

Proposed Drive-Thru Coffee Shop at Reading Link Retail Park, Rose Kiln Lane, Reading

Design, Access and Planning Statement

October 2018

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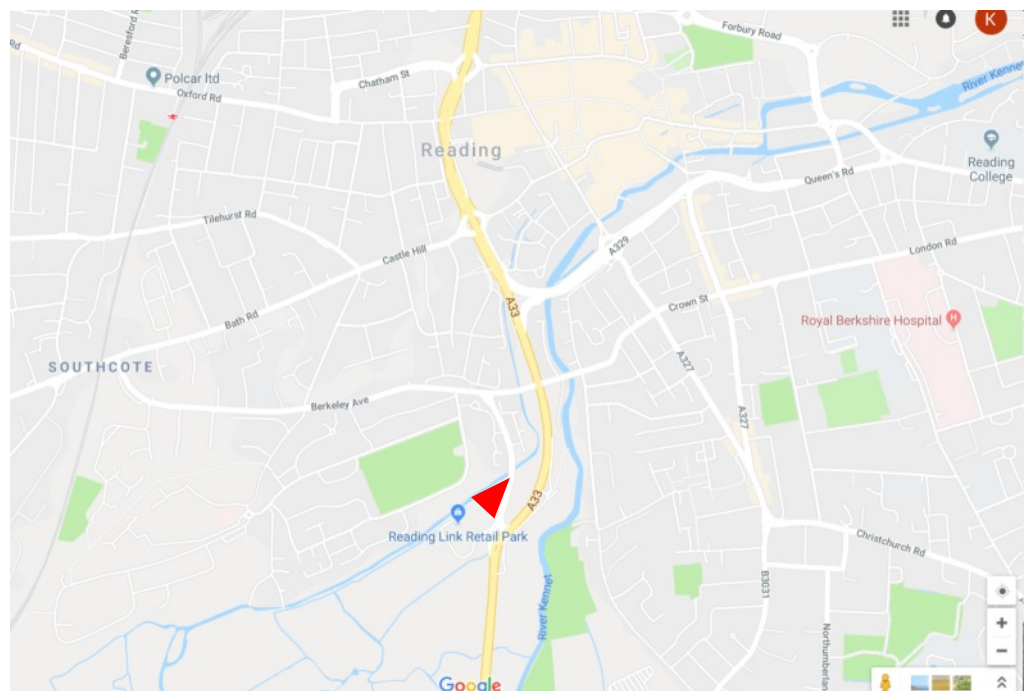
1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design, Access and Planning Statement accompanies an application for planning permission for:

Outline permission for a drive-thru coffee shop of 189sqm and a new access at Reading Link Retail Park, Rose Kiln Lane

- 1.2 This application follows a previously withdrawn application on the site. The current submission addresses issues relating to trees, retail sequential test and highways that were considered deficient in the previous application.
- 1.3 The proposed coffee shop and revised access arrangements utilise a current area of car parking at the Reading Link Retail Park and will offer a type of retail unit not currently seen at this site or in the surrounding area.
- 1.4 This Statement is structured in accordance with the advice in National Planning Practice Guidance. It also takes account of the local requirements of the Council as well as setting out the appropriate planning background to the proposals.
- 1.5 Details of the application site are set out in Section 2 while details of the proposals and an analysis of the planning case for the proposals are in section 3.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



2 The Site and Surroundings

2. 1 The site is located just off of the A33 on Rose Kiln Lane, which leads into Reading town centre when travelling north from the M4. There are a number of other business, retail and industrial parks on the A33, as well as new developments that are providing hotels, residential and retail/employment opportunities along the A33 corridor.
2. 2 Adjacent, to the west, is an area of open space, to which there are two gates on the boundary between the retail park and the field.
2. 3 To the north is a residential development. A footbridge provides access from the retail park, over the river, into the residential estate.
2. 4 The eastern boundary abuts the Rose Kiln Lane section of the A33, whilst the southern boundary is the access road from the A33 into the retail park, with a shared access for the petrol station.
2. 5 The retail park has a large area of parking to the front of the buildings together with an 'overflow' car park in the north eastern corner of the site and a small area behind the end unit. There is some planting within the car park areas.
2. 6 An access road for delivery vehicles runs in front of the site and along the western boundary to a delivery area to the rear of the units.
2. 7 The retail park is made up of one continuous building with the eastern half set slightly further back into the plot than the western half. There are five retailers at the retail park; Matalan (3 units), Home Bargains, Iceland, Magnet and Benson for Beds. Only Benson for Beds has a mezzanine floor, whilst Matalan has a 'vaulted' roof. There is one vacant unit that was previously Pound World.

3 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 This section considers the relevant planning policy context for the site as well as any relevant planning history for the site and its surrounding area.

National Planning Policy

- 3.2 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 which established a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- 3.3 In making decisions, Local Planning Authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way and should look for solutions rather than problems. They should, at every level, seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 3.4 The NPPF sets out the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for the planning system and it encompasses three distinct areas; economic, social and environmental.
- 3.5 The NPPF sets out that the development plan should be the starting point for decision making, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.6 The focus of the NPPF's policies relating to retail focus on the protection and enhancement of retail facilities in town centre while recognising that local planning authorities should take a pro-active approach to development and growth.
- 3.7 The PPG advises that the sequential test should be 'proportionate and appropriate' for the given proposal. It goes on to outline a checklist which sets out the considerations that should be taken into account in determining whether a proposal complies with the sequential test.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.8 The Council's current planning policy context of relevance to this site is contained within the Core Strategy (January 2008, altered January 2015) and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document October 2012, altered January 2015). Policies that are relevant to these proposals include:
- Policy CS4: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
 - Policy CS5: Inclusive Access
 - Policy CS7: Design and the Public Realm
 - Policy CS9: Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities

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- Policy CS25: Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development
 - Policy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
 - Policy CS34: Pollution and Water Resources
 - Policy CS35: Flooding
 - Policy SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - Policy DM1: Adaptation to Climate Change
 - Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity
 - Policy DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway - Related Matters
 - Policy SA3: Retail, Leisure and Culture Uses in South Reading
3. 9 Other relevant documents to these proposals include:
- Revised Parking Standards and Design (October 2011)
3. 10 In addition to these planning policies, it is noted that the Council has published a Pre-Submission Local Plan which was consulted on from November 2017 to January 2018.
3. 11 The site lies within Flood Zone 2.

Planning History

3. 12 Planning consent was granted in 1988 by the Secretary of State for the Retail Park. This consent granted 6500sqm of retail floorspace and c. 300 parking spaces. Overtime, additional retail floorspace has been added to the site through the addition of mezzanine floor levels and the retail units themselves have been sub-divided or amalgamated to meet the changing needs of retailers.
3. 13 Pursuant to a planning consent 01/00873/FUL, the total retail floorspace permitted at the site is 9,230sqm. Car parking provision at the site has not been amended at the site since the original grant of consent and provides c. 300 spaces.
3. 14 A number of consents have also been granted in recent years to extend the range of goods that can sold from the site within the existing retail units.
3. 15 As noted in the introduction a recent planning application for a drive-thru coffee shop was submitted in July 2018 but subsequently withdrawn. This resubmitted application addresses the issue that were raised during consideration of the previous application and this is the focus of the subsequent chapters of this Statement.

4 Proposals

4.1 The proposals seek consent for:

Outline permission for a drive-thru coffee shop of 189sqm and a new access at Reading Link Retail Park, Rose Kiln Lane

- 4.2 At this time only access and siting are sought for approval, all other matters are reserved. The indicative layout of the proposals is shown in Figure 2.
- 4.3 The proposals consist of a 189sqm drive-thru coffee shop with a new access from Rose Kiln Lane to serve the site. Drive thru access is provided surrounding the building while a seating area is provided, both inside and outside, as well as associated facilities for cycle parking.
- 4.4 The proposals will also include provision of a further 2 disabled parking spaces for customer use. Electric car charging points (outside of the red line of this application) are to be installed at Reading Link Retail Park as part of the wider upgrading of facilities at the site.

Figure 2: Annotated Site Layout Plan identifying revisions from previous application



- 4.5 The new access into the site will be directly from Rose Kiln Lane providing a left and right turn into the site. The accompanying Transport Statement demonstrates that the access will meet all necessary highways standards in this respect.

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4. 6 The proposals will provide for significant improvements to the public realm in this location with improved pedestrian access into and across the site to reach the residential properties to the north. In addition, further tree planting and landscaping is proposed to significantly improve the quality of the environment. Part of this overall improvement will provide a pedestrian link through to site to provide access along the length of Holy Brook to link with a Public Right of Way to the south west of the site along this watercourse.

5 Planning Considerations

5.1 This section assesses the planning considerations for the redevelopment of this site under the following headings:

- Principle of Development and Retail Provision
- Layout of the Site
- Parking, Access and Highways Impact
- Flooding and Drainage
- Other

Principle of Development

5.2 Policy CS25 of the adopted Core Strategy (2008) states that:

Major retail and main town centre leisure and culture development will take place in, or as an extension to, the centre of Reading. Where a need for additional development has been identified, and no sites are available in or adjoining the centre of Reading, a sequential approach should be adopted to identifying alternative sites.

All development will comply with the relevant tests for retail, leisure and culture development set out in government guidance.

5.3 Policy SA3 of the Sites and Detailed Policies DPD (2012) specifically refers to retail, leisure and culture uses in the South Reading area and seeks to ensure that proposals maintain and enhance the network of centre and do not detract from the vitality and viability of these.

5.4 The proposed use for a drive-thru coffee shop has a set of distinct characteristics that means it is different to a standard model of coffee shop. As set out in the accompanying Retail Sequential Test document:

It must be recognised that the operational, and hence locational, requirements of a Drive-thru Coffee Shop, are notably different to that of a standard Coffee Shop. A Drive-thru will not represent a destination in itself, but will be located where it can benefit from those who are already visiting and travelling in the area, and will simply 'call-by' at a Drive-thru. It is not appropriate to introduce such provision at a town centre, where customers are typically away from their car, and hence would have no need for a drive-thru facility.

5.5 Considering these special characteristics the location of a drive-thru coffee shop in this location is entirely appropriate making good use of an existing retail site with good access to the local highway network. For the reasons set out in the letter relating to the Sequential Test that has been submitted with this application, the site will not compete with more traditional town centre

coffee shops and will have added benefits for this long standing out-of-town retail park.

- 5. 6 As a result of this application, significant improvements will be made to the environment alongside Holy Brook as well as pedestrian access into the site to provide better access to the residential development to the north.
- 5. 7 For these reasons the proposals are considered to meet the requirements of the NPPF as well as Policy CS25.
- 5. 8 Reading Link Retail Park lies in a part of the identified South Reading area that is undergoing significant change. The addition of a drive-thru coffee shop will not negatively impact on local district centres in this areas but will instead complement the retail offer within the South Reading area. For this reason the proposals are in accordance with the objectives and principles of Policy SA3.

Layout of the Site

- 5. 9 This application is submitted in outline with approval for access and siting only being sought. The siting of the proposed coffee shop has been considered in the context of the operation of the existing retail units and surrounding car parking as well as the proposed new access road into the site.
- 5. 10 The proposals do not extend any further north than the existing area of hardstanding currently in use as car parking. This is to ensure that no impact is placed on the vegetation in this area and maintains the existing buffer zone to Holy Brook. No built form is proposed within 10m of the brook.
- 5. 11 Additional planting is proposed along the Rose Kiln Lane frontage of the site within the existing landscaped areas. This will improve these areas significantly and provide screening along this main access road. Further planting is proposed along Holy Brook to supplement dead or dying trees that are to be removed as part of this application. Further details of this tree planting is included in the Arboricultural Report.
- 5. 12 The site sits in Flood Zone 2 which is confirmed in the supporting Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test documents. The proposals will provide a new access road from Rose Kiln Lane as well as improvements to pedestrian access through the site.
- 5. 13 The layout of the site is largely driven by commercial factors to ensure safe operation of the coffee shop. Provision is made for the drive-thru access, a sitting out area, car parking, cycle parking. As part of the wider improvements to the retail park additional electric car charging points will be provided on the site.
- 5. 14 The suitability of the access road is considered in more detail in the next section as is the provision of car parking.

5. 15 This section considers the highway merits of the proposals.

Parking

5. 16 Policy CS24 sets out the car parking standards for developments in the Borough. The requirement for retail uses is 1 space per 40sqm. This equates to a requirement across the site for 168.5 spaces. With 308 spaces on the site there is sufficient surplus for spaces to accommodate the new coffee shop while maintaining sufficient car parking in accordance with Policy CS24.

New Access and Highways Impact

5. 17 Policy DM12 requires that proposals for new accesses onto the transport network comply with highways standards, does not have a material detrimental impact on the highways network and should provide suitable servicing requirements. The proposals should not impact on highway safety or result in inappropriate HGV movements.
5. 18 In response to the comments received to the previous application additional survey work and assessment has been undertaken to provide a robust assessment of the proposals. The updated Transport Statement is submitted with this planning application.
5. 19 The key findings of the Transport Statement are:
- The proposal accords with national and local policies relevant to transport;
 - There are no significant safety problems within the surrounding area that are caused by the design of the local highway network.
 - The proposal benefits from good pedestrian and cycle connections to local public transport services, and the town centre.
 - The development proposals retain the existing level of car parking at the retail park, whilst also providing additional cycle parking facilities at the Drive-Thru.
 - The proposed development will result in an increase of 5 and 7 two-way vehicle movements in the weekday AM and PM peak hours, and an additional 12 movements within the Saturday afternoon peak.
 - The proposed junction will be within capacity and will not result in a severe impact on the highway occurring
5. 20 In light of the conclusions from the Transport Statement and in accordance with Policy DM12 , it is considered that the proposals can be accommodated without detriment to the operation of the local highway network. As such, it is considered that there is no reason why the proposals should be resisted on traffic or transportation grounds.

Trees

- 5. 21 Four individual trees and part of a group of trees are proposed to be removed to enable the proposals. These are: Lime (no. 1 on the tree schedule), Cherry (no. 3), Ash (no. 4), Sycamore (no. 18) and a mixed species group (G2). Of these, all are between 5m-11m in height and are of low quality. Four are categorised as 'C' and the Cherry is categorised as 'U'.
- 5. 22 The proposals include an area for landscaping between the drive-thru access and Rose Kiln Lane. It is proposed that four extra heavy standards (16-18cm) fastigate Hornbeam are to be planted to mitigate for the tree removals and to provide an attractive landscaped setting for the drive-thru. The details of a full high-quality landscape scheme could readily be secured by an appropriate planning condition.
- 5. 23 The TPO White Willow trees nos. 6-9 are proposed to be removed because they are dead and although removal and replacement of these are not directly required for the proposals, it is proposed to replace these with the same species to provide a continuation of the landscaped corridor adjacent to the brook.
- 5. 24 There are no impacts on the key arboricultural features of the site the Weeping Willow trees (nos.13-17).

Landscaping

- 5. 25 The proposals will provide for additional tree planting and landscaping along the north east boundary of the site with Rose Kiln Lane to provide a better environment in this location.
- 5. 26 The area of land where the environmental improvements are proposed is currently blighted by being isolated from public access and has become a location for anti-social and illegal behaviour and dumping of drug-related items. This area regularly needs cleaning up and provides and has a negative impact on the amenity for passers-by.
- 5. 27 The proposals will provide for significant improvements to the public realm with improved pedestrian access into and across the site to reach the residential properties to the north. In addition, further tree planting and landscaping is proposed to significantly improve the quality of the environment. Part of this overall improvement will provide a pedestrian link through to site to provide access along the length of Holy Brook to link with a Public Right of Way to the south west of the site along this watercourse.
- 5. 28 The proposals will, generally, significantly improve the quality of landscaping and tree cover on this site. Tree planting is proposed to replace dead or dying trees along Holy Brook to improve the environment here and to contribute to biodiversity improvements. Further tree planting is proposed along the Rose Kiln Lane frontage to improve screening effects and visual amenity along this frontage.

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5. 29 Overall the proposals represent a significant environmental improvement over the existing situation and are a major benefit of the current proposals.

Flooding and Drainage

5. 30 Policy CS35 states that planning permission will not be granted for developments which impact on the flood risk of the site and surrounding area.
5. 31 The site lies in Flood Zone 2. According to the flood risk and flood vulnerability tables set out in Planning Policy Guidance retail facilities are appropriate in this area of flood risk. In accordance with the NPPF, a Sequential Assessment accompanies this application which identifies no alternative sites are available.
5. 32 The proposed development is classified as Less Vulnerable under the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) "Flood Risk & Coastal Change". Therefore, the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) can be undertaken in accordance with the Environment Agency's (EA) Standing Advice.
5. 33 The EA's Standing Advice states that Less Vulnerable developments in Flood Zone 2 should address the following:
- Surface Water Management
 - Access and Evacuation
 - Floor Levels
5. 34 The British Geological Survey Map shows that superficial deposits will most likely provide opportunities for infiltration techniques. Therefore, permeable pavement systems and soakaways should be considered for surface water drainage.
5. 35 The EA provided flood levels for this location for storm events with a return period of 1 in 100 year and 1 in 100 year plus 20% which is appropriate for this location as set out in the accompanying Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment.
5. 36 The worst-case scenario for the 1 in 100 year plus 20% storm event shows that the flood level will be 39.12m AOD. The topographical survey drawing shows that most of the site will not flood in this storm event and direct access from the development to Rose Kiln Lane, where the ground levels are well above the flood level, is available. Rose Kiln Lane leads to Berkeley Avenue which provides access to Flood Zone 1. Therefore, safe access is available at all times.
5. 37 The EA's standing advice states that the building's ground floor levels should be a minimum of either 300mm above the general ground level or 600mm above the estimated river or sea flood level whichever is higher.
5. 38 The EA's standing advice also clarifies that the 1 in 100 year flood level should be used for areas at risk of fluvial flooding. The topographical survey drawing shows that the average ground level is 39.2m AOD. Therefore, the building's ground floor level should be the higher of 39.2m plus 0.3m or 39.01m (1 in 100

year flood level) plus 600mm. Therefore, the building's ground floor level will be set at 39.61m AOD to comply with the EA's standing advice.

Ecological Buffer Zone

5. 39 In advice received to the previous application the EA raised the issue of an ecological buffer zone to Holy Brook. The current proposals maintain the current position in terms of the proximity of hardstanding to Holy Brook and any built form is in excess of 10 metres from the banks of the river. In addition, proposed new planting and landscape and ecological improvement works are proposed along the bank of the river to improve the current position.
5. 40 Therefore, these revised proposals have considered the issue of the buffer zone and have ensured that the status quo is maintained with respect to hardstanding and that no additional buildings are located within 10m with the relocation of the bin store.

Archaeology

5. 41 The site lies in an Area of Archaeological Potential. An desk-based assessment has been carried in support of the application which concludes:

"While the proposed development has the potential for a negative impact on the archaeological remains, if present, an archaeological evaluation undertaken along the northern boundary of the site targeted both sides of the Holy Brook in 1988 and revealed no archaeological deposits (HER ERD53). The site has also undergone some significant previous ground disturbance."

6 Conclusions

6. 1 This Design, Access and Planning Statement accompanies an application for planning permission for:

Outline application for a drive-thru coffee shop of 189sqm and a new access at Reading Link Retail Park, Rose Kiln Lane

6. 2 This application follows on from a previous application that was withdrawn following comments from a number of statutory consultees. For the purposes of this application the following revisions have been made:

- The location of the drive-thru has been moved away from Holy Brook to maintain an appropriate buffer zone with no built form. All development is now contained within what is the existing hardstanding car park area.
- Tree surveys have been undertaken and the proposals include significant tree planting to mitigate loss of vegetation in this location as well as to rejuvenate the area alongside Holy Brook.
- Landscape improvements to the north east of the site to improve amenity for users and passersby and to complement the site and surroundings.
- Additional highways surveys and assessment have been undertaken to respond to the highways comments raised and to address them.
- Additional information on the retail sequential test has been submitted with this application.

6. 3 The proposed coffee shop and revised access arrangements utilise a currently under used area of car parking at the Reading Link Retail Park and will offer a type of retail unit not currently seen at this site or in the surrounding area.

6. 4 The location of a drive-thru coffee shop at Reading Link Retail Park is entirely appropriate, making good use of an existing retail site with good access to the local highway network. It will not compete with more traditional town centre coffee shops and will have added benefits for this long standing out-of-town retail park. For these reasons the proposals are considered to meet the requirements of the NPPF as well as Policy CS25.

6. 5 Reading Link Retail Park lies in a part of the identified South Reading area that is undergoing significant change. The addition of a drive-thru coffee shop will not negatively impact on local district centres in this areas but will instead complement the retail offer within the South Reading area in accordance with Policy SA3.

6. 6 The siting of the proposed coffee shop has been considered in context of the operation of the existing retail units and surrounding car parking as well as the proposed new access road into the site.

6. 7 Overall the proposals represent a significant environmental improvement over the existing situation and are a major benefit of the current proposals providing for significant improvements to the public realm with improved pedestrian access. In addition, further tree planting and landscaping is proposed to significantly improve the quality of the environment.

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- 6. 8 The proposals provide for sufficient car parking in accordance with parking standards in Policy CS24 and ensure sufficient car parking with remain within the retail park. The proposed new access into the site will be constructed to meet all relevant highway standards.
 - 6. 9 The proposals lie within Flood Zone 2 but pass the sequential test and will not worsen the flood risk in the vicinity of the site. An ecological buffer zone to Holy Brook is maintained and improved over the existing situation.

	Initials	Date
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