



Telephone: 01628 773095
Fax: 01628 773096
Email: dw@rkdc.com

Redlands Wing, Maidenhead Court Park, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 8HN

25th June 2018

Alison Amoah
Planning Applications Team
Reading Borough Council

By email to Application Case Officer alison.amoah@reading.gov.uk

Dear Alison

180698 - Change of Use of 448a Basingstoke Road

I have been considering the recent response from the HSE, and I understand you have sought clarification on several points. I have been undertaking my own investigation in parallel and ask that you take the points below into account.

Firstly, it appears that the LPG storage tank considerably post dates the lawful construction of the building on my clients' land, which took place during the 1980s.

From your planning records it appears to have been installed at the time of a deemed application in 2009 (Ref 096708), when I assume that as the HSE had granted a licence, proximity to existing buildings and their use and occupancy was considered acceptable.

More recently, my clients' neighbours at Procter and Gamble (Gillette) submitted an application for redevelopment and the provision of extensive new B2/B8 buildings on their own site, with the new buildings as close to the tank as is 448a Basingstoke Road. The HSE was consulted on that scheme and raised no objection to this similar relationship. I see that you were also the case officer on that application, so no doubt you are familiar with the detail (Ref 162108).

The current owner and former occupier for more than 20 years (Ultima – another large Reading employer) tells me:

- No notification has been given to Ultima at any time by any organisation that the storage tank presented any danger to 448a, or any limitations to on site activities, or any suggestion to review risk factors for their long established workforce. This would seem to reflect the HSE lack of objection to placing the tank where it now is.
- Prior to deciding to rebuild on their own site, Gillettes carried out extensive negotiations with Ultima with a view to acquiring 448a Basingstoke Road for additional staff of their own, without any reference to concerns about proximity (the potential

purchasers will have been aware from several site tours that in fact the Ultima outdoor smoking area for staff was immediately next to the shared boundary).

- The owner also draws my attention to the fact that Ultima has never objected to any application submitted by Procter and Gamble for development on the Gillette site, confident that all relevant issues of safety and neighbourliness were fully considered by the relevant parties.

The current HSE objection seems to suggest that it was acceptable for around 170 people (staff numbers rechecked with Ultima) who worked on the Ultima site until relocation to co-exist with the storage tank without risk, whereas the new proposed use, with much lower daily use but occasional higher numbers on site will not. This seems entirely absurd to both the site owner and potential new occupier.

I am sure that this inconsistent response from the HSE is an error – otherwise the decision they made in granting the licence has rendered the neighbouring site unusable or at best restricted – a matter which appropriate legal experts will be investigating further.

I have already confirmed that the site will remain as a single planning unit, with a centralised single site management, able to ensure that no fireworks, barbeques or bonfires will be permitted on the site. Hopefully you can address this issue via a sensible discussion with the HSE. I will endeavour to do the same.

Many regards

Deirdre Wells Dip TP MRTPI

Red Kite Development Consultancy