

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE

FROM OFFICE BUILDING

(USE CLASS B1)

TO

NEW POLICE BASE

(USE CLASS SUI GENERIS)

AT ATLANTIC HOUSE

IMPERIAL WAY, RG2 0TD

**THAMES VALLEY
POLICE**



1. INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement is in support of a planning application to deliver a new Police Base for Thames Valley Police (TVP) in Reading. The new base will largely replace the existing Police Station in the Town Centre and be the location for the majority of staff and services currently provided in the Police Station. By way of information a new dedicated “town-centre” facility is to be provided separately from this application and that facility will retain the visible presence in the town, a base for the dedicated town-centre neighbourhood team and the public interface (front counter) for members of the public to engage with TVP.

This application simply seeks permission for a Change of Use, no physical works are proposed. The existing building was most recently occupied as an Office by Regus and therefore considered to fall into category B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

Traditionally a Police Base/Station falls to be determined within Use Class *Sui Generis*, hence the requirement for this “change of use” application.

This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying “Planning Statement” submitted as part of this application, which examines a number of wider planning issues relating to the application.

2. SITE & SURROUNDINGS

The building sits within a well-established employment area to the south of the Town Centre. The surrounding area is predominantly made up of other office buildings, trade counters, car showrooms and some industrial units.

The application site is a late 1980s Office building comprising 4707 sqm GIA (3579 NIA sqm) of floor space. It is one of a pair (Pacific House being the other) that are accessed via Worton Drive but front onto Imperial Way. The two buildings are self-contained but share vehicular access and parking arrangements.

3. DESIGN

Use/Amount

This planning application seeks only a change of use, no physical alterations to the building are proposed and accordingly the impact with regard to the Use/Amount of development is non-existent in this case,

Scale

Similarly the scale of proposed development is identical to that already found on site and therefore is not considered an issue for determination as part of this application.

Appearance

The office building will retain its existing appearance (save for some minor repair and decoration works). No physical alterations or amendment to either the building or surrounding area are proposed.

Landscaping

All existing hard and soft landscaping is to be retained with no new landscaping proposed. The existing hardstanding areas may be subject to new marking out to improve legibility on site and to demark the parking arrangements for TVP and occupiers of the neighbouring Pacific House.

4. ACCESS & MOVEMENT

No new vehicular or pedestrian access are proposed. The existing vehicular access serving the office building will remain unaltered. TVP will occupy 153 of the 373 parking spaces on site, this is commensurate with the size of the office building. The majority of these (128) will be within the existing split level car park to the rear of the office buildings and a smaller number (25).

The parking will consist of a mixture of operational/fleet vehicles, some staff parking and a modest number of visitor parking spaces.

The site sits within a highly sustainable location with a bus stop within 150 metres of the site. This provides direct bus links to the Town Centre (and Railway Station) as well as the surrounding residential areas of Reading. The site also benefits from direct access to Reading's designated cycle network and a Park and Ride facility 0.8m away.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This modest proposal will deliver a modern, fit for purpose new Police Base in Reading. The change of use will not have any material impact on the site and surrounding area in terms of its Design and Access.

The proposals are considered entirely appropriate on their planning merits. The scheme will not give rise to any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbours nor will it appear out of keeping in the context of the character of the area.