

27th January 2025

<By Electronic Submission>

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Department
Reading Borough Council
First Floor North Rear
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

Dear Jonathan,

RETROSPECTIVE CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING CAR PARK ASSOCIATED WITH FORMER OFFICE USE TO PUBLIC CAR PARK, 2 NORMAN PLACE, READING, RG1 8DA.

Further to your recent email of 7th January 2025, please find additional detail enclosed herewith to respond to information requested.

I would note that the nature of the application is to provide a temporary use for the site whilst plans for wholesale redevelopment as submitted to the Council for consideration, ref: PL.24/0958, are determined.

The temporary nature of the proposals means that there are no physical changes to the site in terms of new barrier structures, relining of car parking spaces, changes to access/egress, removal or addition of landscaping or formalising of the site through permanent signage.

To respond to matters raised by the Council, the following detail is pertinent:

RBC query - Description of development and Nature of Use. The Council considers that the description of development should specify the retrospective nature of the application, the use class and the temporary period for which the car park use is sought.

Applicant response - As noted above, the application is to allow for re-use of the car park area for public parking which the planning application for the redevelopment proposals is determined and pre-construction matters are resolved post-determination. Accordingly, a temporary period of three years is sought to provide adequate cover for this process. Should the applicant be able to commence construction works in relation to the redevelopment proposals at an earlier stage, the car park use will be ceased at that point.

To reconcile the Council's query with the application being sought, it is proposed to revise the description of development to:

'Retrospective change of use of existing car park associated with the former office premises to public car park (Sui Generis) for a temporary period of three years'.

The planning application forms have been amended to reflect this change of detail and will be submitted direct to the Council via the planning portal.

In addition to the above detail, the Council has sought submission of a Flood Risk Assessment, as well as further information regarding on-site operations and management of these, as well as usage data. Our response to the requests made is set out below.

RBC query – A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required in support of the application.

Applicant response – To meet the Council's request, a bespoke FRA has been produced by Stantec, which is enclosed. This report has also been uploaded to the Planning Portal, as part of the updated submission.

RBC query - The nature of the spaces (e.g. are any accessible or parent/child car parking spaces included as part of the proposal) and whether any provision is made for cycles, motorbikes etc, or whether all spaces are solely for cars?

Applicant response - The site has 56 car parking spaces. These are all standard bays, as per existing. There are no marked accessible or parent/child car parking spaces. There is no provision made for cycles or motorbikes.

RBC Query - Whether any electric vehicle charging facilities are provided at the site?

Applicant response - There are no electric vehicle charging facilities to be provided, this relating to the temporary nature of the car parking to be provided on site

RBC Query - Details about the parking charges, minimum / maximum time periods of stays and method(s) of payment

Applicant response - Parking tariffs are: 1 hour - £1.00, 3 hours - £2.00, 6 hours - £4.50, 24 hours - £9.00. The minimum period of stay is 1 hour. The car park is accessible 24/7 with payment being made via online payment apps. The payment apps used on the site are RingGo, Paybyphone and ECParkbuddy.

RBC Query - Potential effects of additional traffic generation (does the proposal lead to additional traffic movements on the road network?) and consequent effects on road safety

Applicant response: Data for the last three months showing occupancy rates is enclosed. This has been broken down into daily and hourly bands and identifies busier periods between 7am and 4pm, Monday – Thursday, with late night, early morning, Fridays and weekends being significantly less busy.

Taking into consideration the existing trip rate detail submitted in relation to the redevelopment proposals, Table 7.1. of which is set out below, it is considered that the proposed car park operates in a similar manner.

Table 7.1: People Trip Rates and Generation for Existing Office Building

Time Period	Trip Rates			Person Trips (3,817sqm)		
	Arrive	Depart	Two-way	Arrive	Depart	Two-way
Weekday AM (08:00 – 09:00)	1.921	0.157	2.078	73	6	79
Weekday PM (17:00 – 18:00)	0.109	1.736	1.845	4	66	70
Weekday Daily (07:00 – 19:00)	8.695	8.606	17.301	333	321	660

The survey data shows peak usage per hour at 60 cars (Cell P5). As the car park will typically accommodate longer stay users given the location adjacent to the rail station, it is contended that there will be fewer additional users at peak periods; the car park will be largely full of day users. In this regard, it is considered that person trips will be similar to or most likely less than the weekend AM person trip rate of 73 cars identified in terms of that related to the previous office use.

Similarly, the weekday PM peak which is seen to be slightly earlier in the car park usage data (between 2pm and 4pm) identifies a maximum use of 50 spaces (Cell T4), meaning that in light of the longer term

users of the car park the trip rates are considered to be within the 66 person trips identified for the existing use in Table 7.1.

Whilst the 24/7 use of the car park will add some additional users outside office hours, the numbers identified are very low in comparison, typically in single figures, and will not add substantial traffic to the local highway network or contribute towards an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

RBC query - Details of security measures in place in relation to vehicles and access in and around the red line boundary.

Applicant response - The site has one vehicle entrance / exit and two pedestrian exits / entrance areas. The site is fitted with an ANPR system which picks up vehicle registrations as they enter and exit the car park. Euro Car Parks do not operate CCTV cameras.

We trust that the above information is sufficient to validate the application, but should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact Jonathan Walton at our Henley Office.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Walton

Planning and Development Director

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