2 In addition, it is proposed to landscape the section of the existing access road that has been made redundant following the previous introduction of the one-way system to the front of the site and provide additional tree planting and planting zones within the extensive hard paved areas immediately in from the main façade. The bus stop is relocated slightly, and which will include provision of a new bus shelter and real time information board.



- 4.2.3 As per the plans at **Appendix B**, a total of 25 parking bays are proposed at the front of the site for visitor parking (including six disabled bays, two drop-off/pick-up/taxi bays and four EV charge points). The parking bays are brought forwards closer to the access road to reduce the area of available informal parking/blocking of parking bays.
- 4.2.4 Together with proposals to raise the existing crossing points and improve signage (to clarify to arriving vehicles that they are entering RIBP, not the adjacent Tesco regional distribution centre), the proposals will improve traffic calming, reduce rat running and better manage conflicts between NMU's and vehicles. Vehicle tracking is provided at **Appendix C** which shows that vehicles manoeuvre safely to/from the parking bays and relocated bus layby.

## PARKING

### At Grade Parking

- 4.2.5 Whilst the Proposed Reconfiguration seeks to encourage sustainable travel and carbon neutrality (as detailed further below), the Site's location outside of Reading town centre means it does need to accommodate both those coming to work or visiting the site who are dependent on a private vehicle. This is especially the case in light of the situation regarding COVID-19 and the reluctance of some to commute via public transport or in shared vehicles.
- 4.2.6 The original outline planning permission for the Site allowed the provision of 1,260 spaces, reduced to 1,199 through a reserved matters application. As part of the proposed relocation of the gym and end of travel facilities, a number of the existing car parking spaces will be displaced and will need to be re-provided elsewhere on the Site.
- 4.2.7 The proposed relocated spaces are shown at drawing 001 provided at **Appendix B** which is proposed in support of Application 1. Vehicle tracking is provided at **Appendix C** which shows that vehicles can manoeuvre safely to/from the parking bays.

## CYCLE PARKING/CHANGING FACILITY

- 4.2.8 The site enhancements involve a complete overhaul of on-site cycle parking facilities comprising new changing, shower and locker facilities (shown at **Appendix D**), that will provide 174 long-stay spaces. The new end of journey facilities will be located immediately adjacent to the enlarged gym and will be linked to the main reception area at ground floor level.
- 4.2.9 Of the 174 long-stay cycle parking spaces:
- ⦿ 75% of the capacity will be two-tier racks (ie accommodating 131 bicycles);
  - ⦿ 5% of the capacity will accommodate enlarged bicycles such as cargo/recumbent bikes/handcycles (ie accommodating 9 bicycles). These will be in the form of 2.7-3m long Sheffield stands;
  - ⦿ 10% of capacity will be provided in the form of lockers for foldable bikes such as Brompton's (ie accommodating 17 bicycles);
  - ⦿ 10% of capacity will be provided in the form of standards Sheffield Stands (ie accommodating a further 17 bicycles), and
  - ⦿ Out of the total cycle parking capacity, electric charging provision will be provided for 5% of the cycle parking (ie 9 spaces).



- 4.2.10 At the front of the site a new 16 space covered visitor cycle parking shelter is proposed where there is currently no such visitor cycle parking provision. Lastly, an area to the front of the site has been reserved as part of a future-proofing exercise to accommodate a cycle docking station in the event there is the opportunity to connect to a Reading-wide network of cycle docking stations (including at Green Park).

#### NET CHANGE IN VEHICLE, CYCLE AND MOTORCYCLE PARKING

- 4.2.11 To help emphasise the significant changes to vehicle, cycle and motorcycle parking, the following table provides a summary comparison of the existing and proposed facilities and their level of compliance with local policy. Two green ticks indicate requirements have been exceeded.

Table 4-1: Vehicle, Cycle and Motorcycle Parking Summary and Policy Compliance

| INFRASTRUCTURE           | POLICY REQUIREMENT                                          | EXISTING PROVISION (SPACES) | PROPOSED PROVISION (SPACES)                                        | PROPOSED POLICY COMPLIANCE                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Disabled bays            | 2% of total + 6                                             | 10                          | 24 (2% + 6)                                                        |                                                                                          |
| Motorcycle spaces        | 2% of total parking spaces                                  | 0                           | 24 (2%)                                                            |                                                                                          |
| EV charge points         | 0 based on RBC parking SPD.<br>10% based on Local Plan 2019 | 0                           | 120 (10%)<br>(60 passive converted to active when demand requires) |                                                                                         |
| Car share bays           | n/a                                                         | 0                           | 24 (2%)                                                            |   |
| Long Stay Cycle Parking  | 1/200sqm                                                    | 64                          | 174                                                                |                                                                                        |
| Short Stay Cycle Parking | n/a                                                         | 0                           | 16                                                                 |   |
| Electric cycle charging  | n/a                                                         | 0                           | 9 (5%)                                                             |   |

- 4.2.12 It should be noted that while some disabled car parking is currently provided, they are not compliant in terms of dimensions so the proposed provision and design of disabled bays would provide a significant improvement compared to the existing situation, in addition to the overall quantum.
- 4.2.13 There are currently no car share bays and no existing policy requirement to make such provision. The implementation of 24 car share bays would act as an incentive for workers on site to car share. Furthermore, with their proximity to the rear pedestrian entrance and the offer of a guaranteed ride home for car sharers in case of an emergency, it is hoped this will additionally incentivise car sharing.
- 4.2.14 As can be seen, the development proposals go significantly beyond what is currently provided on-site and also beyond what would be expected or required by local/national policy.



## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

- 4.2.15 As RIBP looks to expand its portfolio of tenants and reach full capacity, the demand for travel to and from site by all modes of transport will become increasingly bigger and the associated pressure on parking, public transport, walking and cycling routes. To facilitate this, a Travel Plan has been prepared for the site and is also submitted in support of planning.
- 4.2.16 The Travel Plan draws on qualitative research, site visits, a site-wide audit of the estate and its surroundings as well as quantitative evidence, a travel survey, a review personal injury accident data and feedback from discussions with RBC.
- 4.2.17 As part of a firm commitment to significantly improve the positioning of the business park, a wide package of improvements are proposed which are centred around the provision of on-site wellness and amenity facilities and transport initiatives that will attract occupiers, increase occupancy densities, create additional jobs within the borough and maximise opportunities for travel by non-car modes (minimising the parks impacts associated with congestion, road safety and parking).
- 4.2.18 The document itself assesses existing transport conditions and road safety records, establishes baseline travel conditions, sets objectives and targets for reducing single occupancy car travel over an interim/ 5 year plan period, identifies responsibilities for delivery, funding mechanisms and future action owners for the associated measures, and finally confirms the on-going governance structure, monitoring and review process and action plan to deliver the identified measures.
- 4.2.19 A summary of the sustainable transport measures package (provided in the Travel Plan) is also contained at **Appendix D** of this note and includes the following:
- ⦿ Complete overhaul of on-site cycle parking facilities via a bespoke cycle parking / storage / changing facility, with 174 long-stay spaces and an additional 16 space covered visitor shelter at the front of the site;
  - ⦿ The continued long-term subsidy of the Greenwave bus service to ensure the bus remains an attractive and easy mode choice for employees, linking them to home and local public transport nodes;
  - ⦿ Provision of real time information boards within the new reception and at the bus stop to increase the attractiveness of the service and help staff/visitors make more informed decisions about boarding times, including new bus layby, shelter, seating (thus improving shade, shelter and comfort);
  - ⦿ Designing in a future bicycle hire docking station, effectively future-proofing Reading International to enable employees to easily commute by bike for the last part of their journey, making commuting by train to the new Green Park station (or Reading Town Centre) a more attractive mode choice;
  - ⦿ The provision of a significant volume of active and passive electric vehicle charging points to encourage and move away from petrol and diesel vehicles and facilitate an overall reduced carbon footprint;



- ⦿ Roll-out of a new Reading International workplace app with a centralised information source for travel information for all staff, prospective tenants, and visitors (and associated live links to footage of local traffic conditions) to help occupiers make more informed decisions on departure times and help stagger demand;
- ⦿ Evolution of a complete long-term managed transport solution via implementation of a dedicated Travel Plan Network at Reading International, offering numerous benefits and incentives to occupiers that travel by non-car modes or car-share, and
- ⦿ A commitment to implementation of a detailed Travel Plan based on qualitative research, site visits, a highways audit in/around the park, mode share surveys, personal injury accident data, incorporation of all proposed measures to tackle congestion, improve road safety, and ultimately maximise opportunities to travel to RIBP by non-car modes both for existing and future staff.

## SUSTIANABLE TRAVEL CERTIFICATION

- 4.2.20 As part of the applicant's commitment to promoting sustainability, the development aims to achieve BREEAM Excellent as well as Cycle Score Gold status.

### BREEAM

- 4.2.21 The RBC Local Plan (2019) and the Sustainable Design and Construction SDP (2019) identify the Council's aspirations in relation to sustainable design, construction and energy. These have informed the proposals for RIBP, where together with the sustainable transport strategy, the owner is targeting a BREEAM Excellent rating.

### CYCLE SCORE

- 4.2.22 The owner has also engaged with Cycle Score. Cycle Score is an industry wide initiative that provides certification rates for buildings according to an official set of standards that determine a building's micro mobility friendliness and how commuter friendly a building is. These standards were developed in conjunction with industry professionals, travel planners, tenants and executives in cycle/ micro mobility orientated businesses.
- 4.2.23 In the case of RIBP, the applicant is aiming to achieve Gold certification which will mean RIBP will be seen by where prospective tenants as being a cycle friendly building with facilities that encourage cycling to and from work.

## REAR CAR PARKING DECK

- 4.2.24 An outline application ('Application 2') is being made which proposes the introduction of a new decked car park to the rear of the site opposite Spurs B & C and accessed off the main service route. A drawing showing the proposed decked car park is provided at **Appendix B**. The impact of delivering this deck is to increase parking on site from the currently consented 1,199 bays to 1,260 bays, in line with the level originally approved in 1999. This is achieved by the removal of 24 parking bays at grade (proposed to be introduced under application 1, resulting in the loss of landscaping) and the provision of 85 new bays on level 1 of the deck, a net gain of 61 bays.



- 4.2.25 The purpose of the new deck is to ensure that there is an optimum level of car parking for both existing and future tenants following the loss of a number of existing bays to dedicated spaces, that will only be available for those using electric vehicles (60 active spaces at the outset) and car sharers (24 spaces), as proposed under Application 1.
- 4.2.26 Our proposals seek only a small increase of 61 bays that does not even offset the 84 lost above, so is a fair and reasonable approach that only increases numbers to a previously agreed level. This also represents the optimisation of the layout and brings all of the spaces within a secure area, making car park management easier. The new deck will also have less of an impact on the existing landscape than the proposed reconfiguration of the at grade spaces (proposed under Application 1) as the deck will sit above existing parking bays and an enclosed storage area.
- 4.2.27 If approved, the deck will be constructed under a Design & Build Contract, so detailed drawings will be submitted for reserved matters approval at a future date. However, it is envisaged that the deck will be a lightweight concrete/steel structure with the potential for a roof which can take solar PV panels (subject to viability). Further justification for provision of the parking deck is provided later in this section.

### 4.3 PARKING JUSTIFICATION

- 4.3.1 As requested by RBC, the following arguments sets out our proposed justification for implementation of the car parking deck.

#### RIBP SPATIAL LOCALITY

- 4.3.2 The geographical positioning of Reading International means it is appealing to tenants from the perspective of access both to Reading Town Centre (with good bus connectivity) and the M4 Strategic Road Network (providing direct access for occupier commutes further afield). With this in mind there will always be a need to provide a careful balance of capacity for travel by multiple modes, whilst meeting the sustainable transport objectives within the NPPF, RBC Local Transport Plan 3 (2011 - 2026) (2011) and the RBC Local Plan.
- 4.3.3 Our proposed improvements and increased parking capacity have, therefore, been developed with these objectives in mind by ensuring the park can be accessed by a range of modes of transport, but with an increasing emphasis on encouraging travel by sustainable/active modes, capitalising on the opportunities that exist, as outlined further below.

#### COVID IMPACT ON TRANSPORT

- 4.3.4 A recent article (see **Appendix E**) in the Guardian has found that there are perhaps setbacks for those hoping that Covid-19 would bring forward fresh attitudes to using non-car forms of transport, whilst research by the RAC has found that almost two-thirds of UK car owners now consider their vehicle essential, with a sharp fall back to 2002 figures of those saying they would use their cars less if there was better public transport.

#### MAXIMISATION OF OCCUPIER DEMAND

- 4.3.5 The intention is to significantly improve the positioning of the business park by instigating an extensive package of refurbishment and improvement works centred around the provision of market leading wellness and amenity facilities that will help attract new occupiers, reduce the vacancy rate and as a result create additional jobs within the borough.

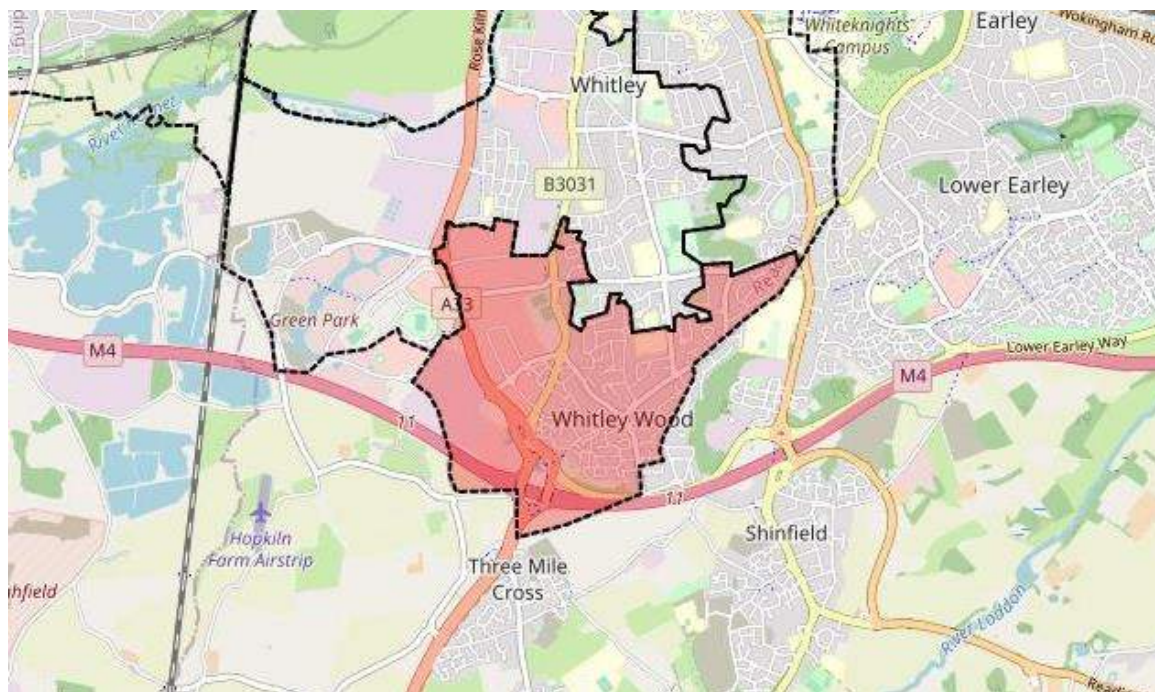


- 4.3.6 While these measures will be key to attracting new occupiers, given the site's geographical position as outlined above a good supply of parking will be very important to meet occupier requirements and in order to achieve full occupancy. This is a fundamental goal given the level of investment proposed in the building (c. £25m of cap ex).

#### MODE SHARE (RIBP ACTUAL VS 2011 CENSUS)

- 4.3.7 Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that, based on the 2011 census, 42,309 people travel into Reading to work every day. The biggest number, 12,616, come into Reading from the adjacent borough of Wokingham, the majority of which arrive by car with more than 8,500 coming into Reading either as a driver or passenger (62%). It would be reasonable to assume that this mode share proportion will only increase the further out that commuters travel from to Reading.
- 4.3.8 A further review has been conducted of the method of travel to work for all commuters to the ONS referenced Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) in which RIBP is located (Whitley Wood). This is important because the geographical positioning of the park will always make the location an attractive one for prospective tenants because of access to the A33 and the M4 which forms part of the Strategic Road Network.

Figure 4-1: ONS 2011 Census (MSOA Whitley Wood)



- 4.3.9 Data on the method of travel to work into the MSOA of Whitley Wood (in which RIBP is based) is presented in Error! Reference source not found..



Table 4-2: ONS 2011 Census (Method of Travel to Work to MSOA Whitley Wood)

|                                        |       |
|----------------------------------------|-------|
| Work mainly at or from home            | 0.0%  |
| Underground, metro, light rail or tram | 0.3%  |
| Train                                  | 2.6%  |
| Bus, minibus or coach                  | 6.2%  |
| Taxi                                   | 0.2%  |
| Motorcycle, scooter or moped           | 1.1%  |
| Driving a car or van                   | 77.4% |
| Passenger in a car or van              | 3.9%  |
| Bicycle                                | 3.3%  |
| On foot                                | 4.8%  |
| Other method of travel to work         | 0.3%  |

- 4.3.10 This shows that 77% of people commute to the MSOA of Whitley Wood by car, with a further 4% as a passenger in a car or van. The single occupancy mode share is consistent with the mode share survey conducted at RIBP.
- 4.3.11 As explained in Section 2.0, with an existing building occupancy of approximately 933 staff, RIBP generates an existing demand of 718 vehicle trips. For arguments sake, and given that the objective of the Proposed Reconfiguration is to create a fully occupied building (up to 4,000 staff) and taking on board RBC's reference to Covid 19 progressing opportunities for remote working and flexible working, if we assume just 70% of staff use the building at any one time (ie 2,800 staff), based on current actual RIBP mode share and ONS data RIBP will generate demand for 2,156 trips by car. This would be 957 vehicles more than the building currently has consent for.
- 4.3.12 Whilst building management have the power to limit access to on-site parking by vehicle, tenants do still have the ability to park a short distance from RIBP using well connected residential estates such as Whitley Wood, where on-street parking is not restricted. As such, there is a danger of overspill parking near the property.
- 4.3.13 As set out in this report, and as the development proposes significant investment in measures to promote sustainable transport such as car sharing and bike usage, it is considered that this investment (which goes significantly beyond what would be expected or required by local/national policy) helps justify the request for 61 additional parking spaces proposed as part of the parking deck application as being justified and reasonable. It is also consistent with national policy as it does not exceed the originally consented level of parking at RIBP, whilst still promoting economic development and securing inward employment.



#### 4.4 PROPOSED SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.4.1 A separate Delivery and Servicing Plan has been prepared which outlines the servicing arrangements for RIBP and establishes management measures that will be implemented in order to ensure that deliveries, servicing and refuse collection are improved and minimise any adverse safety impacts either on the local highway or within the site.
- 4.4.2 The reason for keeping the barriers is to ensure the car park remains secure and to prevent unauthorised access to the parking and loading areas. , however, the existing control gate and intercom will be relocated eastwards approximately 10m in order to facilitate the safer manoeuvring of any 'lost' vehicles which have incorrectly turned into the main car park.
- 4.4.3 The current signage at the roundabout will also be improved so that it is more obvious to drivers of goods vehicles that Tesco is to the right and that the left turn is 'for access only' to RIBP's car park and Busy Bees.
- 4.4.4 The future strategy for communicating servicing requirements to the supply chain for loading/unloading will be for all vehicles to report to the rear car park and load and unload at Spur B (which will serve Spurs A, B or C) and to report to Spur F if delivering to Spurs D, E or F.
- 4.4.5 To help manage inevitable ad-hoc occurrences of service vehicles reporting to the main reception safely, and avoid servicing vehicles from blocking the access road at the front of the site, a dedicated servicing pull-in bay is proposed in front of the DOT. It will also operate as the loading and waste collection bay for the DOT. This bay is strategically positioned to facilitate the safe movement of goods either to the waste collection store (adjacent the bay), or to the reception (via the existing zebra crossing just south of the bay).
- 4.4.6 In the event of multiple servicing vehicles wishing to access the loadings bays to the rear of the site, the DSP has built in a holding bay strategy where vehicles can wait should both loading bays be occupied upon arrival.

#### 4.5 WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 4.5.1 A separate Waste Management Strategy (WMS) has been prepared as part of the detailed planning application. The WMS considers the potential impacts that may arise from waste generated during the operational phase of the Proposed Reconfiguration, with the overall aim of developing a strategy for legislative compliance and good practice in the separation, storage and collection of waste.



## 5 SUMMARY

- 5.1.1 Velocity Transport Planning was appointed by Tristan Capital Partners to prepare a Transport Technical Note in support of proposals to upgrade the existing office environment at Reading International Business Park within the borough of Reading.
- 5.1.2 The office floorspace was originally designed to operate as either a single headquarters, or a multi-let office campus. Although the building was originally the headquarters for Verizon, over the years they have reduced their occupancy such that the building is now home to a number of different companies.
- 5.1.3 Despite the site's very prominent gateway location, vacancy rates have increased due to a number of factors, but primarily due to the office space having not been modernised so that it is no longer categorised as 'Category A'. It also lacks good quality amenity provision. As a consequence, RIBP finds it difficult to compete with the higher quality office accommodation elsewhere in Reading and in particular at nearby Green Park.
- 5.1.4 There are a number of alterations proposed to the building with the intention is to commence works during the early part of 2021. The two applications this document supports are as follows. **Application 1** seeks permission for:
- ⦿ Upgrade of existing office building comprising the construction of a new entrance, reconfiguration of the car parking and basement level employee ancillary facilities (provision of new gym and end of journey facilities) and improvements to the hard and soft landscaping (including provision of meeting pods), consolidated waste management area, external alterations to 'The Dot' and internal works to the Listed Little Lea Cottage and the recolouring of the existing terracotta tiles under Permitted Development Rights"
- 5.1.5 **Application 2**, promotes further refinements to the parking layout and
- ⦿ A Decked Car Park to the rear of the site and associated amendments to the parking layout at grade.
- 5.1.6 Submitted alongside a Travel Plan, Delivery and Servicing Plan and Waste Management Strategy, this technical note is prepared in accordance with the requirements of National Planning Practice Guidance. The technical note sets out details of existing transport conditions, on-site facilities, forthcoming local public transport improvements, provides an assessment of personal injury accident data, reference to relevant planning policy, details of existing vehicle/cycle parking, access and servicing, details of the proposals (access, vehicle and cycle parking, servicing), parking justification, and proposals to implement significant investment in promoting sustainable transport.
- 5.1.7 Application 1 seeks to retain the 1,199 parking spaces consented through the former reserved matters application, via rationalisation of parking, making use of space that will become available where existing cycle stores become consolidated, infilling and conversion of small areas of soft landscaping.
- 5.1.8 Application 2, submitted in outline, seeks to introduce a parking deck to the rear of the site to ensure there is an appropriate and accessible level of car parking for existing and future tenants following the introduction of dedicated spaces in Application 1, that will only be available for those using electric vehicles (60 active spaces at the outset) and car sharers (24 spaces).



- 5.1.9 The deck will result in removal of 24 parking bays at grade and the provision of 85 bays on level 1 of the deck, thus totalling 1,260 bays, ie no higher than was originally consented. At the request of RBC, a full justification has been set out which is based on RIBP's spatial locality, the short to medium term impacts of Covid 19, the maximisation of occupier demand, transparency on the longer terms impact of car demand based on actual reported RIBP car travel and that reported locally by the ONS, and potential similar future scenarios which may require a small level of flexibility to respond to these circumstances.
- 5.1.10 The parking justification is provided in addition to what is considered to be a bespoke (and will be an exemplar) package of sustainable transport measures to promote non-car modes of travel, alongside significant improvements in associated on-site cycle parking, EV charging, car share bays, public transport funding, real time information, improved travel information, and Travel Planning as the site expands its employee base towards full occupation.
- 5.1.11 On balance it is considered that taking this investment on board (which goes significantly beyond what would be expected or required by local/national policy) the request for 61 additional parking spaces proposed as part of the parking deck application is justified reasonable, and consistent with national policy whilst not exceeding the originally consented level of parking at RIBP and which supports the promotion of economic development and securing inward employment.

