

Document

**Planning Supporting
Statement**

Project

**Mercedes-Benz,
Reading**

Building/Asset/Site

**Richfield Avenue,
Reading RG1 8EQ**

Client

Vertu Motors

Date

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DISTRIBUTION

This document has been distributed to:

Name	Company
Andy Johnson	Vertu Motors
	Reading Borough Council

APPROVALS

This document requires the following approvals.

Name	Title
Mark Baseby	McBains

Signed..... dated.....

For and on behalf of McBains Limited

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The enclosed planning application for Vertu Motors PLC is for the minor extension and rebranding works to the existing Mercedes-Benz dealership at Richfield Avenue, Reading.

The application comprises of drawings, design and access statement, flood risk assessment and drainage strategy.

2.0 EMPLOYMENT

The Mercedes-Benz brand and Vertu Motors PLC are experiencing significant growth, the proposed development will ensure the future viability of the brand on the site in a dealership that has been designed for projected growth. It will provide an exceptional workplace generating new employment and training opportunities with both the construction and the operation of this Mercedes-Benz re-development.

The current dealership directly employs 63 staff of which 11 are part-time positions. The existing parts department will be moved off site into a dedicated facility and will continue to operate with the existing staff, it is expected that due to the move this team will grow from 14 to 20 employees.

At the main dealership the development will allow Vertu to grow over the next 3-5 years to a total of 87 employees. 68 full time and 19 part time employees. Vertu Motors PLC provide apprenticeships and graduate schemes as well as extensive role specific training and career development programmes.

Graduates join the organisation specialising in a number of different functions (e.g. Finance, Aftersales, Operations, HR) and progress through a bespoke development programme that provides exposure to the business as a whole through a number of work based placements, training and further qualifications.

Apprentices are actively recruited right across the business and positions include Technicians, Service Advisors, Parts, Bodyshop and Accounts apprenticeships. Working and learning alongside a team of experienced “Colleagues”, Vertu’s apprentices receive ongoing training from their “Active Training Team”, manufacturers and their local college or local learning provider. These apprenticeships and graduate schemes

will not only provide employment for local young people but also allow Vertu to build relationships with the local community.

As a workplace the development will be outstanding. For example, the workshop will incorporate all the latest equipment for this premium brand, giving apprentices the earliest opportunity to learn and work with the latest vehicle technologies.

The benefits of working with a premium brand mean that the apprentices will get direct experience of the most advanced technologies; and also contribute to their development. Energy efficient electric vehicles are new to Mercedes-Benz and their maintenance will also feature heavily at this dealership. Mercedes-Benz, Reading will be designed to ensure it can meet future changes as new efficient vehicles still in development today are introduced to the market.

3.0 PARKING PROVISION

Overall the site will provide an additional 106 car parking spaces to enable the growth of the brand and ensure that the site can comfortably accommodate the increase in sales and service customers.

Figure 4.2 of the design and access statement highlights how the new proposal not only improves upon the existing parking provisions but brings the site in line with the standards set out in '*Revised Parking Standards and Design*' - Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted 31st October 2011_

Alongside the increase in parking provisions the development will allow the site to be managed far more effectively than in its current configuration. Key to this management is the clear separation and demarcation of different use bays.

Further management measures are introduced through the service drop off zone, this is where all service customers will be greeted on site by a service host who will then either take the car directly to the workshop or to a back of house holding area. This allows all front of house customer parking to be designated to Mercedes-Benz sales customers.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Increase in employment and training opportunities in the borough of Reading.
- 4.2 It will provide an exceptional workplace exposing employees to the latest technologies in the automotive industry. In addition the use of these technologies on site will enhance the customer experience and services Mercedes-Benz and Vertu can provide to the local community.
- 4.3 The development will secure the long term sustainability of the site and be designed to cater for future predicted growth of the market in the Reading area.
- 4.4 Overall the development improves the current site and its operations in terms of aesthetics, services provided, customer experience, parking provisions, employment and training opportunities.

In summary, the implementation of this proposal will benefit local residents, customers and local motorists, as well as securing the long term viability of the site, allowing Vertu Motors to operate in a more efficient manner than is currently possible.