

TECHNICAL NOTE

Job Name: The Oracle
Job No: 332110757
Note No: TN007
Date: 25th September 2025
Prepared By: Rhys Husband
Reviewed By: Chris Brice
Subject: **Response to RBC Highway Comments**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Technical Note (TN) has been prepared by Stantec UK, on behalf of the Client (The Oracle Limited Partnership), in response to comments received from Reading Borough Council (RBC) in connection with the development proposals at The Oracle, which comprises two full planning applications, Yield Hall Place 1 & 2 (Ref: 221916 & 221917), for a combined 436 residential units with 10,121sqm of commercial floor area.

As part of the planning submission a Transport Statement (TS) was prepared that assessed the impacts of the development pertinent to transport and highway.

This TN responds to RBC highways and transport comments dated 22nd August 2025.

2. Cycling Accessibility

- 2.1. RBC have stated in their comments that:
"The applicant has provided details of how to deal with this current shortfall of 38 cycle parking spaces which includes the provision of a further 10 cycle spaces around YHP2 and the details illustrated on drawing ORA-LDA-RES-ZZ-DWG-PL-0101 Rev P06 have been deemed acceptable. In addition to this a further 28 cycle spaces are proposed along the Bridge Street elevation of the Oracle which would be in addition to those proposed as part of the House of Fraser application. This is therefore agreed subject to a dedicated plan being issued so that this cycle parking arrangement can be formally agreed given that the applicant is reliant on it to serve the commercial elements of the development."

Stantec Response:

It is acknowledged that the proposed provisions are deemed acceptable.

The requested plan has been supplied alongside this Technical Note. See Drawing 332110757_5501-C010.

3. Cycle Parking

- 3.1. RBC stated in their comments that:
"The applicant has stated that they do not propose any additional cycle parking for commercial use as there is already a significant amount of pre-existing cycling parking (158 spaces) which is to be retained or replaced within the centre for employees and visitors. This application provides a perfect opportunity to review the cycle parking across the site and rationalize it to ensure that it is located appropriately and securely to promote cycling as a possible travel option. A review of cycle parking has been undertaken and as identified above this results in an under provision of 38 cycle spaces across the site. As stated above, the areas identified for the under provision of cycle parking is agreed subject to a plan being submitted for the spaces adjacent to the former House of Fraser unit."

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Stantec Response:

See previous response to Paragraph 2.1.

4. Yield Hall Place 1 – Delivery, Servicing and Refuse Strategy

RBC stated in their comments that:

“The applicant has provided drawing 332110757_5500_SK044 Rev P03 which displays the tracking of the 10T and 7.5T vehicles accessing the servicing bay. Two 10T vehicles can safely pass each other parallel to the loading bay within a 7.0m unrestricted carriageway width, maintaining this as the only location where two-way traffic flow can occur. The principle of this is agreed however the section of widening on the eastern/northern side of yield Hall Place would also appear to be a loading facility and has been utilized as such as can be seen from google images. The applicant would therefore need to propose parking / loading enforcement in this location to ensure that two-way traffic flow can be maintained. The applicant has stated that this would be signed / marked as no waiting /loading to ensure two-way traffic but to ensure that this can be secured a drawing should be submitted illustrating the location of this restriction.”

Stantec Response:

The requested drawing illustrating the location of this restriction has been supplied alongside this Technical Note. See Drawing 332110757_5500_SK054 P01.

5. Yield Hall Place 2 – Delivery, Servicing and Refuse Strategy

5.1. RBC stated in their comments that:

“However, as previously identified if the loading bay design is to be removed the applicant should provide alterations to the parking / loading restrictions surrounding the site whilst providing preventative measures to reduce vehicles parking on the footway/cycleway. This has not been provided as part of the latest submission. It is accepted that the existing restriction along this elevation is no waiting or loading at anytime however the Highway Authority does not accept the applicant comment that the four street trees and standard height kerb along with this restriction would prevent deliveries taking place with drivers likely to park half on and half off the footway. The Highway Authority does not believe that the provision of retained / extended guard railing or bollards is appropriate and therefore a proposal is required that alters the kerbing along this elevation so that it is not possible to mount the footway.”

Stantec Response:

It is proposed that higher kerbs such as Kassel or Treif kerbs be used along the carriageway edge to prevent mounting the kerb. Details of which can be agreed during s278 highways technical approval.

6. Fire Tender Access

6.1. RBC stated in their comments that:

“The proposed scheme alters the location of the build form for both parts of the development, and as such updated tracking diagrams have now been provided for fire tender access which have also now been updated to ensure that vehicles access YHP1 from the south.

Although the standard fire tender appliance can undertake the required manoeuvre for YHP1 it is noted that the aerial ladder platform vehicle has been amended due to conflicts with the bridge structure being illustrated. The applicant has stated that the amended swept path shows some body overhang on the eastern side of the bridge but no conflict with the parapet. The movement is now also retained within the western crossover and to achieve the manoeuvre the vehicle performs a mid-adjustment once swept into the scheme, reversing back and straightening before moving further through the scheme. The Technical Note has referenced drawing 332110757_5500_SK025_P05 but this drawing has not been submitted for review only and extract provided.

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However, it is evident from the extract that the fire appliance would be required to be at touching distance to the bridge parapet as it crosses the bridge and even more so on the inside of the bend. To conform with standards and to ensure that emergency vehicles are not held up or collide with existing structures the scheme must be revised to ensure that a 500mm clearance is provided between structures and the swept path of vehicles.

The fire tender analysis for YHP2 has been deemed acceptable."

Stantec Response:

The existing tree has been removed to accommodate access for the larger aerial ladder platform fire tender, the landscape has been updated to accommodate. This is reflected in the revised drawing 332110757_5500_SK025 P07 provided which now shows an acceptable appliance manoeuvre.

7. Public Highway

7.1. RBC stated in their comments that:

"As explained at the pre application stage it is noted that the existing Public Highway extends to within the existing building line of the Oracle and as such this must be rationalized as part of any planning application and areas of Highway not usable for Highway purposes stopped up.

It is unclear why this did not take place at the previous application stage, and this is unlikely to be discovered given that this should have taken place in the region of 25 years ago. There is a clear demarcation of what the effective Highway boundary is. Drawing 332110757_5500_SK048 Rev P02 has been submitted which indicates a proposed area of stopping up however, the Highway Authority subject to any further revisions to the scheme would require the existing area of footway/cycleway to be maintained and any increases to those widths also retained within the adoptable area.

Clarification previously requested has been submitted however there is still an area in the south east corner of the site adjacent to an existing brick wall where the applicant proposes stopping up that reduces the width of the footway cycle way. Although the applicant is currently proposing this area to be an extension of the footway this area should remain as adopted Highway and therefore drawing 332110757_5500_SK048 Rev P02 must be updated to reflect this requirement.

The Highway Authority cannot accept that the stopping up extent is agreed later, it should be agreed and secured as part of this application and should it be necessary due to scheme revisions adjusted a later date."

Stantec Response:

The updated highway boundary is included with this Technical Note. See Drawing 332110757_5500_SK048 P03.

This will be demarcated by metal studs to delineate between the Site and the adopted highway.

8. Street Lighting

8.1. RBC stated in their comments that:

"In the southeast corner of the site a high mast street lighting column exists which is assumed will create unacceptable lighting levels for the adjacent residential units.

The applicant has stated that this would not result in a detrimental impact however, the existing high mast will generate a lux level of between 50-100 lux which would be well in excess of the permitted light spill levels into residential properties (5 lux). It is not believed that this could be mitigated by way of black out blinds within the properties themselves.

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The applicant will therefore be required to provide clarification as to what impact the lighting from the high mast would create and how they are proposing to address any detrimental impacts”.

Stantec Response:

Blackout blinds are designed to block external light from entering a room. Their effectiveness depends on several factors, including material quality, installation technique, and the presence of gaps.

- The material will be a dense, layered materials that blocks nearly 100% of light penetration through the material itself.
- The blinds will be custom fitted to minimize gaps and maximize light control.
- Edges will be sealed with side channels/tracks. By using U-shaped side channels that the blinds slide into, side spill will be virtually eliminated, typically 95%-99% of spill. Velcro or magnetic strips can help seal edges further.

Curtains will be fitted to the internal wall side of the blind to ensure 100% effectiveness.

Some examples include:

https://www.google.com/aclk?sa=L&ai=DChsSEwiP3OOEy9CPAxWZjiAGHVFQMS4YACICCAEQCxoCZGc&co=1&ase=2&gclid=EALalQobChMlj9zjhMvQjwMVmY5QBh1RUDEuEAAYAyAAEgL3ffD_BwE&cce=2&category=acrcp_v1_32&sig=AOD64_2AHgnnNGkRZbZP-GhjmCUDjile_w&q&nis=4&adurl&ved=2ahUKEwi8v96Ey9CPAxV8Z0EAHcw8H4wQ0Qx6BAgKEAE

https://www.blindsbypost.co.uk/zerolux-blinds/blackout-zerolux-blinds/?sort_by=rwpp_sortorder_2220&sort_order=asc

<https://johnsblinds.co.uk/blackout-blinds/>