
Former Peugeot, 160 Basingstoke Road Reading RG2 0HJ

TITLE:
Planning Statement

DATE:
26.01.2018

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1.0

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement is prepared in support of a full planning application for the use of part of the site as a Car Hire Centre for Enterprise Rent – A – Car and the installation of a car wash bay area with canopy over at land known as the former Peugeot site, 160 Basingstoke Road, Reading, RG2 0HJ
- 1.2 Advertisement consent is also sought for five fascia signs attached to the existing building on the land and a free standing pole sign.
- 1.3 The Statement sets out details of the site, planning policy and planning issues including the principle of development, the impact on the character of the area, amenities and parking/highway issues

2.0

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1

The subject site, 160 Basingstoke Road extends to 1250sqm and was previously occupied by Peugeot. It forms part of a wider site (totalling of 11,400sqm) which was previously occupied by Ford. The overall site is located within the Core Employment area, designated as SA12e North of Basingstoke Road on the adopted Proposals Map. The site is located on the western side of Basingstoke Road, on the southwest corner of Elgar Road South and Basingstoke Road. It is currently vacant but it is understood that the wider site has recently opened as a car supermarket for the sale of used cars.

2.2

This stretch of Basingstoke Road is in various commercial and retail uses with some residential units. To the north of the site is predominately residential.

2.3

The application site currently consists of a car showroom building and associated parking for approximately 40 vehicles. The site is served by an existing vehicle access on to Elgar Road South.

3.0

PLANNING HISTORY

3.1

The most recent planning history relates to applications for advertisements in 2014 and 2015. Prior to this the planning history can be summarised as follows:

- Proposed refurbishment of showroom approved in February 1990, under reference 900543
- External cladding to existing car showroom and workshop approved in September 1990

4.0

PROPOSAL

4.1

Planning permission is sought for the use of part of the site as a car hire centre (sui generis) by Enterprise Rent-A – Car. The subject site is 1250sqm and was formerly occupied by Peugeot for car sales (also sui generis use). The existing car showroom building on the land will be used as an office and no other buildings are proposed. A car wash bay with canopy is proposed that would have a maximum height of 4.63m.



Source googlemaps



Source googlemaps

4.2

The site will be laid out to provide 26 parking spaces as shown on the proposed site plan. The parking spaces will be separated as follows: 10 rental return spaces, 9 ready to rent spaces, 1 disabled bay, 4 van bays, 2 staff bays A valeting bay is also proposed. The site will remain enclosed with fencing and hoops. Drainage is to be as existing.

4.3

The business will be open between the hours of 0700 and 1900 hours seven days a week including bank holidays. Five full time staff will be employed and two full time valeters.

4.0

PROPOSAL

4.4

The proposal facilitates the relocation of an existing Enterprise Rent – A –Car facility in Boulton Road, approximately 600 metres to the southwest of the subject site.

4.5

Advertisement consent is also required for five fascia signs located on the office building and one free standing pole sign as outlined below:

Sign 1 (South) This sign will be located on the south facing elevation of the building and will be 13.9m in length, 1.52m in height and 0.25m in depth. It will be 3.91m from ground level and project 0.1m from the wall. It will be internally illuminated to 685.00 cd/m²

Sign 2 (East). This sign will be located on the east facing elevation of the building and will be 13.92m in length, 1.52m in height, 0.25m in depth. It will be 4.07m above ground level and project 0.1m from the wall. It will be internally illuminated to 685.00cd/m²

Sign 3 (North east) This sign will be on the north east facing elevation of the building and will be 13.79m in length, 1.52m in height and 0.25m in depth. It will 3.99m above ground level and project 0.1m from the wall. It will be internally illuminated to 685.00cd/m².

Sign 4 (North west) This sign will be on the north west facing elevation of the building and will be 10.843m in length, 1.52m in height and 0.25m in depth. It will 3.99m above ground level and project 0.1m from the wall. It will be internally illuminated to 685.00cd/m².

Sign 5 (west) This sign will be on the west facing elevation of the building and will be 9.29m in length, 1.52m in height and 0.25m in depth. It will 4.08m above ground level and project 0.1m from the wall. It will be internally illuminated to 685.00cd/m².

Freestanding sign . This sign will be located in the south east of corner of the site. The sign will be 6.420m above ground level and measure 6.2m in length, 1.2m in height and 0.44m in depth. It will be internally illuminated to 685.00cd/m²

5.0

PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

5.1

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF confirms the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity. It places emphasis on a plan-led planning system and the promotion of sustainable economic growth is an important consideration. However, paragraph 22 notes:

Planning policies should avoid the long terms protection of site allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses if land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.

5.2

Local Planning Policy

The most relevant policies within the Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008) are Policy CS7: Design and the Public realm, Policy CS10 Location of Employment Development, Policy CS11 use of Employment Land for Alternative uses and Policy CS12 Maintaining a Variety of Premises.

5.3

Other relevant policies which are contained in the Sites and detailed Policies Document (2012) are Policy DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters, Policy DM22: Advertisements and Site Specific Policy SA 12e Core Employment Area North of Basingstoke Road.

6.0

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1

The main issues to consider relate to the principle of development, its impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, amenity, parking and highway issues.

6.2

Principle of development

The site falls within a designated core employment area under Policy SA12e North Basingstoke Road. The relevant employment policies in the Core Strategy seek to ensure that Reading has a flexible and reasonable supply of employment land. Further, Policies CS 10 and CS11 of the adopted local plan seek to resist the loss of employment uses from core employment areas.

6.3

Policy CS12 recognises that a range of types and sizes of units should be present in the Borough. In order to create a healthy and balanced local economy, there is a need to make sure that a variety of size and types of employment premises are available which may include those uses outside the B1 – B8 use classes or which employment areas are the only possible location.

6.0

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 6.4 The Draft Policies reflect the same principles. Draft Policy EM3: 'Loss of employment land' states that the overall level of employment land should be maintained. It goes on to say that there is a need for a certain degree of flexibility with existing employment land to allow an appropriate balance of uses to develop in the right locations. For this reason, it is not appropriate to simply add a blanket protection to all existing employment areas. Further, the NPPF is clear that local plans have to be up to date and should not include restrictive policies. It also promotes sustainable economic development and takes a broader approach into employment generating uses. In this regard, the proposed car hire use clearly represents economic development.
- 6.5 Whilst it is recognised that the use of the land as car hire would be classified as a sui generis use and would therefore not be a 'B Class' employment use, the site as a whole has historically been used as a car showroom/car sales (sui generis) and therefore the proposal would not result in the loss of an existing employment use. The whole site has been vacant for over a year and the wider part of the site has recently opened as a car supermarket for the sale of second hand vehicles.
- 6.6 The proposal involves the relocation of the existing Enterprise Rent –A- Car business which currently operates at 19 Boulton Road, RG2 0NH, approximately 600 m to the southwest of the site and located in the same core employment area. The proposed site is much more visible and has open parking all on one level, in addition to a better laid out building. The existing premises is located within an industrial estate which is more akin to typical warehouse, storages uses that would fall within the B use class and the proposed relocation would 'free up' an employment site in a more appropriate location within an industrial estate location, complying with the relevant employment policies.
- 6.7 Overall it is not considered that the use of a car hire would reduce the range of sites and space for employment use given its historic use and would in fact increase the opportunity for an employment site. The principle of a car hire use is therefore considered to be acceptable.

6.0

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.8

Similar uses

The existing business would be relocated from within the same designated employment area, which would release land for employment use. There are no similar uses in close proximity of the application site. As such, there will be little if any cumulative impact arising from this proposal.

6.9

Character of the area

The site has been in used as car showroom for a number of years with parked cars on the forecourt. The wider site has recently reopened as a car supermarket and therefore the proposed use of a portion of the overall site as a car hire would not detract from the quality of the surrounding environment. No building works are proposed and the car wash bay will be small in nature, at a maximum height of 4.63m, having no detrimental impact upon visual amenity.

The proposal has been designed with regard to the context of the site and the wider area and this will ensure the development respects and relates to the character of the area.

6.10

Highway impact and servicing

The application is supported by a transport statement by ttp consulting. The site will be laid out for up to 26 vehicles (9 ready to rent spaces, 10 rental return spaces , 1 disabled bay, 2 staff bays and 4 van bays) and a valeting bay. There are no specific adopted parking standards for car hire businesses, and therefore this number has been arrived at through the knowledge of the applicant and awareness of the business. Enterprise Rent-A-Car will operate a fleet of approximately 100 vehicles from the site, however typically 90% of this fleet will be utilised and out for rental purposes. Swept path analysis of all spaces have been provided to demonstrate that access to each space is achievable (Appendix E of the transport statement)

4 Cycle spaces will also be provided within a covered shelter as shown in the photograph below.

6.0

PLANNING ASSESSMENT



Figure 1: Proposed cycle shelter

Advertisements

- 6.11 This application propose five internally illuminated fascia signs to the office and one internally illuminated freestanding sign.
- 6.12 The signage is designed to respect the appearance of the building. Further the fascia signage is located on an existing building where signage was previously located.
- 6.13 The signage would not appear prominent, visually intrusive or out of keeping with the area, given the previous use. The NPPG considers that signage such as this, located in a commercial area, will have a limited impact on public safety. The signage is of a scale and design that will appear functional in serving to identify the location of the site and business. It will therefore not detract from pedestrian, vehicular or other safety.
- 6.14 The signs will be internally illuminated to 685.00cd/m. The purpose of the illumination is to help identify and locate the business. The planning application sets out the opening hours for the business being 7am until 7pm. It is not considered the level of illumination will result in the signage either being an amenity issue or a public safety issue.

7.0

CONCLUSION

7.1

The application site lies within a designated employment area where the current adopted policies resist non B Class uses unless the land is no longer required for such purposes. However the whole site has historically been used for car sales (sui generis) and therefore the use of part of the land for a car hire facility (also sui generis) would not result in the loss of an employment site. Further the relocation of the existing business, located within an industrial estate within the same Core employment area would release land suitable for employment B use class.

The proposed use is not considered to be detrimental to the existing road network, the character and appearance of the local area or neighbouring amenity.

Thank you for viewing our Planning Statement.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss anything further with us please don't hesitate to get in contact. Our details can be found below.