

## **PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF THE FACULTY, LONDON ROAD, READING HIGHWAYS NOTE – SITE LAYOUT AND PARKING**

**1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

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### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Connect Consultants is a specialist consultancy of transport planners and highway design engineers that has been instructed to provide advice to support the proposed change of use of The Faculty, 23-27 London Road, Reading.
- 1.2 A planning application has been submitted to Reading Borough Council which seeks a change of use from 16 serviced apartments (Use Class C1) to 15 residential flats (Use Class C3) of one- and two-bedrooms.
- 1.3 Consultation comments have been received from Reading Borough Council's Transport Development Control (TDC) department (dated 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020) requesting that a site layout plan is submitted to show the parking layout and access, including cycle storage and bin stores.
- 1.4 This Highways Note has been produced to provide commentary on the requested layout plan, which is appended to this document.

### **2.0 Existing Situation**

- 2.1 The existing use of The Faculty site includes a dedicated car parking area at the rear, providing eight parking spaces for the 16 serviced flats.
- 2.2 The Faculty also has prescriptive rights to use a shared casual/visitor parking area of five spaces adjacent to the Faculty's dedicated parking area, but outside of the Faculty's boundary. This is identified on the site layout plan appended to this Highways Note.
- 2.3 No cycle storage is provided with the existing use of the site.
- 2.4 The Faculty's bin store is located in the southwest corner of the car park, from where the bins are moved to the entrance of the Faculty car park for collection.

### **3.0 Proposed Development**

#### Reading Borough Council TDC Comments

- 3.1 The consultation comments from the TDC department confirm that the site is located in Zone 2 but close to the boundary of Zone 1 as identified in the Reading Borough Council Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD.
- 3.2 The TDC comments also acknowledge that the site is located in close proximity to the town centre, and of course its shops and facilities, and public transport services, all of which provide good opportunities for future residents to lead non-car lifestyles.
- 3.3 The comments also confirm that for this site, a parking provision below the Council's current parking standards is acceptable on account of the site's proximity to the town centre and the parking restrictions in place in the surrounding area.

- 3.4 In addition to accepting the principle of reduced parking provision, the comments request that plans are submitted to illustrate the parking layout and access, cycle storage (to provide 0.5 spaces per unit), and the location of bin stores.

Proposed Layout

- 3.5 No cycle storage is currently provided at The Faculty. Due to the site constraints, it is not possible to accommodate a secure, covered cycle store as well as the existing eight parking spaces.
- 3.6 As such, the proposed site layout provides a total of seven car parking spaces, with a new cycle store located adjacent to the existing bin storage area in the southwest corner of the car park. This is shown in the site layout plan appended to this Highways Note
- 3.7 The site layout plan also illustrates how a refuse collection truck can manoeuvre to collect the bins from the entrance to the Faculty car park, as per the existing arrangements.

Proposed Parking Provision

- 3.8 As the Reading Borough Council Parking SPD zonal plan shows, the site is located within Zone 2, which is described as follows:-

*"This zone directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. Typically this zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone. Much of this area is within acceptable walking distance (400m) of either the main railway station, or Reading West railway station. Walking and cycling in this area tends to be encouraged through the provision of wide and safe footways, with some dedicated or shared cycle ways. The areas within Zone 2 also typically have smaller local centres, providing day-to-day access to retail and some commercial facilities. Future growth in these areas is likely to be more mixed than in the core area, with larger amounts of residential than commercial space."*

- 3.9 To support this, the zonal plan illustrates that the site sits adjacent to a high frequency bus corridor. The site is also close to a number of services/facilities with walking and cycling encouraged through a continuous network of footways and cycleways. Therefore, it is very possible that future residents of the proposed flats will lead non-car or low-car-ownership lifestyles.
- 3.10 The TDC consultation comments have already agreed that a parking provision below the Council's standards is acceptable in this location; the inclusion of cycle storage further encourages and facilitates non-car lifestyles among the future residents.
- 3.11 The type of accommodation proposed, with a limited supply of parking, is likely to attract a self-selecting demographic of future residents that are likely to be more open to leading non-car lifestyles, if they do not do so already. In other words, families with multiple cars are not likely to reside in this development.

- 3.12 To provide additional justification for the proposed parking provision, an indication of the likely car ownership and the associated parking demand of the proposed 15 flats has been derived from Census 2011 Table CT0103. This dataset shows the prevailing local car ownership data at ward-level, per household, in terms of building type and number of rooms.
- 3.13 The data in Table CT0103 is presented by the number of rooms per dwelling; the Census definition of a room is kitchens, living rooms, bedrooms, utility rooms, studies and conservatories (it does not include bathrooms, toilets, halls or landings, or rooms that can only be used for storage).
- 3.14 On this basis, the proposed 15 flats are all within the Census category "Flat, maisonette or apartment with 1-3 rooms". The proposed development is located in Katesgrove ward.
- 3.15 Census Table CT0103 identifies that, for the ward of Katesgrove, the average car ownership for flats with 1-3 rooms defined as "shared ownership; rented and living rent free", is as shown at Table 1.

**Table 1 – Katesgrove Car / Van Ownership**

| Car ownership by building type:<br>Katesgrove Ward | Total Flats, Maisonettes, Apartments | No cars or vans in household | 1 car or van in household | 2 cars or vans in household | 3 or more cars or vans in household |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Flat, maisonette or apartment 1-3 rooms            | 1,024                                | 646<br><i>63.1%</i>          | 338<br><i>33.0%</i>       | 38<br><i>3.7%</i>           | 2<br><i>0.2%</i>                    |
| Proposed 15 no.1-3 room flats                      | 15                                   | <i>63%</i><br>9.5            | <i>33%</i><br>5.0         | <i>4%</i><br>0.6            | <i>0%</i><br>0                      |
| Total                                              |                                      | 9.5 x 0 car                  | 5 x 1 car                 | 0.6 x 2 cars                | 0 x 3cars                           |
| Car Parking Demand                                 | 7                                    | 0                            | 5                         | <2                          | 0                                   |

*Note that the data in the table includes some mathematical rounding*

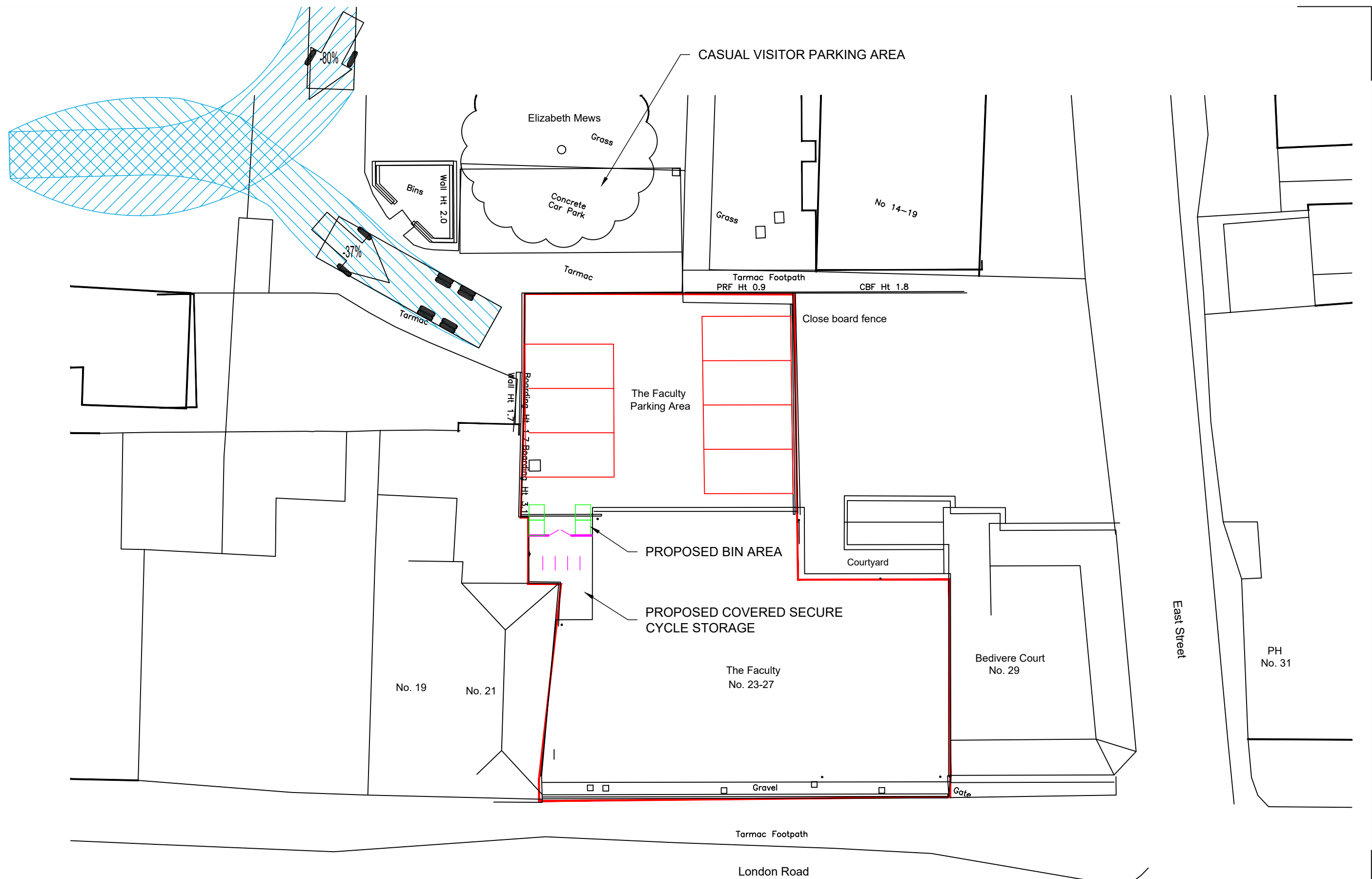
- 3.16 On the basis of the local Census data of the prevailing car ownership within similar flats to the proposed development, nine or ten of the proposed 15 flats are expected to have no car, five are expected to have one car each, and less than one is expected to have two cars.
- 3.17 This equates to an average car-ownership of less than 0.5 cars per unit, and on this basis, the proposed development is likely to have a car parking demand of no more than seven vehicles.
- 3.18 Therefore, based on the prevailing car-ownership levels among comparable flats in the local area, the proposed seven parking spaces are appropriate for the proposed development. Further, The Faculty has prescriptive rights to use an adjoining area of five shared parking spaces for casual/visitor parking, which can be used to accommodate visitor vehicles.

- 3.19 The proposed on-site parking provision is therefore shown to be suitable to accommodate the anticipated residents' and visitors' parking without creating additional on-street parking demand.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 The attached plan provides the information requested by Reading Borough Council's Transport Development Management team:
- The location of a secure, covered cycle store with Sheffield stands to accommodate eight cycles;
  - The location of the bin storage area and an illustration of how the bins are collected;
  - A total of seven parking spaces within The Faculty car park, along with the location of a shared casual/visitor parking area to which The Faculty has a prescriptive right to use.
- 4.2 The TDC consultation comments have already agreed that a parking provision below the Council's standards is acceptable in this location; this Highways Note provides further justification to support the proposed seven parking spaces, based on the prevailing car-ownership levels among comparable flats in the local area.
- 4.3 The proposed on-site parking provision is shown to be suitable to accommodate the anticipated residents' and visitors' parking without creating additional on-street parking demand.
- 4.4 There are therefore no highways reasons to refuse this application.

## **APPENDIX 1 – Site Layout**



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client  
**THE FACULTY LTD**

project  
**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT  
THE FACULTY  
READING**

title  
**CAR PARK LAYOUT**

|                                      |                           |                          |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| date<br><b>NOVEMBER 2020</b>         | drawn by<br><b>T.A.S</b>  | checked by<br><b>T.B</b> |
| scale<br><b>1:200</b>                | status<br><b>PLANNING</b> |                          |
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