

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

08/09/2025



Prepared For :

3, Barrett Court, 70, Cardiff Road, Reading, RG1 8ED

RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE CLASS FROM STORAGE SPACE TO TAXI
OPERATION SHARED OFFICES.

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INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement is submitted in support of a retrospective planning application for the change of use of the premises from storage space (Use Class B8) to a taxi operation with shared office facilities (Sui Generis Use) at 3 Barrett Court, 70 Cardiff Road, Reading, RG1 8ED.

The application seeks to regularise the current use, which supports a private hire taxi operation involving administrative functions, shared workspace, and limited on-site vehicle movements. The change of use has already taken place and is currently in operation.

THE SITE & SURROUNDING AREAS

The premises is situated within Barrett Court, a multi-unit commercial building located on Cardiff Road in Reading. The surrounding area includes a mix of light industrial, commercial, and office-based premises.

The site was previously used solely as a storage unit (Use Class B8). Internally, the unit comprises of shared offices space of class E use, which has been repurposed to support administrative and operational aspects of a licensed taxi business.

There have been no external alterations to the property, and the change of use involves only minor internal reconfiguration with new furnishings.

The property is not listed or in a green belt nor located within a conservation area.



Fig 1. Aerial View

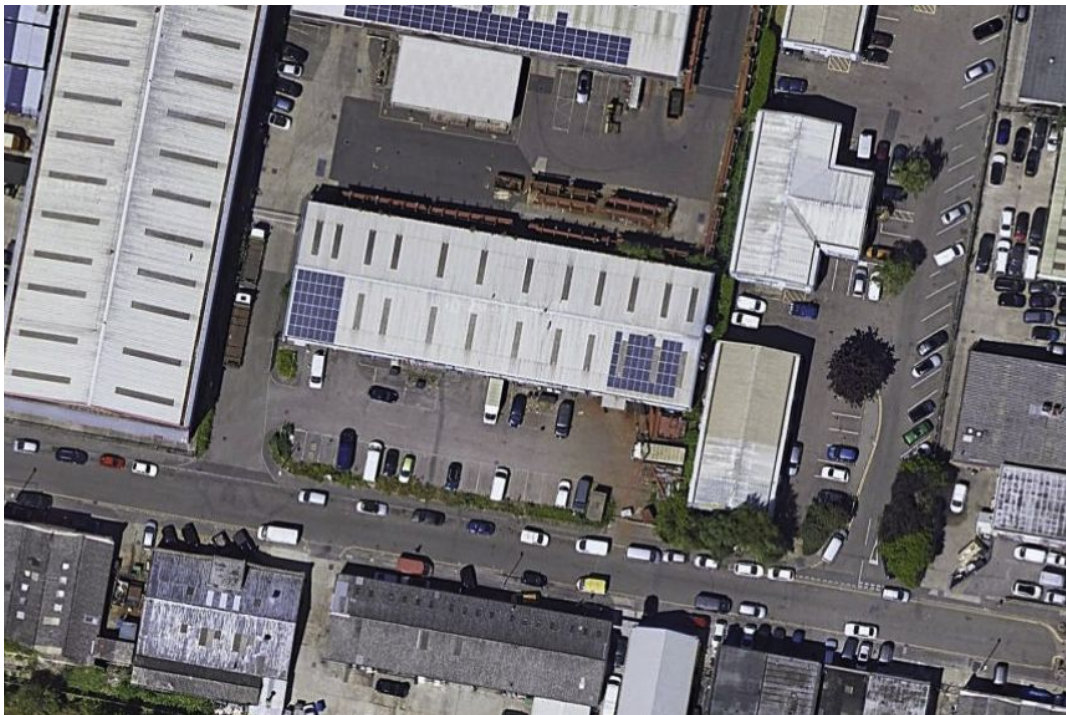


Fig 2. Aerial View

PLANNING HISTORY

No previous planning history

PRE-EXISTING SITE

The Pre-existing site was used for storage and office use. The new taxi operations use is classified under sui generis hence the retrospective application purpose for this application. The offices and meeting rooms are located on the first floor whereas the storage rooms and communal toilets and kitchen are shared on the ground floor. Parking is located outside the building and is reserved for different offices.

PROPOSED USE (RETROSPECTIVE)

The unit now serves as a base of operations for a private hire taxi company since August 2024. The following elements form the operational layout and function:

Administrative office for booking and dispatch.

Staff facilities including toilet and kitchenette.

Limited parking on-site for staff.

All taxi bookings are arranged by telephone. There is no walk-in customer service, and the premises does not function as a taxi rank.

ACCESS

Pedestrian access to the site is through the existing main entrance, shared with other business offices, while vehicle access is provided via the shared access road serving Barrett Court, with on-site parking limited to two spaces for staff and no vehicular repairs or maintenance conducted on the premises.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Noise: No public queuing or loud activity. All communications and bookings are remote.

Traffic: No Vehicle movements are held in this building and are done from another unit, this building is used for the operations only.

Amenity: No significant impact on nearby properties. All activity occurs indoors.

Hours of Operation: The operations offices operates between 06:30 and 19:00, Monday to Saturday, and sundays including public holidays. There is no overnight staff members in office at late hours and business continues remotely.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The proposed application can be considered under the following guidelines and have adhered to the guidance set out by:

National Planning Policy Framework

This application complies with the core principles of the NPPF (2023). The proposal represents a sustainable reuse of an existing commercial premises (paras 119–121), enabling the growth of a local business and providing employment opportunities (paras 84–85).

It supports sustainable transport options by facilitating accessible private hire services (paras 104–106), and contributes to climate objectives by consolidating operations and supporting low-emission transport. The development promotes inclusive and safe access for staff and drivers (para 130), and is consistent with the overarching objective of making effective, environmentally responsible use of urban land.

Reading Borough Local Plan and Transport Strategy

This proposal aligns with the Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019), which encourages sustainable reuse of commercial premises to support local employment. The shift from Class B8 storage to a sui generis taxi operation responds to current planning guidance requiring permission for changes outside permitted classes. The Reading Transport Strategy 2040 (notably RTS3, RTS4, and RTS29) supports accessible, low-emission transport solutions and healthy street design, which this operation reinforces.

CONCLUSION

This retrospective application seeks to regularise a low-impact, commercially appropriate change of use from storage (Use Class B8) to a taxi operation with shared office functions (Sui Generis) at 3 Barrett Court, 70 Cardiff Road, Reading, RG1 8ED. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and Reading Borough Local Plan.

The proposal would have no detrimental effect upon the amenity or privacy of immediate neighbours, the streetscape, or the wider community. The proposal makes effective use of an existing commercial space which provides local employment. Thus, supports Reading Borough Council's objectives for sustainable, employment-generating land use.

Therefore, it is kindly requested that the Local Authority grants planning approval for the retrospective application.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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