



Planning Statement

HOF Subdivision The Oracle Shopping Centre, Reading

November 2019

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Documents

- Document 1: Pre-application advice, dated 18 September 2019
- Document 2: Draft Operational Management Plan

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Simply Planning Limited (SPL) on behalf of The Oracle Shopping Centre Limited. It supports a full planning application in respect of the existing House of Fraser department (HOF) store at The Oracle Shopping Centre, Reading. The description of development is as follows:

“Subdivision of three-storey retail unit (Class A1) and change of use to form: 1 x flexible retail/restaurant/bar unit (Class A1/A3/A4) 1 x flexible retail/restaurant unit (Class A1/A3) and 1 x assembly and leisure unit (Class D2) at Riverside level; 1 x retail unit (Class A1) and 1 x assembly and leisure unit (Class D2) at lower ground level; 1 x retail unit (Class A1) at upper ground level, together with alterations to the Riverside frontage and associated plant, car parking and external alterations at car park levels.”

- 1.2 The proposals have been subject to pre-application discussions with Reading Borough Council, which has influenced the design evolution of the proposals that form this application. The scope of the application submission reflects the advice received in correspondence dated 18th September 2019 (ref. 191264) enclosed as **Document 1**.
- 1.3 The submission comprises the following:

Application Drawings

Drawing No.	Drawing Title
Location Plans	
URB-OR 08 00 01-D00	Site Location Plan
Floor Plans	
URB-OR 08 37 01-D00	Riverside Level as Existing
URB-OR 08 37 02-D00	Riverside Level as Proposed
URB-OR 08 42 01-D00	Lower Ground Floor as Existing
URB-OR 08 42 02-D00	Lower Ground Floor as Proposed
URB-OR 08 48 01-D00	Upper Ground Floor as Existing
URB-OR 08 48 02-D00	Upper Ground Floor as Proposed
URB-OR 08 55 01-D00	Upper Ground Floor as Existing
URB-OR 08 55 02-D00	Upper Ground Floor as Proposed
URB-OR 08 58 01-D00	Upper Ground Floor as Existing
URB-OR 08 58 02-D00	Upper Ground Floor as Proposed
Elevations	
URB-OR 08 70 01-D00	Elevations as Existing
URB-OR 08 70 02-D00	Elevations as Proposed
Sections	
URB-OR 08 80 01-D00	Sections as Existing

Drawing No.	Drawing Title
URB-OR 08 80 02-D00	Sections as Proposed
Landscape Drawings	
URB-OR 08 98 01-D00	Soft Landscaping Proposal
URB-OR A6 90 01-D00	Indicative Planting Palette
URB-OR A6 90 02-D00	Detailed Landscape Specification
Lighting Strategy	
180503-RGL-22-00-DR-E-73-001-S2-P02	Lighting Strategy Riverside Facade

Technical Reports

Document	Consultant
Design and Access Statement (including Heritage Statement)	Urban Edge Architects
Planning Statement (including Draft Operational Management Plan)	Simply Planning Limited
Transport Statement	Waterman Infrastructure & Environment
Flood Risk Assessment	Santec
Public Utility Supplies Statement Report	Rolton Group
Sustainability & Energy Statement	Envision
Noise Impact Assessment	Hoare Lea
Drainage Statement	Byrne Looby
Employment Skills Plan	The Oracle Shopping Centre Limited
Riverside (Day/Night) & Bridge Street CGI	Urban Edge Architects
Lighting Statement	Rolton Group

- 1.4 This Statement provides a Planning Appraisal of the proposals. For ease, it follows the structure of the pre-application advice, responding to this as necessary.

2. Factual Background

Application Site

- 2.1 The existing House of Fraser store (HOF) is located in the south-west corner of The Oracle Shopping Centre and is one of the original anchor department stores (along with Debenhams).
- 2.2 The HOF is arranged over three floors (Riverside, lower ground and upper ground) and principally faces inwards with its main access from the entrance rotunda and Holy Brook Mall. There is also direct access to the Holybrook car park (Levels 1 and 2) from an escalator atrium at roof level. HOF have a Café Nero and Yo Sushi concession within the store. Yo Sushi has independent access from the Riverside.
- 2.3 The main elevation of the HOF unit is to the Riverside, which has two elements. First, a projecting canopy (or 'pop out box') that sits at the lower ground level and forms a colonnade along the Riverside. Although there is access to Yo Sushi, it presents a largely inactive frontage to the Riverside public realm. Secondly, is a corner splay which consists of full height glazing from ground to parapet level but with heavy curtain walling behind.
- 2.4 The Bridge Street elevation is essentially the back of The Oracle, but has the same vernacular and pop out box as the Riverside. At the northern end of the Bridge Street elevation is the staff entrance to HOF. This building is much more modest in scale reflecting the adjoining Seven Bridges House (Grade II Listed), which is also within the ownership of the applicant.

The Proposed Development

- 2.5 The application seeks full planning permission for the subdivision and part change of use of the existing HOF department store, which is arranged over Riverside, lower ground and upper ground floor level of The Oracle Shopping Centre.
- 2.6 At Riverside level, it is proposed to subdivide the existing HOF and Yo Sushi concession floorspace into three main elements:
 - 1.A new food hall unit (R22), with direct access from the Riverside. This would be a mixed Class A1/A3/A4 use. A series of questions are asked in the pre-application correspondence regarding the nature of the Food Hall operation. In response to those questions:
 - The Food Hall unit would be let by the applicant to one tenant. It will be a single shared space, with no formal subdivision.
 - The Food Hall will be formed of a series of restaurants or street food vendors.
 - A central bar would form part of the food hall offer. It is proposed, however, that only 20% of the total floorspace be allocated to an A4 bar servery area. This can be controlled by condition.
 - No hot food take-away outlets would be included – the use classes of the operators would be within A1, A3 or A4; any take-away function would be ancillary to this.
 - Audible music would be played, but given the nature, mix of uses and proposed opening hours (see below) the operation would not be a 'late-night nightclub'.
 - The proposed opening hours for the mixed Class A1, A3, A4 unit are:

0800 – 0000 (midnight) Mondays to Saturdays.

0800 – 2300 Sundays, Bank Holidays.

- Security would be managed by the tenant, in consultation/agreement with The Oracle Centre Management.

Examples of comparable food halls include: Mercato Metropolitano, Elephant & Castle; Time Out Market, Lisbon; and Market Halls, Victoria. A tenant for the proposed food has not yet been secured, but a draft Operational Management Plan is enclosed as **Document 2** to indicate the nature and control of the operation.

As a consequence of the changes to the elevations (see below), this unit would also have external seating/dining broadly in the area currently defined by the canopy.

2.A new leisure use (Class D2) (R25) utilising the existing internal HOF access from the entrance rotunda of The Oracle.

3.On the splayed corner facing the Riverside, an entrance lobby (incorporating stairs, lifts and escalators) will give separate access to the proposed leisure unit at lower ground floor (see below).

- 2.7 On the Bridge Street frontage, the existing HOF staff entrance would be reconfigured to accommodate a new, small retail/café unit (Class A1/A3) improving activation in this area.
- 2.8 At lower ground floor level, the existing HOF floorspace would be subdivided to accommodate a leisure unit (Class D2) (R24) on the Riverside frontage, with independent access from the Riverside entrance lobby described above. The applicant is in discussions with a bowling alley operator in respect of this unit and the layout of the floorspace reflects their operational requirements. The rest of the floorspace at lower ground floor level would remain in retail (Class A1) use.
- 2.9 At upper ground floor level, the existing retail (Class A1) floorspace will be retained, reconfigured to meet current expectations/requirements of retailers.
- 2.10 Remote storage units, new service/fire escape corridors and stair cores will be accommodated as part of the re-purposing of the internal floorspace.
- 2.11 The floorspace schedule is as follows:

Existing Gross Internal Area Schedule (GIA m²)

	Use Class	Riverside	Lower Ground Floor	Upper Ground Floor	Total
HOF/Yo Sushi/Café Nero	A1	4,356	4,181	3,650	12,187

Proposed Gross Internal Area Schedule (GIA m²)

Unit	Use Class	Riverside	Lower Ground Floor	Upper Ground Floor	Total
R22	A1/A3/A4	1,514			1,514
R25	D2	1,719			1,719

Unit	Use Class	Riverside	Lower Ground Floor	Upper Ground Floor	Total
R24	D2	110	2,474		2,584
R23	A1/A3	210			210
L43	A1		1,386		1,386
U48	A1			3,272	3,272
				Total:	10,685

* The difference between the existing and proposed total floorspace figures is explained by the remote storage, re-configured servicing, etc. outlined above.

2.12 In addition to the subdivision and change of use, it is proposed to make improvements to the Riverside elevations. For full details, please refer to the Design and Access Statement. In summary, however, these include:

- The removal of the existing canopy ('pop out box') and its replacement with new glazing at Riverside and lower ground floor level, surrounded by a main projected portal, with a recessed entrance (glazed) to the proposed Food Hall.
- The removal of the curtain walling to the splayed element of the Riverside elevation and its replacement with full height structural glazing.

2.13 No changes are proposed to the Bridge Street elevation of The Oracle, save the introduction of a new retail/café unit within the existing HOF staff entrance area. The future occupiers of the Food Hall at Riverside level and the leisure unit at lower ground floor will, however, be encouraged to allow visibility through their façade glazing so that the Bridge Street elevation has a sense of interest and activity (see the CCI's submitted with the application).

2.14 The proposed materials are specified on the elevations and within the Design and Access Statement. They utilise a simple contemporary palette which reflects the existing architectural language of The Oracle including; recon stone panels, steel/aluminium clad 'portals' and frameless structural glazing.

2.15 The re-purposing of the HOF unit results in alterations at roof level (car park levels 1 and 2), including:

- Removal of the existing HOF glazed atrium (that provides escalator access). The infilled void will accommodate an additional 16 car parking spaces (including 4 disabled spaces).
- Two additional electric charging points (adjacent the existing provision on car park level 2).
- Removal of existing HOF plant and its replacement with new plant to new tenant specification.

2.16 Improved landscaping is proposed adjacent to the existing building (at the corner of the Riverside and Bridge Street) and within the existing corten steel planters.

2.17 Proposed signage zones are identified on the proposed elevations. Tenant signage will, however, be subject to separate advertisement consent applications (as necessary).

3. Planning Appraisal

3.1 The new Reading Local Plan (LP) was adopted on 4th November 2019. It replaces the Reading LDF Core Strategy (2008, Altered 2015), Reading's Central Area Action Plan – RCAAP (2009) and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, Altered 2015).

3.2 The following paragraphs appraise the application proposals against the new LP policies.

Principle of Development – Land Use Considerations

3.3 Policy RL1 of the LP recognises that the vitality and viability of the identified network of centres, including Reading as a Regional Centre, should be maintained and enhanced. The supporting text to that policy explains that whilst Reading has a very strong town centre, as competing centres continue to enhance their offer, it will be necessary to develop and adapt to maintain its position. LP Policy CR7 is concerned with primary frontages in central Reading which includes The Oracle. The policy has four components to it:

1. Uses on the ground floor along the designated primary frontages should be within Use Class: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1, D2 or a related sui generis use.

2. New development – including alterations to existing uses – should provide an active building frontage with a display window/glazed frontage at ground floor level.

3. Frontages should be of high visual quality.

4. Proposals that result in the loss of A1 or A2 uses will not be permitted if the proportion of those uses within a length of frontage would fall below 50%, unless the proposed use would make a positive contribution to the overall diversity of the centre.

3.4 The length of the Riverside frontages of The Oracle Shopping Centre are designated primary frontages on the LP Proposals Map. The existing HOF unit is in lawful Class A1/A3 use and, as explained above, as part of the re-purposing of the unit, flexible retail and two leisure units are proposed. The proposed A1, A3, A4 and D2 uses are consistent with the first part of LP Policy CR7. The proposals include alterations to the Riverside elevation which will involve removal of the existing canopy and the introduction of a combination of glazing and a projecting portal activating this frontage. The proposed architectural detail and materials (as specified in the application submission – see specifically the Design and Access Statement) would result in a high visual quality.

3.5 Although there would be a reduction in Class A1 floorspace, The Oracle Centre would remain predominately in retail use – well over 50%. The proportion of retail (A Class uses) to leisure (in terms of floorspace) in the HOF unit would be broadly 60% to 40%. It is considered that the subdivision of the HOF unit and the introduction of both the Food Hall and leisure uses will make a positive contribution to the diversity of The Oracle and are important to maintaining its competitive position, particularly given the challenging retail environment.

3.6 Further, LP Policy CR4 encourages leisure, cultural and tourism uses that would attract a wide range of people into the centre. It also encourages innovative solutions to leisure provision, particularly those that make best use of available space.

3.7 The proposals are supported by LP Policy CR7 and CR4 and the principle of development in terms of land uses is therefore considered acceptable. This is confirmed in the pre-application advice.

Design/Impact on Heritage Assets

- 3.8 LP Policy CR2 relates to design in Central Reading. Of relevance to the application proposals, it requires development to demonstrate the following attributes:
- Frontages that engage with the street at lower levels.
 - Appropriate, well-designed public spaces and other public realm, providing suitable functions and interest, sense of place and safe and convenient linkages to adjoining areas.
 - Provision of green infrastructure, designed into the development.
 - High quality architectural details and materials.
- 3.9 The approach to the design of the proposals is explained and justified fully in the Design and Access Statement. In the context of LP Policy CR2, however:
- A new recessed entrance to the proposed Food Hall is proposed within the two central bays of the Riverside frontage. A full height glazed entrance is also proposed on the 'splay' of the elevation. These would both provide activity and engaging street frontages.
 - The removal of the 'pop out box' on the existing Riverside elevation allows the external space to be opened up for seating/dining which will significantly improve the public realm of the Riverside. It will provide a function and interest throughout the day, in an area that is currently unwelcoming (at least visually).
 - The scheme incorporates additional green infrastructure in the form of improved planting on the Riverside, utilising (where possible) the existing steel planters.
 - The architectural and materials reflect the language of The Oracle, recognising that the new, contemporary elements of the elevations need to assimilate well with the original elements and indeed the wider centre. Design quality is inherent in all work undertaken at The Oracle.

Transport

- 3.10 A Transport Statement (Waterman Infrastructure and Environment) is submitted with the planning application and reflects the advice received from the Transport Development Control Manager at Reading Borough Council at the pre-application stage. The Transport Statement demonstrates that:
- The trips associated with the new leisure uses (allowing flexibility in the nature of that leisure use) would be lower than the existing retail use during the Saturday peak periods. This is without making any allowance for linked leisure and retail trips.
 - As a consequence of removing the HOF escalator atrium, 16 additional car parking spaces are proposed – 14 at level 1 and 2 spaces at level 2. LP Policy TR5 requires that '*within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point*'. Consistent with that policy, two additional electric charging points are proposed adjacent to the existing provision at car park level 2.
 - LP Policy TR5 also requires development to provide cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of a location. Reading Borough Council's standards for cycle parking for leisure uses are higher than retail uses and five additional Sheffield stands (10 spaces) are therefore proposed on Bridge Street, part

under the existing canopy of The Oracle. This is considered an appropriate location relative to the proposed uses and the cycle route through the Riverside. External stands are also typically well used compared to alternative enclosed provision at the centre.

- 3.11 The proposed leisure and retail units would be serviced by the existing servicing yard beneath The Oracle. There is more than sufficient capacity within the existing loading bays to accommodate the expected trips and there is already effective service management in place. A further Service Management Plan is not therefore considered necessary.

Trees and Landscaping/Public Realm

- 3.12 There are no proposals to alter the hard landscaping within the Riverside public realm. A soft landscaping schemes does, however, form part of the application submission. This includes additional/improved native planting adjacent the bridge over the Kennet and within the existing landscaped area close to the corner of the Riverside elevation. It is also proposed to replace the planting within the existing Corten steel planters.

Amenity Impacts

- 3.13 LP Policy CC8 seeks to safeguard amenity. Development should not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties in terms of (amongst other things) noise and disturbance. The nearest noise sensitive receptor to HOF is Riverside House, an apartment building to the south-west of The Oracle on the other side of Bridge Street. There are also residential properties on Gun Street, albeit some distance from the HOF unit.

- 3.14 The opening hours of the proposed uses would be as follows:

Use	Mon - Sat	Sun & Bank Holidays
Class D2	08.00 – 00.00 (midnight)	08.00 – 23.00
Class A1	To reflect Oracle opening hours*	
Class A1/A3/A4	08.00 – 00.00 (midnight)	08.00 – 23.00

* *Nb. Opening hours of The Oracle are unrestricted and vary throughout the trading year.*

- 3.15 Whilst it is acknowledged that the subdivision and reconfiguration of the HOF unit would result in a more intensive use than existing, given the central location and existing bars/restaurants at the Riverside (and on Gun Street) this is a location where there is already activity into the evening. The proposed opening hours are considered appropriate to this location, as well as meeting the operational requirements of prospective tenants. They broadly align with the opening hours of the Comptoir Libanais restaurant granted planning permission at The Oracle Riverside in August 2016.

- 3.16 The pre-application advice acknowledges that noise from the actual uses should not be a concern. A Noise Impact Assessment (Hoare Lea) has, however, been submitted with the application – this specifically assesses:

- Existing noise conditions.
- Noise limits for fixed plant.
- The impact of activity based noise on nearby residential properties.

- 3.17 Given the separation distance to the nearest residential properties, operational noise levels (based on leisure

uses) are assessed as low.

- 3.18 LP Policy EN17 requires that where noise generating plant is proposed, the noise source rating level (plant noise level) should be at least 10dBA below the existing background level as measured at the nearest noise sensitive receptor. As explained above, the existing HOF plant would be removed and plant areas reconfigured to meet tenant requirements. The Noise Assessment demonstrates that the proposed plant would comfortably meet the Policy EN17 noise source rating levels. This can be controlled by condition.

Flood Risk and SuDs

- 3.19 LP Policy EN18 directs development to areas at lowest risk of flooding in the first instance. It further requires major development to incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) *'as appropriate and in line with the Government's Technical Standards'*. The Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Santec demonstrates that:

- The site lies within Flood Zone 1 'low probability'. The southern boundary appears from the EA Flood Map to be in Flood Zone 3 (although the resolution of the mapping is too low to confirm from this). Surveyed levels of the north of the Kennet confirm that the Riverside public realm adjacent to HOF is actually within Flood Zone 1.
- The site does not flood during the design standard 1:100 annual probability plus 25% climate change flood event.
- The proposed development will not increase the permeable area of the site – no substantive changes are, therefore, proposed to the existing surface water regime. A Drainage Statement (Byrne Looby) has been submitted with the application which confirms there will only be minor adjustments to gully locations at roof level (for surface water drainage) and reallocation of flows to existing foul drains.

- 3.20 The proposals are, therefore, consistent with LP Policy EN18.

Sustainability/Energy

- 3.21 LP Policy CC2 requires all major non-residential developments or conversions to residential to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible. The Sustainability Statement, incorporating Energy Assessment (Envision) submitted with the application explains that technically none of the four parts of the BREEAM non-domestic refurbishment scheme are applicable to the work required to facilitate the change of use and subdivision of the HOF unit. Consistent with the pre-application advice from RBC's Sustainability Manager, however, a BREEAM Pre-Assessment has been undertaken to show how the scheme would align with a BREEAM rating, where appropriate. The sustainability measures that will be incorporated into the scheme are set out in Appendix 3 of the Sustainability Statement.

Employment, Skills & Training

- 3.22 Reading's Employment, Skills and Training Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in April 2013. The purpose of the SPD is to ensure that the construction and end user phases of development contribute towards a range of employment, skills and training measures and facilitate local people gaining better access to job opportunities. This is typically secured through a S106 Agreement requiring the implementation of an approved Employment and Skills Plan (ESP). The Oracle Shopping Centre is already a major employer in Reading and, as set out in the ESP submitted with the application, a number of initiatives are already in place that can be applied to the current proposals at The Oracle. Given this, a S106 requiring a separate ESP is not considered to pass the necessity test in this instance.



HOF Subdivision, The Oracle Shopping Centre,
Reading

Planning Statement

Document 1

Pre-Application Advice, dated 18th September 2019



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18th September 2019

Via email only to: Rachel@simply-planning.com

Your contact is: Mr Jonathan Markwell, Planning

Dear Ms Jones,

PRE PLANNING APPLICATION ENQUIRY RESPONSE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Enquiry Reference: 191264

Address: House of Fraser, The Oracle, Bridge Street, Reading

Proposal: Change of use from Class A1 (Retail) to three leisure units, a food market and two retail units, including subdivision, elevational changes and associated works (c. 12.957 sq. m. floor area (existing))

Information considered: Pre-Application enquiry form; URB OR[08]00 01 Rev D00 Site Location Plan as existing; URB OR[08]37 01 Rev D00 Riverside level as existing; URB OR[08]37 02 Rev D00 Riverside level as proposed; URB OR[08]42 01 Rev D00 lower ground floor as existing; URB OR[08]42 02 Rev D00 lower ground floor as proposed; URB OR[08]48 01 Rev D00 upper ground floor as existing; URB OR[08]48 02 Rev D00 upper ground floor as proposed; URB OR[08]55 01 Rev D00 car park level 01 as existing; URB OR[08]55 02 Rev D00 car park level 01 as proposed; URB OR[08]58 01 Rev D00 car park level 02 as existing; URB OR[08]58 01 Rev D00 car park level 02 as proposed; URB OR[08]80 01 Rev D00 sections as existing; URB OR[08]80 02 Rev D00 sections as proposed; URB-OR[08]90 01 Rev D00a Proposed visual of Riverside façade; Letter from Simply Planning dated 01/08/19 (all received on 01/08/19); The Subdivision and Reconfiguration of House of Fraser, Oracle, Reading Transport Note by Waterman Infrastructure & Environment dated August 15th 2019, received 16/08/19; Sustainability Overview by Envision, dated August 15th 2019, received 16/08/19.

Those in attendance at the pre-application meeting on 2nd September: Jonathan Markwell (Principal Planning Officer), Darren Cook (Transport Development Control Manager) & Sarah Hanson (Natural Environment Officer) (all Reading Borough Council); Rachel Jones (Simply Planning); Phillippa Zieba (Hammerson); Darren Hodgson (Urban Edge Architects).

Officers who did not attend the meeting but provided specialist input for this response: Rebecca Moon (Senior Environmental Health Officer); Ben Burfoot (Sustainability Manager).

Thank you for your enquiry. Further to our pre-application meeting on 2nd September, this constitutes the formal written pre-application advice by the local planning authority.

Introduction / background

As means of context, it is advised in general terms that any planning application at the site would presently be considered within the context of the Council's LDF Core Strategy (2008, Altered 2015), Reading Central Area Action Plan - RCAAP (2009) and Sites and the Detailed Policies (2012, Altered 2015) documents. Other topic based supplementary planning documents would also be applied where relevant, together with national policy and guidance (the NPPF and PPG). Please use [this link](#) to view the local policies and guidance.

Moreover, as you are already aware, a new local plan for Reading is at an advanced stage. Although adoption of the [new local plan](#) (and its policies - replacing the existing policies referenced above) is not anticipated until early in November 2019, it is also advised that the emerging policies can be afforded some weight in the determination of planning applications now that:

- the draft local plan has been submitted to the Government (The Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on Thursday 29th March 2018),
- the examination in public has taken place (September-October 2018),
- an initial response has been received from the Inspector (March 2019) and
- consultation has taken place on the main modifications (June - July 2019).

The Inspector's report following the recent modifications consultation is imminent, beyond which it is anticipated that the new local plan will be formally adopted on 4th November. Once adopted, the new policies will be afforded full weight and will supersede the Core Strategy / Central Area Action Plan / Sites and Detailed Policies. Given your anticipated timescales for the submission of a full planning application it is envisaged that the new local plan will either be adopted at the time of submission, or at least prior to the determination of the application. Accordingly you are strongly advised to prepare your submission on the basis of the requirements of the new local plan (taking into account the main modifications consulted on in June/July 2019).

Principle of development

It is noted that the application involves the division of the existing single retail unit occupied by House of Fraser (but also including a Yo Sushi restaurant with access from the riverside).

First, it is acknowledged that usually under planning law, the continued retail use at part lower ground level (specified as 1,366.4sqm and unit L43 on the proposed plan) and upper ground level (specified as 3,274.1sqm and unit U48 on the proposed plan) would not in themselves require planning permission as no change of use is taking place and instead the unit is being subdivided into smaller (continued retail) parts at these points. However, on the basis of the wording of condition 62 of the original permission (Ref 97/00017/FD / 970419) this permitted development right has been removed and, consequently, this should form part of your future application. As a reminder, condition 62 states:

62 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order, with or without modifications there shall be no subdivision of the department stores shown on the approved drawings into separate shop units unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: as the balance between shop units and department store retail floor space has a critical effect on the vitality and viability of the rest of the town centre and the impact of any shift needs to be evaluated by the Local Planning Authority.

The reasoning for the condition is noted. It is however also acknowledged that the context of planning policy (both nationally and locally) has changed in the intervening time, in a response to the changing face of the retail sector generally. In line with both the current and emerging local policy, put simply the sub-division of the retail unit into a number of small retail units raises no in-principle land use concerns. At the meeting you outlined that you may in-fact be seeking for the smaller retail units (Class A1) to actually include some flexibility for other uses too. In this regard your future submission should make it abundantly clear which uses are sought within each unit proposed.

The proposals also involve the change of use of various elements too:

- a food market at part riverside level (specified as 1538.3sqm and unit R22 on the proposed plan) (use class sought is unspecified)
- a leisure unit at part riverside level (specified as 1718.1sqm and unit R25 on the proposed plan) (intended occupier stated to be a mini golf operator)
- a leisure unit at part riverside level (specified as 205.3sqm and unit R23 on the proposed plan) fronting onto Bridge Street (leisure use unspecified)
- a leisure unit at part riverside and part lower ground floor level (specified as 2,496.1sqm at lower ground level and unit R24 on the proposed plan) (intended occupier stated to be a bowling operator)
- various storage / associated uses at various points.

Considering the proposed leisure uses first, although the proposals would result in a significant reduction in retail floorspace at the site (the exact amount is not able to be ascertained from the information provided - but would obviously need to be detailed at application stage), leisure uses are broadly welcomed in principle as other main town centre uses. More specifically, emerging Policy CR4 details that leisure uses which would attract a wide range of people into the centre will be encouraged. The supporting text to the policy also provides further details (which you are advised to take into account), most pertinently paragraph 5.3.15:

5.3.15 In all cases, new leisure development should be based on the principles of high quality and inclusive design, to assist in making the town centre more attractive and usable for local residents, shoppers, employees and leisure visitors. Blank and/ or uninteresting façades or shed-like structures will not be permitted. New development and/ or redevelopment in the Centre also provides opportunities for the creation of new spaces that may be used for formal or informal recreation and leisure.

You are advised to pay particular attention for the need for high quality and inclusive design, with your supporting design and access statement clearly detailing the proposed measures and features proposed.

It is advised that your future submission makes clear whether you are seeking permission for any leisure (presumed to be Class D2) use within each unit, or whether you would intend to limit your proposals only for certain (specified) elements of the Class D2 use class? The Class D2 use is fairly wide in its nature (the planning portal references: Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or area for indoor or outdoor sports and recreations (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used)) and the different uses within the same use class could potentially have very different transport and amenity (e.g. noise/disturbance / hours / anti-social behaviour / crime) implications for example. As such, your proposals need to be clear in this regard so that the proposals can be assessed (and potentially secured via condition as such) accordingly.

In terms of the food market use, despite my attempts prior to the meeting, you have to date provided little detail as to how this would operate in practice or what use class you seek for this to be within. To be clear, your future submission will need to include precise and detailed information regarding the nature and extent of the use(s) / operations proposed within the proposed food market, revolving around the type of uses proposed. For example, there are various questions posed around the proposed use(s) and further questions stemming from this:

- How many tenants are intended?
- Would these be in a single shared space or more formally sub-divided?
- Would these be sandwich shop / café related?
- Would a series of restaurants be proposed?
- Would any standalone drinking establishments be included?
- Would hot-food take-away outlets included?
- Would music be played internally / when combined with a drinking establishment use would this constitute a late-night nightclub use?
- What hours of use are proposed?
- Crossover with licensing arrangements
- Access provision
- Security strategy (including details of CCTV / external lighting / interaction with existing requirements regarding open access to the Oracle centre and times etc).

A clear and unequivocal operational management plan would therefore need to form an integral part of your future submission. In any permission the measures specified in the operational management plan would be likely to be secured via a compliance condition, in the interests of ensuring the proper and safe operation of the use permitted.

More specifically, from a use perspective, it could be that the food market could fall within the Class A1/A3/A4/A5 uses, or a combination of a number of these separate uses (thereby equating to a sui generis use). Although a proposed food market use is likely to be accepted

in principle land use terms, owing to the significant floorspace involved (stated as 1,538.3sqm in your submission), the need for this to be carefully considered and managed is particularly pertinent.

You will note that in the recent case within the borough at Broad Street Mall a flexible retail/restaurant/bar (Class A1/A3/A4) use was resolved to be granted when it was considered at Planning Applications Committee in June 2019 (the decision notice was subsequently issued on 31/07/19 - ref 190099). An earlier permission at 1-2 Market Place (Ref 180863) also included a foodhall (Class A3/A4), which has been implemented and recently opened (albeit officers note that the layout is not in accordance with the permission). Obviously food markets are a growing trend across the country, so your submission could also include case studies of other examples your client (or others) have experience of and include details as part of your supporting statement in this case too. You will note on the recent example at Broad Street Mall a condition secured the development being carried out in accordance with a layout plan submitted as part of the application and limiting the Class A4 bar serverly area to no more than 20% of the total floor area. Similarly the Market Place condition also limited the Class A4 space in accordance with the approved plans. As such, in your future submission, a detailed layout plan for the food market should be provided, in particular making clear any Class A4 area and the % of floorspace sought for this area, so this can be assessed accordingly.

Your confirmation of the use class(es) of the food market will dictate the exact emerging local policies the proposals would be considered against. Given the lack of information submitted in advance of the meeting, I have not specifically engaged the RBC Licensing, CCTV or Access officers, nor the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police as part of this pre-application submission (as no specific guidance would have been able to have been provided by these parties). Naturally these consultees will be engaged at application stage. Although it is recognised that there are different legislative regimes between planning and licensing, it is envisaged that planning officers will work closely with licensing colleagues to ensure consistency and a joined-up approach on interrelated matters.

Design / Impact on Heritage Assets

In respect of design based matters, only a single initial CGI from the riverside has been provided in support of the proposals. Accordingly, only limited advice can be provided on the basis of a lack of meaningful documentation submitted. Based on the CGI (and confirmed by the floor plans submitted) it is evident that the existing canopy along the northern bank of the riverside is being removed, with a largely glazed replacement frontage proposed. This appears to be framed with vertical columns (materials unspecified) and includes clear glazing at ground floor level and some form of patterned glazing treatment at first floor level. A new material appears to be introduced horizontally between ground/first and first/second floors.

It is considered that the principle of removing the canopy is not considered to be contentious in itself in design terms (in-fact the opening up of the riverside façade at this point would bring a welcomed level of activity which is respectfully lacking at present - assisting in viability and vitality terms), providing that the proposals are of a sufficient design quality (aligning with the emerging design based policy for the central area). In this regard, the

principle of a more contemporary approach is broadly welcomed, but without further details of the intended materials or more detailed proposals (illustrating the design quality), it is not possible to provide a clear view at this time. Any proposal will need to be carefully considered as it appears that elements of the original structure will be retained alongside the new elements; it is accordingly a challenge to ensure that the new elements assimilate satisfactorily with the original elements and within the context of the wider Oracle site too (e.g. longer views from the east and west). In any future proposal active window displays without the provision of window vinyls, roller shutters or similar would be expected and secured via condition.

As outlined in advance of the pre-application meeting, it would be expected that a proposal of this nature is considered by the Reading Design Review Panel. For the sake of brevity, those details are not repeated here, but in short it is advised that the proposals should be advanced so that they can be considered at DRP as soon as possible, to explore the detailed design / design quality of the proposals. Please contact me to arrange this, with this ideally taking place prior to your formal submission (although, to confirm, proposals can be considered post-submission - with this taking place as early as possible in practice).

It is also noted that the south-east corner elevation is also set to be revamped, to facilitate the entrance to the upper level bowling use. Although there is no objection in principle to the replacement of the existing façade, the choice and use of suitable high quality materials and finishes will be important, with a requirement for this to be demonstrated by you. It will be especially important for you to demonstrate how this aligns / maintains / improves the character/appearance of the façade and integrates the pre-existing context to the east with the more contemporary appearance set to emerge to the west.

Furthermore, it is noted that no significant changes appear to be proposed in relation to the Bridge Street façade, with the riverside floorplan specifying *“existing projecting box to be retained, cleaned and made good where required”*. Officers consider this could be a missed opportunity and it is instead advised that you should explore introducing measures which activate this frontage too. Like the riverside façade, there is respectfully considered to be a lack of activity at ground floor level, with the columns and undercroft area (and vinyls added to the window displays at this point) resulting in a general lack of activity and anecdotally an increased fear of crime (in comparison with other areas around the wider Oracle site). As such, officers strongly suggest that measures to improve this space could/should be incorporated within your emerging proposals, such as:

- a) exploring the provision of customer access to the food market directly from Bridge St (as well as the Riverside);
- b) removal of vinyls from the windows at ground floor level (and above should the ‘projecting box’ remain) to enable views into the food market at this point;
- c) explore the provision of external seating, similar to that proposed on the riverside. External seating is already provided further to the north on Bridge St;
- d) explore the provision of external soft landscaping along Bridge St, given the existing ‘hard’ environment at this point at present;

- e) explore the removal of the projecting altogether, similar to the approach proposed on the Riverside, which would then assist in the aforementioned measures being incorporated.

It is considered that by incorporating some/all of these measures would lead to positive impacts, in particular in increasing footfall to this area to the benefit of both the food market and, moreover, the standalone 205sqm leisure unit proposed fronting onto Bridge Street (referenced at the meeting as potentially being occupied as a gym or boxing gym). Without the inclusion of additional measures it is considered that the leisure unit may appear isolated and cut-off from the rest of the Oracle site and therefore potentially increase the risk of struggling to attract / maintain tenants.

From a design perspective too, if significant works to the riverside frontage are included but in contrast only minimal works are proposed to the Bridge Street façade, this may unbalance the overall composition and reduce legibility at the wider Oracle site.

It is therefore strongly advised that you further develop your proposals to incorporate improvements to both facades, rather than predominantly focusing on the riverside elevation as it appears at present.

Although not shown in elevation form, based on the floor plan and sections it appears that there are some reductions in the overall massing of the building within the uppermost car parking areas (owing to the removal of escalators). Given this area appears to be away from the boundary of the building, it is unlikely to be contentious from a design perspective.

Turning to consider the impact of the proposals on heritage assets, given that no elevational information has been provided barring an initial riverside CGI, it is difficult to provide any meaningful comments at this stage. Accordingly, the Council's Historic Buildings Consultant has not been engaged at pre-application stage, but will naturally be consulted at the time of your future application.

It is however noted that the future application site is in a sensitive location in terms of nearby heritage assets. Most prominently this includes the neighbouring Grade II listed 19 Bridge Street. It is noted that the floor plans suggest that three new entrances on the boundary with the external space associated with the listed building are proposed (serving new substations and an LV switchroom). Naturally these would need to be sympathetically designed to preserve the setting of the listed building at this point. In addition, it is noted that the doors appear to open outwards (onto land not within the red line of the boundary plan), so it is presumed that discussions/agreements/notice have taken place with this neighbouring landowner? In particular, it is questioned whether the provision of the entrances would limit / harm the use of the external space at the neighbouring site (either for off-road parking or other uses). As such, this should be clearly explained in your future submission. At the meeting you indicated that in reality perhaps only a single new entrance would be necessary and 19 Bridge Street was in-fact under the same ownership as the application site (thereby falling inside application site), thereby potentially already addressing these potential issues.

Furthermore, there are also a number of other nearby listed buildings and conservation areas in close proximity to the site (e.g. further listed buildings to the north-west; the St Mary's Butts / Castle Street Conservation Area; to the south-east the impacts on views / setting of listed buildings including St Giles Church within Market Place/London Street Conservation Area). With this in mind, it is also advised that you should be mindful of view 2 within Appendix 4 of the [Historic Environment Background Paper](#). This is one of a number of evidence documents which informed the local plan examination and the emerging local plan (part of emerging Policy EN5). View 2 (View looking north down Southampton Street from Whitley Street) includes reference to the Oracle in distant views, so consideration to this should be provided in your future submission.

It is considered likely that information / justification will be able to be provided by you to justify your proposals in respect of the impact on heritage assets. However, the onus is on you to provide such information to demonstrate compliance with relevant local policies and the statutory legislative tests.

Given the nature of the proposals and the location of the site, it is therefore advised that a succinct heritage statement will be required to be submitted at the time of your future application (in line with section 12 of the validation requirements).

Transport

The Transport Development Control Manager is largely content with the information presented at pre-application stage, commenting as follows:

- Transport officers are content that the retained car parking provision complies with policy, given the town centre location.
- The proposal includes the provision of 12 additional car parking bays; in accordance with the Council's emerging Local Plan 10% of all new car parking spaces should be provided with electric charging facilities. If an application is submitted and additional parking is proposed an electric charging point should therefore be shown to be provided within the documentation submitted. As discussed at the meeting, this could be located within the spaces proposed to be created, or as part of the wider parking locations at the Oracle. Your future submission should make it clear where the facility is proposed.
- The Council's standards specify that more cycle parking is required for the leisure uses when compared against the existing retail uses. The application will therefore need to provide additional cycle parking. It is noted that the documentation specifies that the existing provision is underutilised and this has been identified on site with no bicycles being attached to the Sheffield stands under the up ramp to the car park, while numerous bicycles have been attached to the external Sheffield stands. As a result transport officers are content to take account of the under provision when assessing the increased number of cycle parking that is required. However, it is advised that you should review how the existing cycle parking provision under the up ramp can be improved to encourage an increased number of cycle movements to and from the site. For example, if the Sheffield stands under the ramp are not used, are the lockers in this location used instead? If so, could further lockers be provided to aid use? If there

are other means of seeking to increase use of the cycle parking at this point, this should be explored and considered to be included in your future proposals. The site is located within easy reach of numerous cycle routes (one of which travels through the Oracle itself) and therefore providing attractive cycle parking will encourage this mode of travel to the site by both staff and customers. Accordingly your future proposal should indicate proposed improvements to cycle parking provision and your red line application boundary should be altered accordingly.

- Transport officers are content that the proposal to utilise the existing servicing bays would be acceptable, although it is considered likely to result in a service management plan being required (secured via planning condition) given the increased number of deliveries. As discussed at our meeting, it is considered that there would be scope to provide more detailed information at application stage, thereby meaning that potentially only a compliance condition is required (rather than a condition requiring a separate submission at a later date).
- Subject to the TRICS data being provided it is agreed that the proposed uses are unlikely to generate increased trips to the site especially in the peak periods. The uses are likely to generate linked trips to other facilities within the town centre and result in people staying longer more than increasing numbers. It is however recognised that the Class D2 use class is wide and should the proposal seek for any Class D2 use to be able to occupy the units (rather than being the specific bowling / indoor golf uses specified) the assessment should take account of this and demonstrate the suitability of a variety of uses within the Class D2 use.
- Planning officers asked transport officers to explore whether improvements to taxi parking provision on Bridge Street could be incorporated within this proposal, given the relatively limited provision at this point at present. Transport officers have discussed this with the Network Management team and have concluded that at present it is considered that it would be impractical to make any significant improvements.
- It is noted that a number of new substation entrance points are proposed on the boundary with No. 19 Bridge Street. Your future submission should make it clear whether this would have any implications for off-street parking provision at the neighbouring site?
- Given the nature and level of works proposed, it is likely that a demolition and construction method statement will be required, to protect the amenity of nearby occupiers / users of the space and maintain highway safety. Depending on whether a contractor is appointed prior to the submission of the application, it could be that you seek to choose to submit information at application stage, to avoid a pre-commencement (including demolition works) condition. Alternatively, officers would have no in-principle issue with this being secured via condition. Any condition would be likely to be worded as follows:

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to provide for:

- a) space on site where vehicles of site operatives and visitors can be parked with details of how site operatives and visitors will be required to make use of the parking area provided*
- b) location on site for storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development*

- c) *the erection and maintenance (including removal of any graffiti or fly posters) of security hoarding around the site*
- d) *any footpath closures or road closures needed during construction*
- e) *wheel washing facilities on site*
- f) *a scheme for recycling waste resulting from the construction works*

The measures within the approved Construction Method Statement shall be maintained and adhered to throughout the course of the development unless changes are agreed in advance and in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Trees and landscaping / public realm

It is advised that there are a number of early mature trees south of the site adjacent to the River Kennet and these enhance the amenity of the Oracle. The trees are growing in a paved area which will protect their roots to some extent, however parts of the trees above ground could be damaged due to the proximity of the proposed external building alterations. Every effort should therefore be made to protect and retain the trees as part of the building works and tree protection fencing will be expected. In the event that the trees cannot be retained or are irreparably damaged, then they will need to be replaced with others of a similar size and species on completion of the building works.

It is also considered that the proposals present an opportunity to make possible soft landscaping improvements on the Bridge Street façade, which is presently a somewhat ‘hard’ environment. Please also refer to the design section comments above, where this is also referenced in respect of a wider discussion regarding the Bridge Street frontage.

Linked to this, it is not clear at this juncture whether the external seating area shown on the riverside would be permanent structures, or whether they are moveable and would be removed outside opening hours? This should be clarified in your future submission, both from a practical perspective, but also in terms of public safety / anti-social behavior matters too.

Amenity impacts

Although some amenity based impacts have already been outlined in part within the principle of development section, it is important to acknowledge that there is nearby residential accommodation to the south-west (Fobney Street) of the site and to the north (Gun Street). As such, consideration should be taken to ensure that the proposed uses do not cause individual or cumulative harm to the residential amenity of any nearby occupiers.

In any future submission you should make it clear what hours of use you are proposing for each unit within the red line application site. It is considered that the two previous applications for food markets within the Borough (referenced separately above) and a recent application for Class D2 uses at nearby Broad Street Mall (Ref 180823) can act as a guide, although officers will naturally consider the proposals on their own merits (and on the basis of any supporting justification you seek to include as part of your submission).

In terms of possible future external lighting (as referenced by you at our meeting on the riverside façade), the [validation checklist document \(section 9\)](#) provides guidance as to the level/nature of information to be submitted. In particular, it is advised that you should be particularly careful regarding the setting of the River Kennet from an ecological perspective.

From an Environmental Protection perspective, there are potential concerns related to:

- Noise arising from development
- Air Quality impact - increased emissions
- Odour assessment
- Construction and Demolition phase

In terms of noise generating development, in general terms it is unlikely that in this location noise from the actual uses should not be of concern in itself. The potential exception to this is in relation to structural borne noise disturbance from any proposed gym use (impacting negatively on other floors of the building) and potentially specific noise from any bowling use too (which if not managed could limit the attractiveness of the other floors of the building). Accordingly, if such uses are proposed then your submission should ideally include specific acoustic information in these regards. If the specific gym type operations are not known at application stage, it would instead be appropriate to include a structural based noise assessment via condition.

It is also advised that if significant new mechanical plant is proposed as part of the development (likely to be the case if, as indicated, the House of Fraser plant is removed and replaced with new equipment serving the new units) then an acoustic assessment will be required. This should be carried out in accordance with BS4142:2014 methodology. The noise assessment needs to establish the predicted noise rating level taking account of any characteristic factors like tonality or impulsiveness of the noise. The rating level should be compared with the background noise level.

Within Reading there is strong justification for requiring the plant specific sound level to be at least -10dB below the measured background level and for the plant noise rating level to not exceed the measured background level. Specifically to prevent cumulative impact from addition of plant over time which could result in background creeping up to levels which might cause adverse health impact, which is more likely in a densely occupied town such as Reading. Levels of -10dB ensure that the background level is not increased and nuisance is unlikely.

Turning to consider air quality (increased emissions) matters, Reading has declared a significant area of the borough as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). This is for the exceedance of both the hourly and annual mean objectives for nitrogen dioxide. In addition to this recent epidemiologic studies have shown that there is no safe level for the exposure to particulate matter PM10. Further assessment may be required to establish whether the change of use is likely to impact on local air quality, e.g. will it lead to increased trips by road? On the basis of the initial transport scoping note and feedback from the Transport Development Control Manager, given there is unlikely to be an increase in trips, this

consequently means that a formal air quality assessment is not required, but instead succinct commentary should be provided within your supporting design and access statement.

With regard to the altered kitchen extraction likely to occur from the food market and leisure uses, it is advised that an odour assessment should be submitted alongside your submission. If such details are not known at application stage (if, for example, the tenant(s) are unknown) then this matter could be dealt with via condition (as was the case in application 190099 at Broad Street Mall).

Finally, in terms of the construction and demolition phases, Environmental Protection officers have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses). Accordingly, a scheme should be submitted which specifies the provisions to be made for the control of noise and dust emanating from the site during the demolition and construction phase. If such details are not known, this could alternatively be secured within the aforementioned demolition and construction method statement condition.

Hence, there are a number of amenity-based matters to consider and your future submission should make clear the safeguards to be implemented to protect nearby amenity.

SuDS

In relation to SuDs, the information provided is agreed in principle, but it is advised that to ensure that this is covered if an application is submitted, at the very least a statement should be included within the planning statement to cover the requirement for SuDs.

Advertisement consent

It is noted that the CGI includes signage. In the first instance it is advised that you should consider whether any such signage would be included within your submission (resulting in planning permission and advertisement consent being required - on the proviso that the advertisements do not fall under deemed consent) or whether they are shown indicatively and would be sought separately in due course (if that is the case an annotation should be included on the elevation plans to clarify that). Obviously the adopted and emerging local policies have established elements, in particular in relation to limiting high level signage. However, it is also recognised that high level signage exists at the Oracle and hence a case could be made to seek to justify this in any future submission. It is noted that the CGI provided refers to 'Bridge St Market' - a general comment from officers is that this is potentially confusing as this is shown on the riverside frontage, rather than Bridge Street itself.

Sustainability / Energy

The submission of the sustainability overview document by Envision is welcomed. In discussion with the Sustainability Manager it is advised that, in line with the emerging policy CC2 a BREEAM 'excellent' rating is expected. In your submission you have outlined that no part of the BREEAM assessment are directly applicable in this case, but nevertheless a

BREEAM pre-assessment will be submitted with the application. Officers can advise that a pre-assessment would be expected, and should the policy rating not be anticipated to be met, supporting commentary and evidence will be required to seek to justify this. At application stage officers will carefully consider and assess such justification, with view to this being robustly verified as genuine shortcomings in this case which cannot be improved. If this is subsequently accepted, then officers would then be minded to recommend that lower ratings than 'excellent' are sought to be secured via condition.

In terms of specific energy matters, the approach you have committed to undertaking in your overview document at application stage is considered appropriate in this case, including the consideration of the various decentralised energy options and the specific circumstances which you consider to be relevant in this case. Your future energy assessment should be explicit in listing the exact measures which you are committed to, with view to these being secured via a compliance condition should the justification provided be accepted by officers. Although a variety of energy based improvements are understood to be taking part across the Oracle site, your submission should be specific to the measures to be incorporated within the red line of the application site and be directly related to the proposed development.

S106 / CIL

Employment, Skills and Training - Given the floorspaces involved it is considered that both a construction phase and end user phase Employment, Skills and Training Plan will be required to be secured. This is as per the stipulations of the [adopted SPD](#), and in practice this would be secured via section 106 legal agreement. Typically officers would, in the first instance, seek for actual employment, skills and training plans to be secured. However, the SPD makes clear that where an applicant chooses not to implement an ESP a financial contribution will be secured instead (based on the formula set out in the SPD). As such, in your future application, you should make it clear from the outset whether you intend for an actual ESP to be secured, or whether you wish to make a financial contribution instead.

At our meeting you indicated that you may seek to include commentary/evidence to possibly negate the need for an ESP (at least the end-user phase, owing to the existing programmes the Oracle is involved in). In such instances it is advised that your future submission should clearly outline your rationale, to enable this to be further considered by officers. At application stage the local planning authority would formally consult Reading UK CIC, who is Reading's economic development company who delivers ESPs. Should you wish to liaise with Reading UK CIC in advance, please contact Economic Development Manager Sue Brackley in the first instance (sue.brackley@reading.gov.uk / 0118 937 4340). As per your request, I have not contacted Reading UK CIC as part of this pre-application enquiry.

At the time of writing this is likely to be the sole head of term for any s106 legal agreement as part of this proposal. However, this may change once the formal application has been submitted and considered by the local planning authority. Naturally, any obligation would need to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that it would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

In terms of the Reading CIL, please refer to the [adopted charging schedule](#) (please note that the rates stated have subsequently been updated due to yearly indexation). It is considered likely that the proposals will be CIL chargeable, but the CIL charge is likely to be £0.

Validation requirements

On the basis of [the local validation checklist](#), I can advise that the following documents will be required to accompany your future application:

All necessary part 1 requirements (including the CIL form - in particular plans showing your methodology for how you have calculated the floorspaces)

7. Energy efficiency statement
9. External lighting details (if proposed)
10. Flood Risk Assessment (if required, pending your separate discussions with the Environment Agency)
11. Heads of Terms Proposals - s106 legal agreements (in relation to an ESP)
12. Heritage Statement (potentially a succinct statement with the Design & Access Statement)
13. Landscape principles
14. Material details
15. Noise and vibration impact assessment
17. Planning statement
18. Plans and drawings - in particular please note the requirement for streetscene elevations, sections including site levels and finished floor levels stated on the plans, CIL methodology evidence plans. Furthermore, in this specific instance 3 sets of plans are required: existing, demolition and proposed.
20. Sustainability statement
22. Transport Assessment (as per transport comments above)
23. Tree survey (tree protection measures as per tree comments above)
24. Utilities surveys and proposals
25. Vehicle (car & cycle) Parking and Servicing (including waste storage and collection) details
26. Vent/flue & ventilation details

(please make use of the part 1 and part 2 checklists)

Please also note the requirement for bespoke additional elements in this instance, such as an odour assessment and an operational management plan.

Concluding comments

Whilst the principle of the sub-division of the unit is unlikely to raise any in-principle land use issues, at this point there are a number of matters of detail which need to be demonstrated prior to officers being in a position to support the emerging proposals. None of the matters raised are considered to be insurmountable, but the onus will naturally be on you to submit

the necessary level of detail at application stage to satisfy officers. Should the required level of detail be provided, the proposals potentially represent a welcomed addition to the town centre.

Please note that the advice contained within this letter is that of an officer of the Borough Council and is provided without prejudice to the decision of the Borough Council in the event of a formal application for planning permission.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Markwell

Mr Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer

JEM



HOF Subdivision, The Oracle Shopping Centre,
Reading

Planning Statement

Document 2

Draft Operational Management Plan

Draft Operational Management Plan

This Draft Operational Management Strategy has been prepared by Hammerson to provide guidance information to prospective tenants of Unit R22 at The Oracle (known as the Food Hall) in respect of the Landlord expectations of the operation and management of the unit.

Use Class

The use class of the unit will fall within Classes A1/A3 and A4 operated as a food hall. The total floorspace to be allocated to a Class A4 bar servery area shall not exceed 20% of the total GIA of the unit.

Operating Hours

The operating hours shall be restricted to:

Mondays to Saturdays: 08:00 to 00:00 (midnight).

Sundays and Bank Holidays: 08:00 to 23:00.

Licensing

All relevant licensing laws/recommendations and requests from Reading Borough Council and the police will be implemented in full. This will include (as a minimum):

- Membership of Reading Pub watch scheme.
- Reading Borough Council's Cumulative Impact Policy.
- Membership of the Reading Business Against Crime (RBaC)/Townsafe scheme

Security

Unit R22 will be managed by the tenant, but will be required to meet the minimum security procedures of The Oracle:

- Entry policy and Challenge 25 policy.
- Code of conduct for staff and customers.
- Dedicated CCTV system (in addition to existing Centre CCTV).
- Exit and Dispersal policy.



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