



Reading Link Retail Park Drive-Thru
Reading

Transport Assessment

For

Sorbon Estates

Document Control Sheet

Reading Link Retail Park Drive-Thru

Reading

Sorbon Estates

This document has been issued and amended as follows:

Date	Issue	Prepared by	Approved by
7 th October 2020	1st Draft	Chris Saunders	John Russell
17 th October 2020	Final	Chris Saunders	John Russell

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Transport Assessment has been prepared on behalf of Sorbon Estates to accompany a planning application for a new 190m² Drive-Thru coffee shop with associated changes to the car park layout at Reading Link Retail Park, Reading.
- 1.2 The site currently consists of six retail units with a 308 space car park and is bound by Rose Kiln Lane to the west, an access road to the south, undeveloped land to west, and the Holy Brook to the north. The site is located circa 1 kilometre to the south of Reading Town Centre, within the administrative boundary of Reading Borough Council.
- 1.3 The site currently benefits from the ability to gain vehicular access to the local highway network via the A33 Rose Kiln Lane Gyratory.
- 1.4 The site is accessible by sustainable transport modes of travelling including, foot, cycle and public transport. Existing footways and cycleway link the site to nearby bus stops and Reading Town Centre. It is therefore considered that the proposed development is well located to encourage people to travel by modes of transport other than the private car.
- 1.5 The application proposes the provision a new Drive-Thru coffee shop to the eastern edge of the site, within the existing car park. It is proposed that an additional site access will be provided along Rose Kiln Lane, approximately 120 metres to the north of the A33 Rose Kiln Lane signalised gyratory. All vehicles will egress the site via the existing Retail Park access.
- 1.6 This report, which has been prepared in accordance with current best practice guidance, demonstrates that:
 - ▶ The site accords with national, regional and local policies relevant to transport;
 - ▶ The site is accessible by public transport, walking and cycling;
 - ▶ The highway network is not subject to any defects that lead to an abnormally high accident rate;
 - ▶ Suitable and appropriate access to the site can be achieved from the existing site access and a new site access on to Rose Kiln Lane that accord with current and best practice guidelines; and,
 - ▶ The residual impact of the proposed development will not be negligible.
- 1.7 Following this introduction, this Transport Statement is split into five sections as follows:
 - ▶ Section 2 outlines the transport planning policies that are considered to be pertinent to this application.
 - ▶ Section 3 considers the existing use of the site including a review of the parking demands, reviews the planning history of the site and reviews the accessibility of the site by all modes of the transport.
 - ▶ Section 4 provides an overview of the proposed development together with the details related to the access, parking and servicing strategies that will be adopted.
 - ▶ Section 5 Assess the trip generating potential of the proposal by all travel modes.
 - ▶ Section 6 summarises the key findings and conclusion of the report.

2.0 Transport Planning Policy

Overview

2.1 The key policy documents which set the context for the Proposed Development are as follows:

- ▶ National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019);
- ▶ Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019); and,
- ▶ Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document Final (October 2011).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) February 2019 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied.

2.3 The NPPF presumes in favour of sustainable development and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Paragraph 102 says that;

"Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:

a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;

b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;

c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;

d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and

e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places."

2.4 Section 9 of the NPPF deals with 'Promoting Sustainable Transport'. Paragraph 103 states 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. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making."

2.5 Off-street parking provision is referred to by Paragraph 105, which says that, in setting local parking standards for development, local planning authorities should take into account accessibility; the type, mix and use of the development; the availability of and opportunities for public transport; local car ownership levels; and an overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles.

2.6 Paragraph 106 states:

"Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport (in accordance with chapter 11 of this Framework). In town centres, local

authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists."

- 2.7 Paragraph 108 addresses the relationship between development and sustainable transport as follows:

"In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific 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."

- 2.8 Paragraph 109 says 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."

- 2.9 Paragraph 110 suggests that development should be located and designed where practical to, among other things, give priority to pedestrians and cycle movements, have access to high quality public transport facilities, create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians and consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport. Additionally, allow efficient delivery of goods and access by emergency vehicles and be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

- 2.10 Paragraph 111 states:

"All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed."

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

- 2.11 The Reading Borough Local Plan lays out the policies under which future developments in the Reading area will be considered.

- 2.12 Regarding achieving the transport strategy, Policy TR1 states:

"Proposed development should contribute appropriately to meeting the objectives of the most up-to-date Local Transport Plan or any successor document, including sub-strategies, specific projects identified and the local action plans.

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.

All development proposals should make an appropriate provision for works and contributions to ensure an adequate level of accessibility and safety by all modes of transport from all parts of a development, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling, in accordance with any agreed transport assessment submitted as part of the application."

- 2.13 Regarding access, traffic and highways-related matters, Policy TR3 states:

"In determining proposals involving a new or altered access onto the transport network, improvement works to the transport network, the creation of new transport infrastructure or the generation of

additional trips on the transport network, consideration will be given to the effect on safety, congestion and the environment.

Development will only be permitted where:

- ▶ *accesses and works to the highway comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority;*
- ▶ *the development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network;*
- ▶ *the proposals would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists;*
- ▶ *the proposal would not generate regular movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on unsuitable roads, or on roads without easy access to the Classified Highway Network; and*
- ▶ *for non-residential uses, or new dwellings on classified roads, off-street servicing would be provided.*

Proposals involving either the construction of a new site access, or a material increase in the use of an existing site access, directly onto the Classified Highway Network will not be acceptable if they would be likely to result in the encouragement of the use of the network for short local trips or compromise the safe movement and free flow of traffic on the network or the safe use of the road."

2.14 Regarding cycle routes and facilities, 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."

2.15 Regarding car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging, 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.

Development should make the following provision for electric vehicle charging points:

- ▶ *all new houses with dedicated off-street parking should provide charging points;*
- ▶ *within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point."*

Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document Final (October 2011)

2.16 RBC's parking requirements are set out in their SPD titled 'Revised Parking Standards and Design', adopted in October 2011. This document adopts a zonal strategy depending on a site's proximity to local centres and public transport corridors. The site is located in Zone 2 – Primary Core Area, where the relevant parking standards for restaurants and cafes is a maximum parking provision of one space per 7.5m²

3.0 Baseline Conditions

Overview

- 3.1 So that the context of the site can be established, a review of the local highway network in the vicinity of the site has been undertaken. The following text summarises this review and makes reference to the location of the site and baseline traffic conditions. It also sets out an overview of the accessibility of the site by a variety of modes of transport and includes a review of the sites recent planning history.

Overview

- 3.2 So that the context of the site can be established, a review of the local highway network in the vicinity of the site has been undertaken. The following text summarises this review and makes reference to the location of the site and baseline traffic conditions. It also sets out an overview of the accessibility of the site by a variety of modes of transport and includes a review of road safety records.

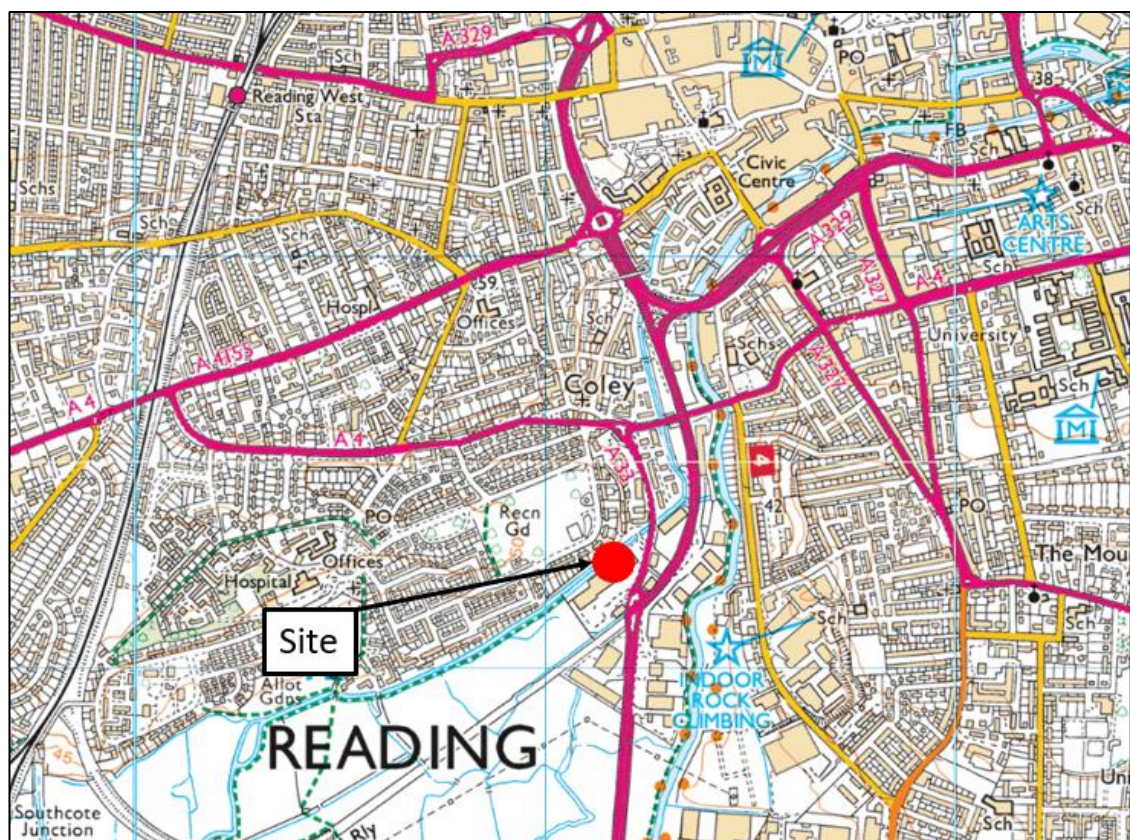


Figure 3.1 – Site Location

- 3.3 At present the site consists of an area of car park that serves six occupied retail units comprising approximately 7,014m² retail floor space provided with a 308 space car park that includes 9 disabled spaces. The site is currently accessed via a single access off the A33 Rose Kiln Lane signalised gyratory junction, a copy of the existing layout is contained within **Appendix A**.

Highway Network

- 3.4 Rose Kiln Lane is a two way single carriageway road that is subject to a 40 mile per hour speed limit. The carriageway is approximately 7.3 metres wide. The road has footways on both sides of the carriageway which are approximately 2.0 metres wide.

- 3.5 The site access road is a two-way single carriageway road that is subject to a 30 mile per hour speed limit. The carriageway is circa 7.5 metres wide, and provides access to the site's car parking, servicing area and a neighbouring petrol station.

Sustainable Transport Accessibility

- 3.6 It is generally accepted that walking and cycling provide important alternatives to the private car and should also be encouraged to form part of longer journeys via public transport. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the Institute of Highways and Transportation (IHT) has prepared several guidance documents that provide advice with respect to the provision of sustainable travel in conjunction with new developments. Within these documents it is suggested that:

- ▶ Most people will walk to a destination that is less than one mile (Planning for Walking, 2015);
- ▶ The bicycle is a potential mode of transport for all journeys under five miles (Planning for Cycling, 2015);
- ▶ Walking distances to bus stops should not generally exceed 400 metres, and it is recognised that people are prepared to walk twice as far to rail stations (Planning for Walking, 2015); and,
- ▶ However, walking distances of 500 metres can be applied to bus stops served by two or more high frequency routes (Buses in Urban Developments, 2018).

- 3.7 Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that Manual for Streets (MfS) identifies 'walkable neighbourhoods' as being "characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes (up to about 800m) walking distance of residential area which residents may access comfortably on foot". However, it is important to recognise that MfS does not consider 800 metres to be a maximum walking distance. Indeed, MfS contends that walking can be used to access a variety of destinations within a range of 2 kilometres and 2 miles respectively.

- 3.8 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the site is accessible by the more sustainable modes of travel including foot, cycle and public transport. Details on each of these sustainable modes of travel are set out below.

Accessibility by Foot

- 3.9 Rose Kiln Lane benefits from street lighting and wide footways that link the site to the town centre and The Oracle shopping and leisure centre, 1 kilometre to the north. The town centre has extensive network of pedestrianised streets which provide direct access to the railway station and main bus interchange.

Accessibility by Cycle

- 3.10 Reading has an extensive network of cycle routes and these are shown within **Appendix B**. The A33 Reading Relief is a designated cycle route linking the site to the station and town centre where access to various Reading cycle routes providing access to all areas of the town and suburbs can be obtained.

Accessibility by Bus

- 3.11 The nearest bus stops from the site are located approximately 320 metres to the north on St. Saviours Road. These stops can be accessed via a pedestrian bridge over Holy Brook, that provides connection into Admirals Court, and through a connecting footpath to St. Saviours Road. These stops are served by the Route 11 (Bronze) service, which operates a 24-hour service with an average hour frequency of one bus every 20 minutes.

- 3.12 This route provides connection between Reading Station, Reading Town Centre and the residential area of Coley. A copy of the bus route is contained within **Appendix C**.

Accessibility by Rail

- 3.13 Reading Railway Station is located 1.4 kilometres to the north of the site and is easily accessible by foot. Reading Railway Station is the second busiest interchange station outside London after Birmingham New Street and is located at the point of the Great Western Mainline and north south cross-country lines. Destination including Newbury, Bournemouth, Birmingham, Manchester Piccadilly, London Paddington, Oxford, Penzance, London Waterloo, Cardiff Central, Newcastle, Bristol Temple Meads and Gatwick Airport can be accessed from Reading Railway Station.

Planning History

- 3.14 An outline planning application for a drive thru coffee shop of 189sqm and a new access at Reading Link Retail Park (Reference 181860) was submitted on the 18th October 2018. The application was for a new coffee shop on the eastern portion of the existing car park and a new two way access into the retail park from Rose Kiln Lane, which would also incorporate deliveries.
- 3.15 The application was refused on the 15th March 2019, with the principle transport issues being as follows:
- ▶ The effect of the proposal on highway safety and the free flow of traffic; and,
 - ▶ The effect of the development on pedestrian safety.
- 3.16 Subsequently an appeal was submitted, and the subsequent decision notice was issued on the 20th April 2020 and is included within **Appendix D**.
- 3.17 With regards the transport issues the inspector commented as follows:
- ▶ *"Modelling undertaken by the appellant demonstrates that there is sufficient capacity within the network to accommodate the proposal, and I have not been presented with substantive evidence suggesting that the provision of a secondary access to the retail park would in itself lead to a harmful intensification of the proposed access. Furthermore, having particular regard to the survey results and the capacity identified by the modelling, the provision of a right turn lane is not warranted."* (Paragraph 11)
 - ▶ *"The proposed two way access would appear inadequate and would in all likelihood require potentially dangerous manoeuvres to prevent the risk of collisions between vehicles entering and exiting the site"* (Paragraph 18)
 - ▶ *"The absence of a through route to the rear of the existing retail units would limit to a large extent alternative options for serving the proposed facility. As I have not been presented with suitable alternatives to ensure the safe access of the appeal site, the imposition of a condition requiring the delivery, waste and servicing management plan in this particular instance would not overcome my concerns."* (Paragraph 22)
 - ▶ *"By reason of the proposed changes to the site's layout, to is unclear how pedestrians in particular would gain access to the proposed drive-thru. The appellant's submissions indicate that the existing pedestrian access points from Rose Kiln Lane would be retained, but these have not been shown on the proposed plans. Whilst it is argued that this issue could be resolved as part of a subsequent reserved matters application, I am required, as part of this appeal, to determine the suitability of the proposed access arrangements."* (Paragraph 25)
- 3.18 The following sections cover the issues raised by the Inspector.

4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 The proposals seek to erect a Drive-Thru coffee shop, with a gross floor area of approximately 190 sqm, in the north-east corner of the site. A copy of the proposed masterplan layout is contained within **Appendix E**.

Proposed Parking Provision

- 4.2 The proposal will incorporate 11 new parking spaces, consisting of a 9 additional disabled parking spaces for the entire retail park, bringing the total provision to 319 spaces. This provision is the same as provided in the previous proposals and deemed acceptable by the Inspector.
- 4.3 The Drive-Thru coffee shop also makes provision for six additional cycle parking spaces adjacent to the proposed building.
- 4.4 The Reading Borough Council Local Plan requires 10% of new spaces to be electric charging points. Therefore, two electric charging points, in accordance with the emerging Local Plan standards will be provided adjacent to the flank wall of the retail unit to the north west of the site.
- 4.5 This parking provision is adequate and will accommodate the demand, especially as there will be a high proportion of linked trips between the retail park and coffee shop.

Proposed Access Strategy

- 4.6 It is proposed that a new access be created to serve the proposals, this is to take the form of a simple priority junction with Rose Kiln Lane just south of the bridge over Holy Brook. This access will also serve as a secondary access for the rest of the site, re-assigning some of the existing right turning traffic from the Rose Kiln Lane gyratory. The access will be controlled by a 6'6" height barrier to prevent large vehicles entering the site by this route.
- 4.7 Given the concerns raised by the Inspector, with regards access width, no egress will be permitted from the access on to Rose Kiln Lane and dragons' teeth will be installed to prevent any vehicle exiting by this route.
- 4.8 A right turn lane has not been provided given the Inspector clearly stated that such a provision was not warranted as detailed within Section 3.
- 4.9 A new pedestrian footway will also be provided along the north side of the access providing a connection to the existing footbridge crossing the Holy Brook. This footway clearly provides access to coffee shop from the Rose Kiln Lane footway and the footway to the north of Holy Brook. This provision clearly overcomes the Inspectors concerns that a footway was not shown on the previous submitted drawings.
- 4.10 In additional pedestrian crossing points will be provided at the existing pedestrian entrance points from Rose Kiln Lane as shown on the pedestrian access plan within **Appendix F**.
- 4.11 All vehicles would leave via the existing car park access onto the Rose Kiln Lane gyratory junction, via the remodelled car park layout.
- 4.12 This access arrangement overcomes the Inspectors principle concern that delivery vehicles egressing or entering the site would come in conflict with vehicles travelling in the opposite direction as the access will be one way. The height barrier will also ensure that delivery vehicles for the retail units are unable to use the access.

Proposed Delivery and Servicing Strategy

- 4.13 In accordance with the requirements of Reading Borough Council (RBC), the servicing strategy has been based on deliveries to the coffee shop being undertaken in vehicles up to 11.30 metres in length, which

are the size of vehicles RBC has requested be assessed for applications for drive thru coffee and fast food restaurants at Forbury Retail Park and Worton Grange.

- 4.14 A dedicated delivery area will be provided to the side of the coffee shop as detailed on the proposed masterplan within **Appendix E**. Due to the height restriction barrier at the new access on Rose Kiln Lane, all deliveries will be via the existing delivery yard to the north of the retail units. To access the car park and the coffee shop loading area, a secured gate which will be opened between the delivery area and the car park. The gate will be only opened on demand when a delivery vehicle for the coffee shop has parked up in the delivery area.
- 4.15 The delivery vehicle will drive forward into the loading bay and once unloaded will reverse out of the loading bay and egress back through the delivery bay area. Swept path analysis of this manoeuvre has been undertaken and is shown on drawing 2009052-TK01 within **Appendix G**. Once the delivery vehicle has unloaded, a member of staff, will act as a banksman to ensure that the vehicle can safely reverse out of the loading bay.
- 4.16 Refuse vehicles will also access the coffee shop via the same route, while collecting waste from the rear of the retail units. The swept path analysis of a refuse vehicle is shown on drawing 2009052-TK02 within **Appendix G**.
- 4.17 This arrangement overcomes the Inspectors concerns that an alternative route for delivery vehicles to access the coffee shop had not been provided on the plans. The drawings within **Appendix G**, clearly show that a safe route through the existing retail park delivery area can be provided.

5.0 Development Impact

- 5.1 The following text evaluates the likely impact of the proposed development, making reference to similar applications in the local area in order to estimate the trip generating potential of the development.
- 5.2 It is noteworthy that development impact follows the same process undertaken for the previous application where the Inspector stated the following.

Trip Generation

- 5.3 In order to assess the trip generating potential of the proposals, reference has been made to the recently approved planning application at Worton Grange (Ref: 15/1944). This application, for a large mixed use scheme, included proposals for a Drive-Thru coffee shop with a floor area of 185m². The trip rates approved with RBC for the weekday peak hours and Saturday afternoon peak hour are contained in Table 5.1, below.

Land Use	Trip Rate (100m ²)			Trips (190m ²)		
	Arrivals	Departures	Two-Way	Arrivals	Departures	Two-Way
Weekday AM Peak (08:00 – 09:00)	7.535	6.427	13.962	14	12	27
Weekday PM Peak (08:00 – 09:00)	8.947	8.947	17.894	17	17	34
Saturday Peak (13:00 – 14:00)	16.611	16.111	32.722	32	31	62

Table 5.1 – Worton Grange Drive-Thru Approved Trip Rates

- 5.4 It is generally accepted that retail development attracts a mixture of the following:
- ▶ New Trips – These trips are new to the network and would not take place without the proposed development being in place;
 - ▶ Transferred Trips – Trips diverted from a similar destination, generally nearby, some of these trips will already be present on the local highway network however other will not;
 - ▶ Pass-by Trips – These trips represent traffic that is already passing the site, these trips simply divert in and re-join the network afterwards;
 - ▶ Diverted Trips – These trips represent traffic passing nearby that diverts into the site, this traffic is already present on the network but the route it takes will vary; and,
 - ▶ Linked Trips – These trips represent traffic that already enters the site for some other purpose and simply includes a trip to the new development as part of this. These trips have no impact on the study network.
- 5.5 In the case of both the Worton Grange application and an application for a Drive-Thru restaurant at the Forbury Retail Park (Ref: 15/0085), RBC accepted that Drive-Thru facilities generally attract different trip types in the following ratios:
- ▶ New Trips – 20%
 - ▶ Pass-by Trips – 40%
 - ▶ Linked Trips – 40%
- 5.6 Based on the above, Table 5.2 sets out the proposed increase in new trips to the site as a result of the development proposals using these ratios.

Land Use	New Trips (20%)		
	Arrivals	Departures	Two-Way
Weekday AM Peak (08:00 – 09:00)	3	2	5
Weekday PM Peak (08:00 – 09:00)	3	3	7
Saturday Peak (13:00 – 14:00)	6	6	12

Table 5.2 – Proposed New Primary Trips

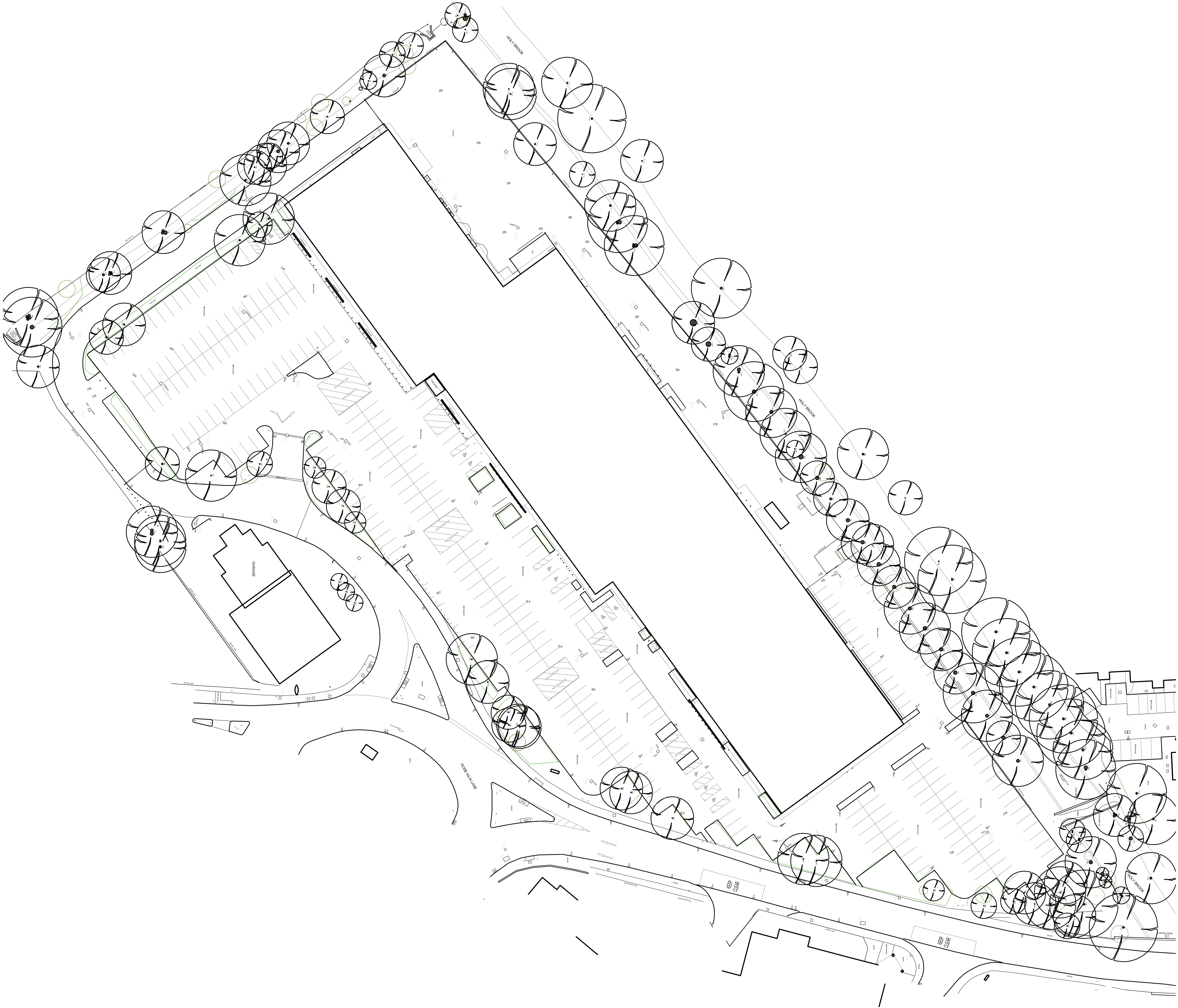
- 5.7 On the basis of the above, it is anticipated that the proposed development will attract approximately 25 linked trips, 25 pass-by trips and 12 new trips in the Saturday afternoon peak period. This level of trip generation represents a negligible increase on the local highway network and equates to approximately 1 additional vehicle every 5 minutes.
- 5.8 In addition, the proposal for an additional site access will provide added benefit to the local highway network through the re-assignment of traffic that currently accesses the retail park from Rose Kiln Lane away from the A33 Rose kiln Lane gyratory.
- 5.9 In relation to the assessment of highway impact, it is typically accepted that proposals resulting in an increase of more than 30 vehicle movements in any hour should be subject to more detailed assessment. The preceding paragraphs of this report identified that the redevelopment proposals will lead to an increase in vehicle movements associated with the site during the identified morning and evening peak hours, compared to the established use. However, the net increase during these times based on the analysis shows an increase of circa 7 vehicle movements in the peak hours. As such, there is no requirement for further detailed junction assessment.
- 5.10 As outlined within Section 3, The Inspector concluded with regards the previous submission that:
- "Modelling undertaken by the appellant demonstrates that there is sufficient capacity within the network to accommodate the proposal".*
- 5.11 The previous modelling was undertaken for the new two way access onto Rose Kiln Lane together with the analysis of additional vehicle movements through the existing access. As the vehicle flows will be the same as the previously assessed application, which the Inspector found acceptable, no further modelling work has been undertaken.
- 5.12 Therefore, the proposed redevelopment will not result in any adverse disruption to the free flow of traffic on the local highway network. In this regard, it is considered the proposals are consistent with national and local transportation policies with respect to traffic impact. To this end, it is concluded that the proposals would not result in a material impact from a highway and transportation perspective, let alone the severe impact that is referred to within the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 Motion has been appointed to prepare a Transport Statement (TS) in support of a planning application for a new Drive-Thru coffee shop and at Reading Link Retail Park, Reading on behalf of Sorbon Estates.
- 6.2 The proposals seek to provide a Drive-Thru coffee shop, with a gross floor area of approximately 190 sqm, in the north-east corner of the site. In addition, it is proposed that a new one way in to the site access will be provided along Rose Kiln Lane.
- 6.3 In summary, the key findings of this statement are as follows:
- ▶ The proposal accords with national and local policies relevant to transport;
 - ▶ The proposal benefits from good pedestrian and cycle connections to local public transport services, and the town centre.
 - ▶ The development proposals retain the existing level of car parking at the retail park, whilst also providing additional cycle parking facilities at the Drive-Thru.
 - ▶ The proposed development will result in an increase of 5 and 7 two-way vehicle movements in the weekday AM and PM peak hours, and an additional 12 movements within the Saturday afternoon peak. The increase can be accommodated on the adjacent network as accepted by the Inspector at the previous appeal on the site.
 - ▶ In accordance with the Inspectors requirements, deliveries and servicing can be undertaken through the existing retail park delivery area without the need to use the new access from Rose Kiln Lane.
 - ▶ The new access will be one way only into the site, managed by a height barrier and dragon teeth. This arrangement overcomes the concerns of the Inspector with regards the width of the access to accommodate two way traffic movements and the new access vehicles being used by large vehicles delivering to the existing retail units.
 - ▶ Pedestrian access will be clearly provided to the site from Rose Kiln Lane.
- 6.4 Considering the above, it is concluded that the proposals accord with land-use and transport policy and that the proposals can be accommodated without detriment to the operation of the local highway network. As such, it is considered that there is no reason why the proposals should be resisted on traffic or transportation grounds.

Appendix A

Existing Site Plan



Consultant

SURVEYED BY
groundsurveys ltd

land & engineering surveys
The Old Forge
Unit 1, Padlocks Yard
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© This drawing is the copyright of SORBON ESTATES
All dimensions and levels must be checked on site and verified
prior to construction

Notes

Rev	Description	Date

Project

READING LINK RETAIL PARK

Drawing Title

EXISTING TOPO

SORBON
ESTATES

Sorbon, Aylesbury End, Beaconsfield,
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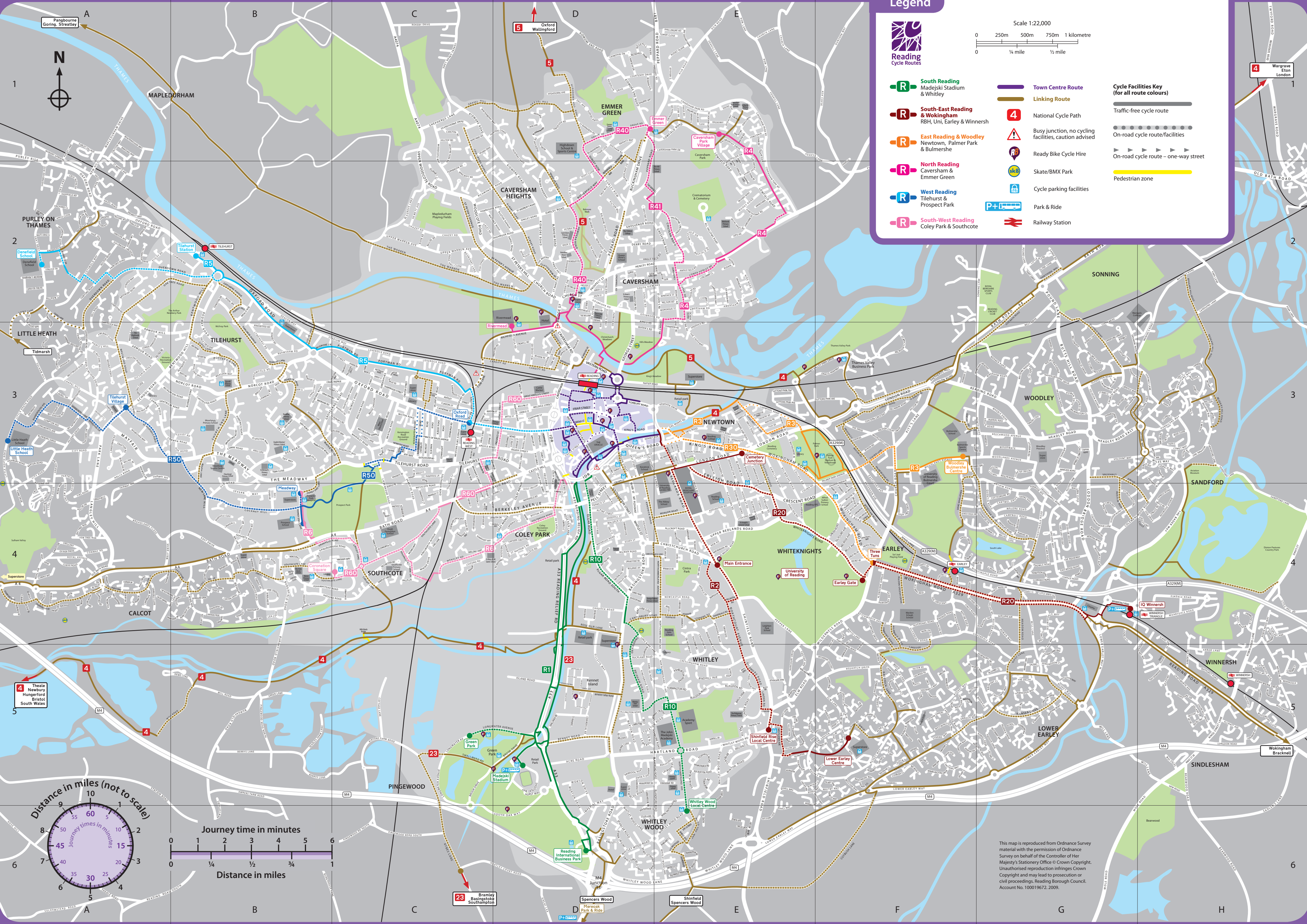
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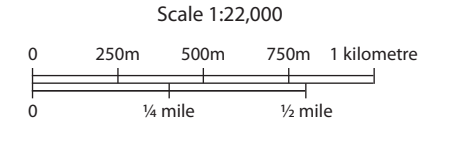
Drawing No. RLRPR_TOPO_001 Revision

Appendix B

Reading Cycle Network



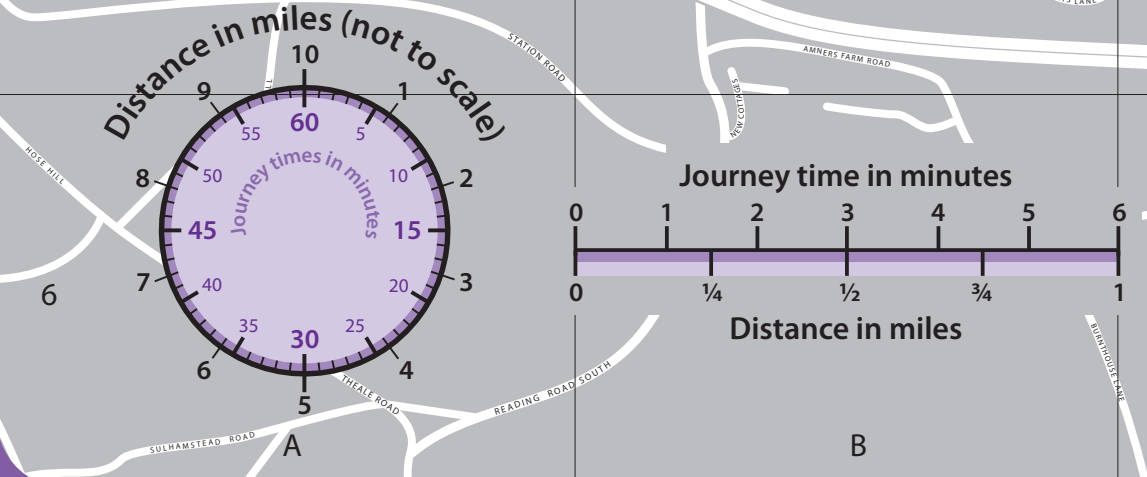
Legend



- R** South Reading
Madejski Stadium & Whitley
- R** South-East Reading & Wokingham
RBH, Uni, Earley & Winnersh
- R** East Reading & Woodley
Newtown, Palmer Park & Bulmershe
- R** North Reading
Caversham & Emmer Green
- R** West Reading
Tilehurst & Prospect Park
- R** South-West Reading
Coley Park & Southcote

- Town Centre Route**
- Linking Route**
- 4** National Cycle Path
- Busy junction, no cycling facilities, caution advised
- Ready Bike Cycle Hire
- Skate/BMX Park
- Cycle parking facilities
- Park & Ride
- Railway Station

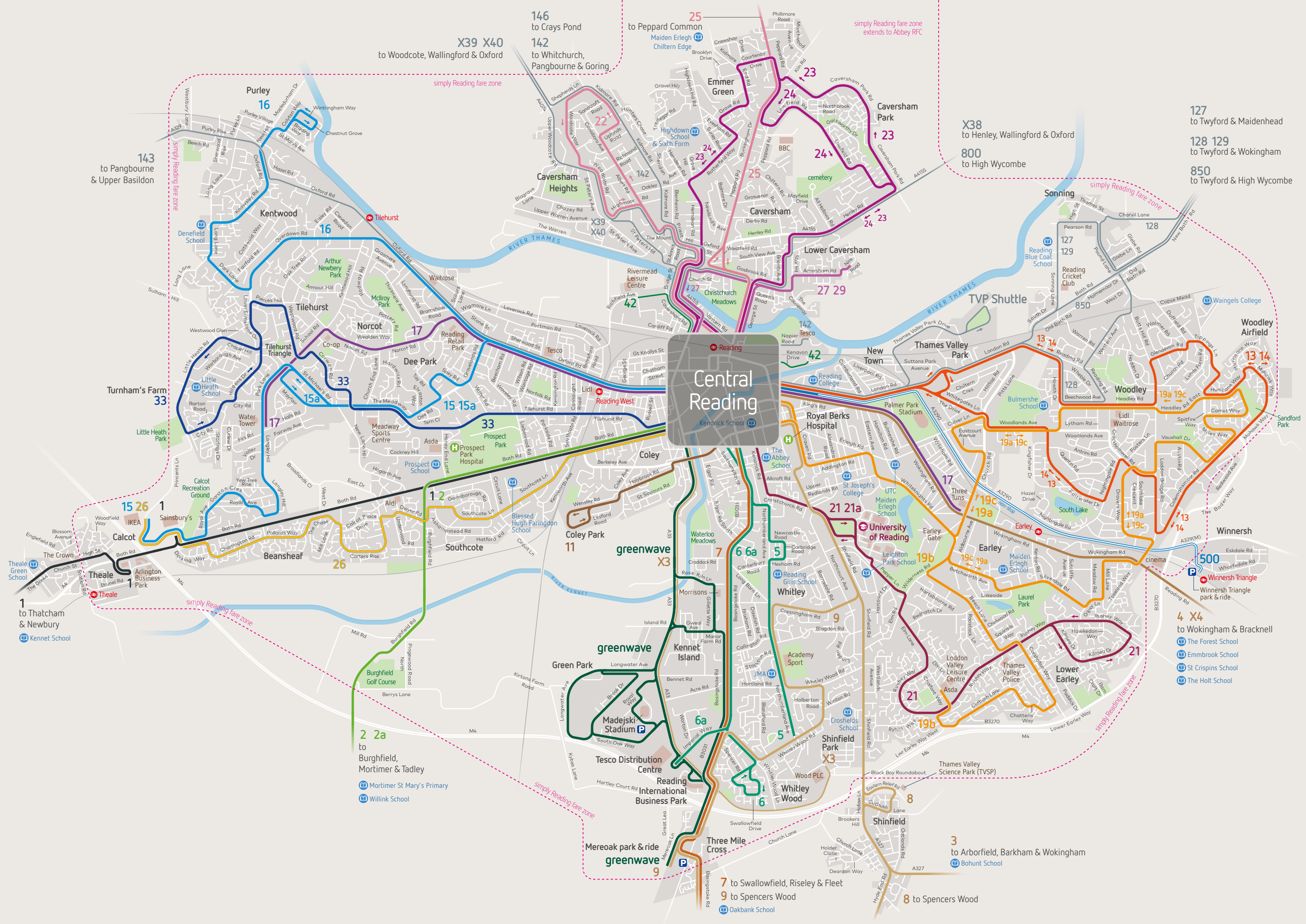
- Cycle Facilities Key (for all route colours)**
- Traffic-free cycle route
 - On-road cycle route/facilities
 - On-road cycle route – one-way street
 - Pedestrian zone



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Appendix C

Reading Bus Network



143
to Pangbourne
& Upper Basildon

X39 X40
to Woodcote, Wallingford & Oxford

146
to Crays Pond
142
to Whitchurch,
Pangbourne & Goring

25
to Peppard Common
Maiden Erleigh
Chiltern Edge

simply Reading fare zone
extends to Abbey RFC

X38
to Henley, Wallingford & Oxford
800
to High Wycombe

127
to Twyford & Maidenhead
128 129
to Twyford & Wokingham
850
to Twyford & High Wycombe

Central
Reading
Kendrick School

1
to Thatcham
& Newbury
Kennet School

2 2a
to Burghfield,
Mortimer & Tadley
Mortimer St Mary's Primary
Willink School

Mere oak park & ride
greenwave

7 to Swallowfield, Riseley & Fleet
9 to Spencers Wood
Oakbank School

8 to Spencers Wood

3
to Arborfield, Barkham & Wokingham
Bohunt School

4 X4
to Wokingham & Bracknell
The Forest School
Emmbrook School
St Crispins School
The Holt School

500
Winnersh Triangle
park & ride

Appendix D

Appeal Decision



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2019

by S Edwards MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/19/3230766

Reading Link Retail Park, Rose Kiln Lane, Reading RG2 0SN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Sorbon Estates Ltd against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 181860, dated 18 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 15 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'outline application for a drive-thru coffee shop of 189sqm and a new access at Reading Link Retail Park, Rose Kiln Lane'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The application was submitted in outline. The application form indicates that approval is only sought for access, whilst appearance, landscaping, layout and scale would be reserved for subsequent determination. I shall therefore determine the appeal on this basis.
3. Since the determination of the application, the Reading Borough Local Plan (LP) has been formally adopted by the Council in November 2019. The policies contained within this document supersede all existing development plans in Reading, including the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document. I have therefore determined the appeal in accordance with the most relevant and recently adopted policies. The parties have had the opportunity to comment on these as part of the appeal process.

Main Issues

4. The Council has confirmed that the reasons for refusal relating to the absence of sequential test, the parking layout and the effect of the proposal on protected species have been satisfactorily addressed by the appellant as part of the appeal process.
5. For the purposes of this appeal, I therefore consider that the main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on highway safety and the free flow of traffic; and
 - The effect of the development on pedestrian safety.

Reasons

Highway safety and free flow of traffic

6. The appeal site comprises a car park which forms part of a retail centre located approximately 1 km South of Reading Town Centre. The site is bound to the North by the Holy Brook and is currently accessed from Rose Kiln Lane (A33), a two-way single carriageway, which is subject to a 40 mile per hour speed restriction and is regarded as an important part of the highway network within Reading.
7. The proposal would include the provision of an additional access onto Rose Kiln Lane, which has notably been assessed against the Council's Geometric Design Guidance for Residential Accesses on to Classified Roads and Commercial Accesses on to Adopted Roads¹ (GDG). Although the GDG does not fully accord with the guidance contained within Manual for Streets or the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, it is nevertheless in broad conformity with these documents, by setting out specific guidelines and objectives for different types of roads across the Borough.
8. The proposed access would take the form of a priority junction with Rose Kiln Lane, which would be sited just South of the bridge over the Holy Brook. By providing a secondary access for other units within the Reading Link Retail Park, it would in effect re-assign some of the existing right turning traffic from the gyratory junction. The submitted evidence relies on a trip rate analysis for a drive-thru scheme approved by the Council elsewhere in Reading. Having regard to the trip rates for weekday and Saturday afternoon peak hours, this indicates that the proposed drive-thru would only generate a modest increase in the number of vehicle trips on the local highway network. This is not disputed by the Council.
9. The appellant has also carried out junction capacity assessments at peak times, which include a manual count of vehicle movements undertaken between 8am and 9am and between 5pm and 6pm on a weekday to establish existing flows into the car park. The Council is however concerned that the presented evidence does not include a wider assessment of the impact of the whole retail park on the proposed access at the weekend and is consequently unable to ascertain whether a right turn lane should be provided.
10. However, I find that the level of information requested by the Council in that particular regard is unnecessarily onerous for what is a proposal for the construction of a drive-thru located within an existing retail park. Whilst the appeal scheme would enable access to the retail park using the proposed junction, these particular journeys would not represent additional trips onto the network. As noted above, they would simply be re-assigned from the existing gyratory junction.
11. The modelling undertaken by the appellant demonstrates that there is sufficient capacity within the network to accommodate the proposal, and I have not been presented with substantive evidence suggesting that the provision of a secondary access to the retail park would in itself lead to a harmful intensification of the proposed access. Furthermore, having particular regard to

¹ June 2011.

the survey results and the capacity identified by the modelling, the provision of a right turn lane is not warranted in this instance.

12. Traffic and speed surveys have been undertaken by the appellant by way of an Automatic Traffic Counter installed along Rose Kiln Lane within proximity to the site, in order to determine whether suitable visibility splays can be achieved for the proposed access. The surveys have established the 85th percentile speed of vehicles travelling northbound and southbound towards the junction as 28 and 32 miles per hour (mph) respectively. The 85th percentile speed of vehicles was calculated in accordance with TA 22/81 – Vehicle Speed Measurement on All Purpose Roads, which states that the preferred times for taking readings are 10.00-12.00 and 14.00-16.00. Although TA 22/81 has recently been replaced by CA 185, both documents insist that all speed measurements shall be undertaken in free flow conditions.
13. The survey results show that Rose Kiln Lane experiences relatively high volumes of traffic throughout the day. The Council is concerned that the results do not reflect free flow conditions, notably by reason of the site's proximity to the gyratory junction located to the south of the proposed access, and the use of times to establish the 85th percentile, which are not necessarily representative of the hours of operation of the proposed drive-thru.
14. To that effect, the Council has submitted a number of photographs showing vehicles queuing from the signalised gyratory beyond the survey point. Although it is unclear when these pictures were precisely taken, the level of traffic shown on the photographs is nevertheless consistent with my own observations as part of the site visit that I carried out around lunchtime on a weekday.
15. Whilst the appellant confirms that the 85th percentile speeds for the 24-hour periods surveyed are below 37mph, these results clearly show that the 85th percentile speeds are at times higher than those used for the calculation of the visibility splays. Additionally, I have not been provided with detailed evidence to demonstrate that adequate visibility splays could be provided on the basis of a higher 85th percentile. This casts doubt in my mind as to whether the required visibility splays would be sufficient, given that the evidence suggests that vehicles are travelling faster when traffic is less congested. This is particularly relevant as the proposed drive-thru would be likely, by its very nature, to operate for long periods of the day. For these reasons, I cannot be certain that the results of the surveys reflect free flow traffic conditions and can therefore be reasonably relied upon as the basis for the calculation of the suggested visibility splays.
16. The submitted swept-path analyses show that the proposed layout would be very constrained, especially for 18t (8.15m) vehicles entering and exiting the site. Even accepting the appellant's contention that the premises could be serviced by vans no larger than 7.5t (8m), the extent to which vehicles of that size (and larger vehicles, a fortiori) would overrun across the centre of the road illustrates the lack of sufficient tolerance to enter and exit the site safely. This would leave little scope for driver error, not just for delivery but also refuse collection vehicles.
17. In practice, large vehicles travelling northbound on Rose Kiln Lane would be more likely to move over into the oncoming lane in order to manoeuvre into the site in a single turn or reverse back into the site or onto the A33, thus

increasing the risk of conflicts with other users of the highway. The potential for conflicts would further increase by reason of the proposal's access to other units within the retail park. Whilst the appellant suggests that the proposed access would only be used by vehicles servicing the proposed drive-thru, I have not been presented with a mechanism, which would prevent other delivery vehicles from using the proposed access.

18. Although they may reflect the 85th percentile speeds established by the survey results, the restricted width and radii of the proposed access would nevertheless fail to give due consideration to the wide range of factors which Manual for Streets 2 refers to in respect of the provision of additional junctions on existing routes. Having particular regard to the swept-path analyses, the proposed access would appear inadequate and would in all likelihood require potentially dangerous manoeuvres to prevent the risk of collisions between vehicles entering and exiting the site.
19. The appellant suggests that conditions could be imposed to ensure that deliveries and refuse collections do not take place during peak hours, but this would only minimise the potential for collisions. Although such risks cannot be entirely negated, the deficiencies associated with the proposed access and site's layout should be designed out from the outset to ensure that a degree of 'give and take' is not required. Accordingly, I find that the imposition of suitably worded conditions would not overcome the harm which I have identified.
20. Although I accept that any larger radii could have implications for the tree belt located on the edge of the site, this does not provide justification for a proposal which, in its present form, would cause unacceptable harm to highway safety. Additionally, I have not been presented with substantive evidence demonstrating that the appeal scheme represents the only way in which to accommodate the proposal and provide access to the site.
21. In reaching these conclusions, I note that a very limited number of accidents appear to have been recorded in this location over the last few years. However, these data have to be treated with caution, especially because all accidents involving motor vehicles may not all have been reported. And even accepting that accidents may not have been a regular occurrence in this area in the past, this does not eliminate the possibility of them happening in the future.
22. I have also had regard to the appeal decision² which has been brought to my attention by the appellant. However, as detailed above, I am concerned that the proposed layout would make it particularly difficult for large vehicles, including 7.5t vans, to access and service the premises in a safe manner. The absence of a through-route to the rear of the existing retail units would limit to a large extent alternative options for serving the proposed facility. As I have not been presented with suitable alternatives to ensure the safe access and servicing of the appeal site, the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a delivery, waste and servicing management plan would not, in this particular instance, overcome my concerns.
23. For these reasons, the development would have an adverse effect on the free flow of traffic and prejudice highway safety. It would consequently conflict with the transport strategy set out in LP Policy TR1, and fail to accord with

² APP/E0245/A/11/2167214.

LP Policy TR3 which seeks to resist proposals involving the construction of a new access onto the Classified Highway Network likely to compromise the safe movement and free flow of traffic on the network or the safe use of the road. It would also not accord with paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states that development should be prevented or refused if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Pedestrian safety

24. As noted above, the appeal site can be accessed by a range of sustainable modes of travel, which include walking, cycling and public transport. The appeal site currently benefits from several pedestrian access points along Rose Kiln Lane, but also to the rear over the Holy Brook through to Admirals Court. The proposal would include the provision of a dedicated footpath between the Holy Brook bridge and the public footway on Rose Kiln Lane. Despite the restricted width of the footway, the proposal would in that particular regard constitute an improvement compared with the existing situation, by formalising a route to the public highway. That said, this footpath would not improve pedestrian access to the site itself, as people would in all likelihood have to negotiate their way across the drive-thru loop system.
25. By reason of the proposed changes to the site's layout, it is unclear how pedestrians in particular would gain access to the proposed drive-thru. The appellant's submissions indicate that the existing pedestrian access points from Rose Kiln Lane would be retained, but these have not been shown on the proposed plans. Whilst it is argued that this issue could be resolved as part of a subsequent reserved matters application, where further landscaping details could notably be provided, I am required, as part of this appeal, to determine the suitability of the proposed access arrangements.
26. Having regard to the evidence before me, I cannot be certain that the existing pedestrian access points from Rose Kiln Lane would be retained. Despite the improvements to connect the Holy Brook bridge to Rose Kiln Lane, the proposal would overall fail to retain or enhance suitable access to the site by modes of transport other than the private car, which would consequently prejudice pedestrian safety. It would therefore conflict with LP Policies TR1 and TR3 which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development proposals are not detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists. The appeal development would also not accord with paragraph 108 of the Framework, by not ensuring that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

Conclusion

27. For the reasons detailed above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR

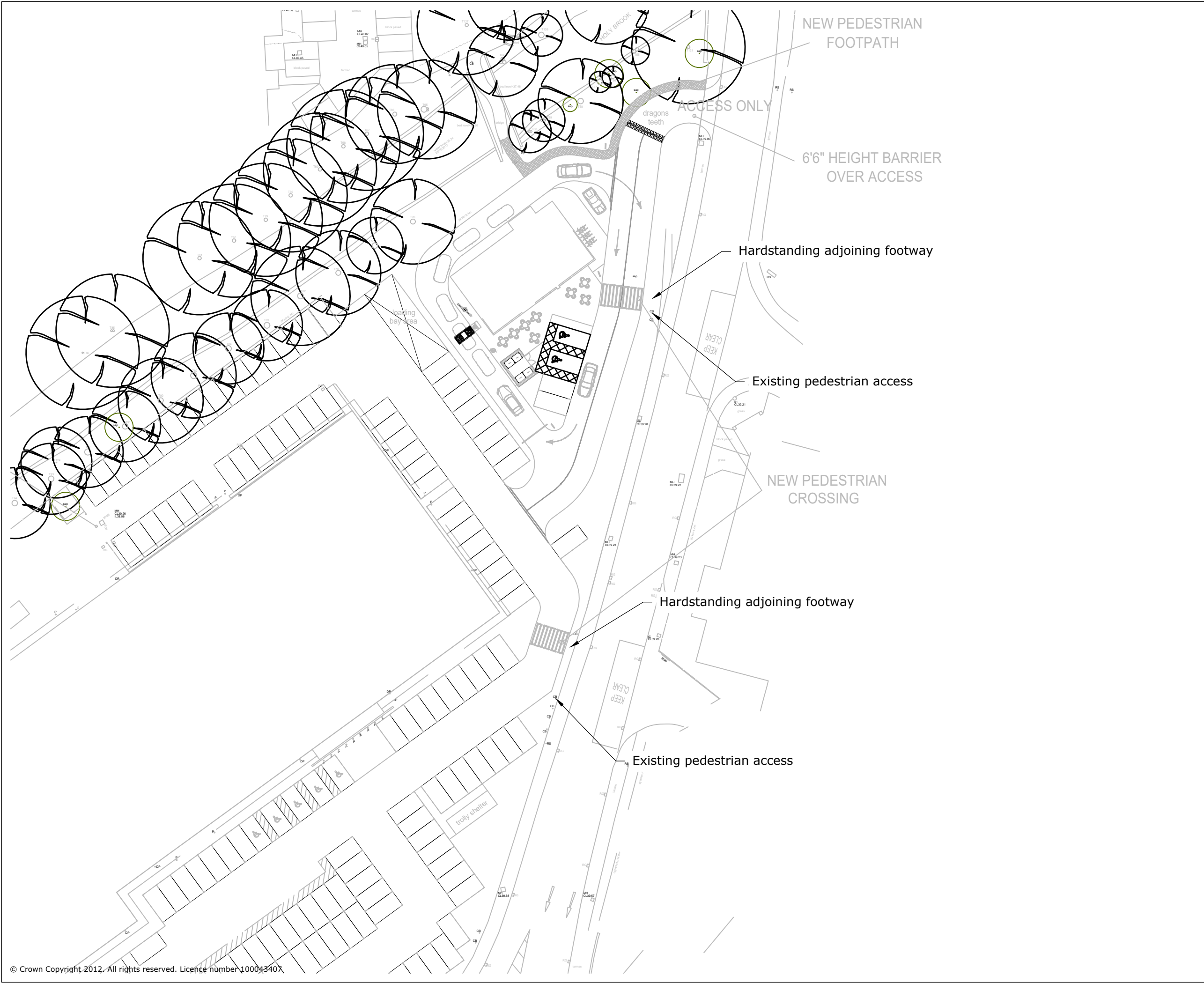
Appendix E

Proposed Site Plan

Appendix F

Pedestrian Access Points

R:\Projects\ksread3 2009052\Drawings\2009052-01.dwg



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www.motion.co.uk

Project:
Reading Link Retail Park

Title:
Pedestrian Access

Scale: 1:1000 (@ A3)

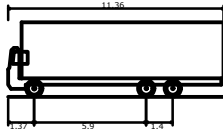
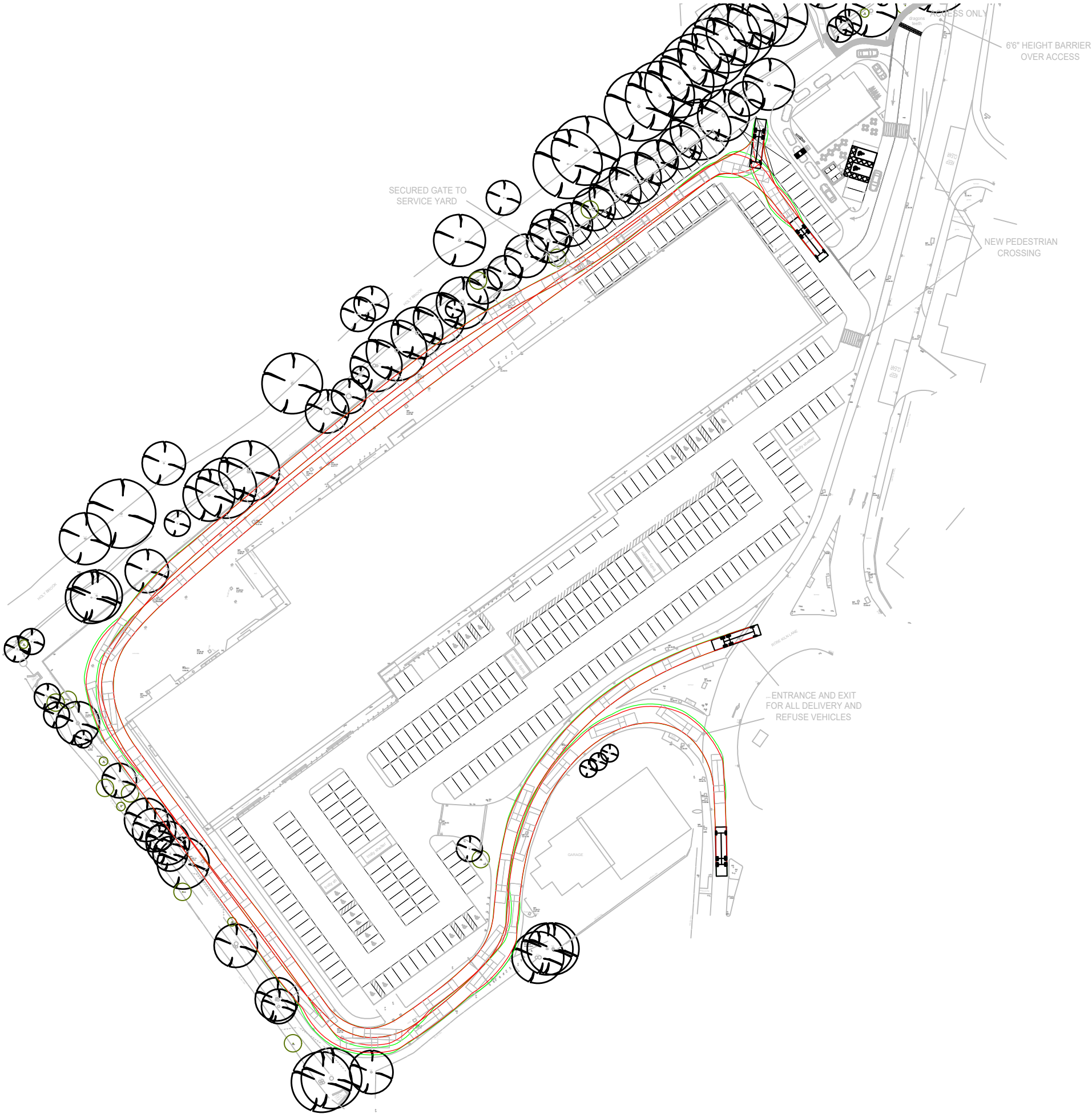
Drawing:
2009052-01

Revision:

-

Appendix G

Swept Path Analysis



Starbucks Rigid Lorry	
Overall Length	11.360m
Overall Width	2.500m
Overall Body Height	3.928m
Min Body Ground Clearance	0.412m
Track Width	2.471m
Lock-to-lock time	6.00s
Wall to Wall Turning Radius	10.926m



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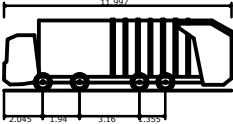
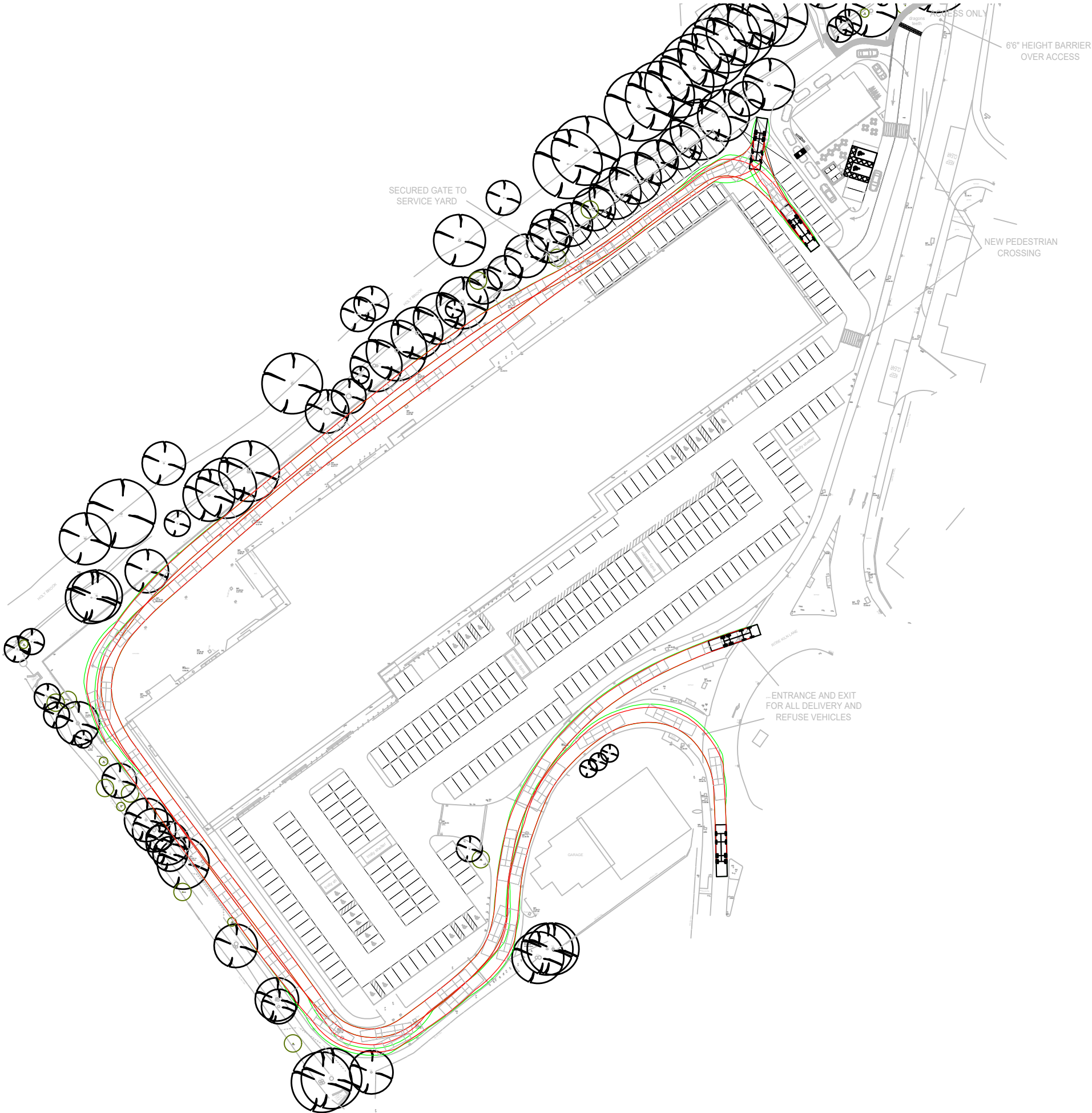
Project:
Reading Link Retail Park

Title:
Swept Path Analysis
Starbucks Rigid Lorry

Scale: 1:1000 (@ A3)

Drawing:
2009052-TK01

Revision:
-



Vulture 3025(N) (with Scania P94GB 8x4 NB300 chassis)
Overall Length 11.997m
Overall Width 2.500m
Overall Body Height 3.749m
Min Body Ground Clearance 0.302m
Track Width 2.490m
Lock-to-lock time 4.00s
Curb to Curb Turning Radius 10.800m



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Project:
Reading Link Retail Park

Title:
Swept Path Analysis
Starbucks Rigid Lorry

Scale: 1:1000 (@ A3)

Drawing: 2009052-TK02
Revision: -