

58 QUEEN'S ROAD, READING, RG1 4RP

**PLANNING APPLICATION BY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT (REF: PP-08414976) FOR
CHANGE OF USE FROM B1 OFFICES TO B1 OFFICES AND D1 NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS**

SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT

1) Background

Taurus Real Estate Consulting is appointed as agent by and on behalf of University College of Estate Management (UCEM) to submit a planning application for 58 Queen's Road, Reading, RG1 4RP for a change of use from B1 offices to B1 offices and D1 non-residential institutions.

This Supporting Planning Statement forms part of the planning application and should be read in conjunction with the application form and accompanying documentation.

NB - A telephone enquiry of the duty planning officer (Anthony – surname unknown) was made on 6 January 2020 and details of the proposed planning application discussed. The advice received was that as the proposal is purely for a change of use with no aesthetic or design alterations involved, a formal pre-app enquiry was not required.

2) University College of Estate Management (UCEM)

UCEM is recognised as the worldwide leading provider of undergraduate, post-graduate and MBA on-line programmes for the built environment. Having celebrated its Centenary in 2019, UCEM has been based in Reading for nearly half of its existence initially at the University of Reading Whiteknights Campus from 1972 and then since 2016 at 60 Queen's Road.

Looking ahead to the next 100 years, UCEM has invested substantially in a growing programme of apprenticeship courses for the built environment, with the validation of the first Level 3 Programme (see below) and the launch of degree apprenticeship programmes in 2015. These apprenticeship courses are an evolution of and extension to UCEM's academic offer.

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The learning programmes available are:

- 1) Level 3 – Diploma students (equivalent to A-level qualification; students are typically 16-25 years old). These students have seven or eight workshops a year (the higher number in their first year of study).
- 2) Level 4 – an HNC-type qualification that UCEM may provide in the future under as-yet-unapproved apprenticeship course standards; students would be 18+ years. The number of workshops is undetermined at this stage and would be specified as part of the apprenticeship standard.
- 3) Level 5 - an HND-type qualification that may form part of a future, as yet unapproved, apprenticeship course standard.
- 4) Level 6 – BSc degree students; will study modules at Levels 4, 5 and 6 as they progress through their degree (4.5+ year path at UCEM); students are typically 18-30 years old. These students have two or three workshops a year (the higher number in their first year of study).
- 5) Level 7 - Postgraduate / MSc level; typically 21 years or above with no upper age limit.

The nature of UCEM's academic offer means that it has a lot of mature students; for example, on all of these programmes it has students aged over 50 years. In its last intake at Level 3 roughly a third was aged 16-19, with two-thirds being mature students.

At present, the apprenticeship courses are held in a variety of unbranded, ad hoc locations throughout the UK and UCEM is looking to establish a new additional home in Reading, easily accessed from all parts of the UK for its future delivery of these programmes.

Whilst UCEM's ownership and occupation of 60 Queen's Road is for executive, administrative and supporting office functions, the need for additional premises will be primarily for teaching and learning purposes (D1) to support degree apprenticeship students together with some supporting office/administrative functions (B1).

3) 58 Queen's Road, Reading

58 Queen's Road has been identified as an appropriate building to meet UCEM's requirements. It is in an excellent location being situated adjacent to UCEM's headquarters at 60 Queen's Road. The freehold is owned by a private investor and terms have been agreed for UCEM to take a new lease of the whole property together with external car parking.

The property comprises a three storey end of terrace building situated on the south side of and with frontage to Queen's Road at its junction with Sidmouth Street, together with rear car parking accessed from Sidmouth Street.

4) Proposed Use

The property currently has planning permission for B1 offices and is vacant.

A change of use is required for B1 offices and D1 non-residential uses for UCEM's occupation and use, primarily for teaching and learning purposes with supporting office/administrative functions.

The property will be staffed by 6 full time equivalent staff comprising 1 x receptionist, 3 x Apprenticeship Officers and 4 x 0.5 tutors.

The property will be used, on average, for 3 days a week between Monday and Friday over a 52 week period. Typical hours of use for teaching and student space would be 9am – 5pm with a typical workshop provision between 10am and 4pm. The minimum number of students will be 25 and maximum number of students will be 100 on those days.

UCEM will instigate a policy which will encourage students to use public transport to travel to and from site. There will be no parking on site for students, with the exception of provision for any disabled students.

5) Public transport and accessibility to site

One of the added attractions to UCEM of 58 Queen's Road is its central Reading location and access to public transport. It has witnessed this first hand since July 2016 and its occupation of 60 Queen's Road, adjacent to the subject site, where its staff are less reliant on single use car borne travel and make good and increasing use of public transport facilities, all of which are within reasonable walking distance and which thereby bring the added benefit of improving staff well-being.

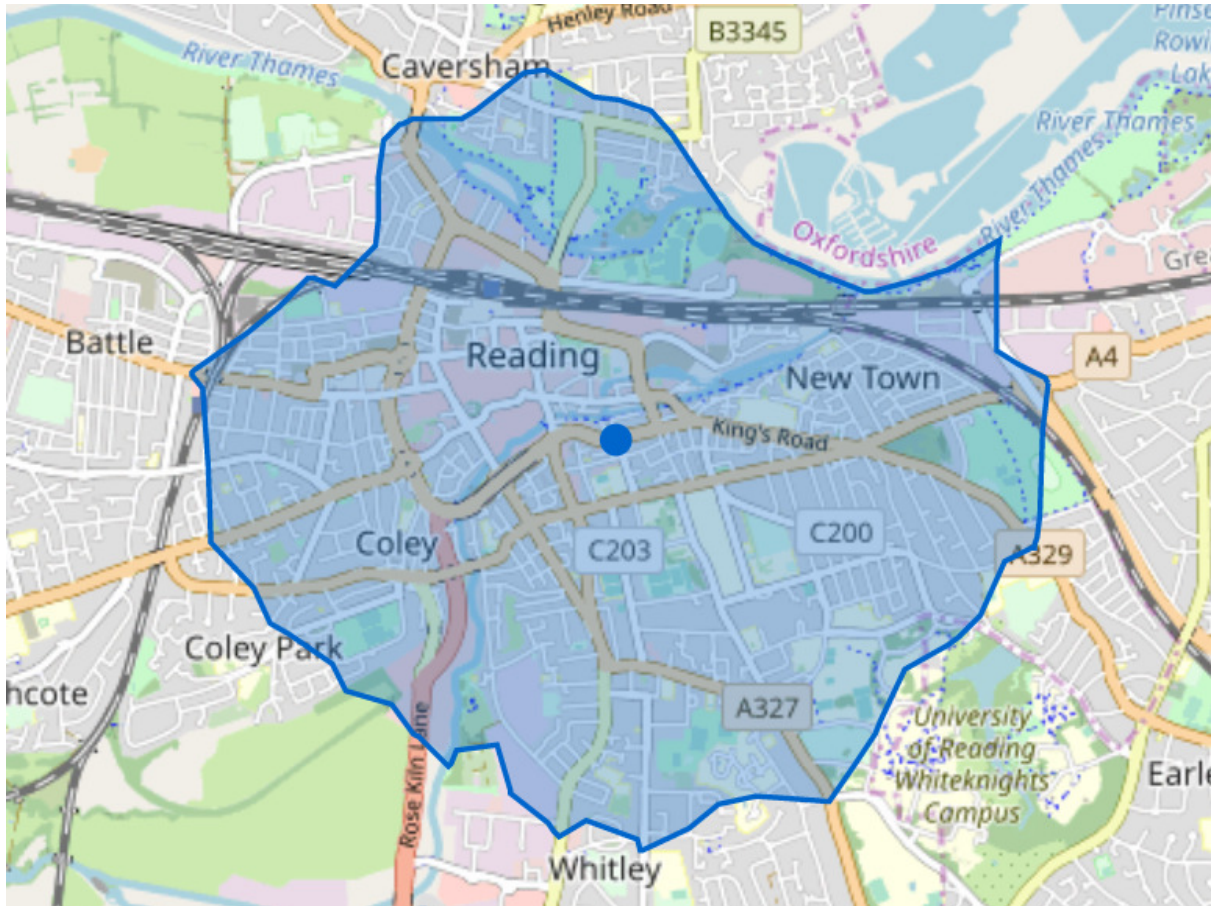
Reading Train Station is within 17 minutes walking distance of the site (Source: www.reading-buses.co.uk).

Bus service provision is very good with frequent services to and from Reading Train Station via routes 5, 6, 13, 14, 19B, 21, 21A, 26 and 500. The quickest of these services is 12 minutes door-to-door including walking at both ends and the longest is 18 minutes. (Source: www.reading-buses.co.uk).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not provide any specific guidance on walking distances. Manual for Streets (MfS) states that *"Walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes' (up to about 800 m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may access comfortably on foot. However, this is not an upper limit and PPG13 states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2 km"*.

Figure 1 below provides the 2km walking isochrone from the site.

Figure 1 – 2km Walking Isochrone

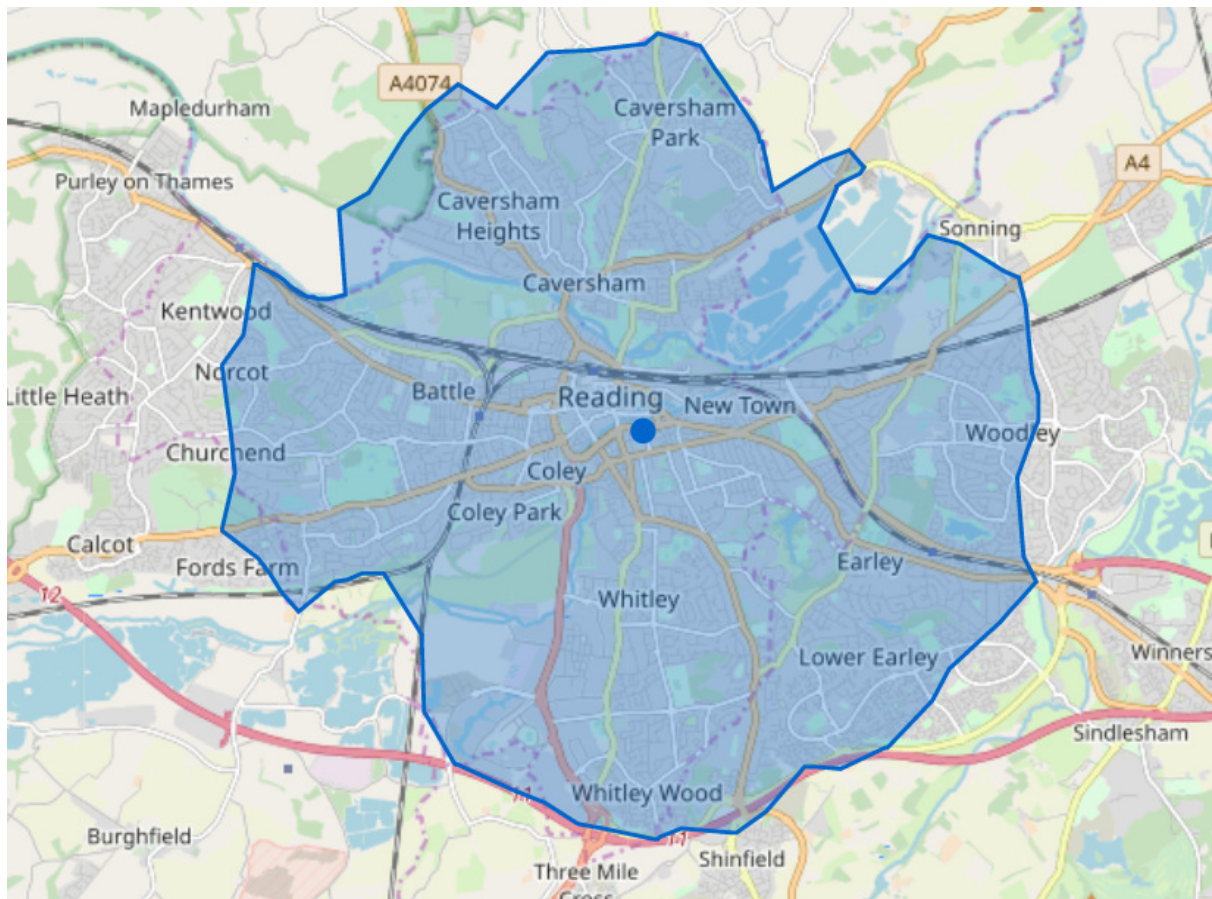


It can be seen from Figure 1 that Reading railway station is within walking distance of the site as well as residential, retail, food and drink and entertainment areas of central Reading, which would facilitate students and staff walking to 58 Queens Road from the railway station and other public transport facilities.

Central Government research states that cycling has the potential to substitute for short car trips, particularly those less than 5km and to form part of a longer journey by public transport. Cycling is an attractive form of travel and it is reasonable to expect that for able-bodied people a cycle distance of 5km is readily achievable and attractive.

Figure 2 below shows the 5km cycle isochrone from the site and shows the areas that are within cycle distance of the site. UCEM intends to provide 12 secure cycle parking spaces at 58 Queen's Road to encourage those students living nearby or travelling to site via train to cycle to site.

Figure 2 – 5km Cycle Isochrone



6) Summary

This supporting planning statement augments the planning application form and accompanying documentation for the propose change of use of 58 Queen's Road from B1 offices to B1 offices and D1 non-residential institutions.

UCEM is an established and highly regarded academic institution with a long-held status as the leading provider of on-line teaching and learning programmes for the built environment. It is a major employer in Reading and has been for 47 years having established its roots in the early 1970's. It currently employs over 200 people in Reading. The evolution of its academic offer now extends to a wide-ranging degree apprenticeship programme in response to both central government initiatives for simultaneous working

and learning and to an increasing number of people who wish to study through this route, whilst at the same time being in employment and who do not wish to follow more traditional full-time academic models.

Being at the forefront of this, UCEM requires additional premises from which to offer such provision and there is a natural continuity to do so from Reading, it's established home. The opportunity has arisen to do so from a property adjacent to its headquarters and from which there will be operational benefits, which meets UCEM's requirements and upon which commercial terms have been agreed.

The planning application is purely for a change of use. There are no aesthetic or design alterations involved. It is hoped that the application will be favourably received by Reading Borough Council and determined expeditiously.

Taurus Real Estate Consulting
For and on behalf of University College of Estate Management
14 January 2020