

Memo

From: Transport Development Control
To: Jonathan Markwell Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk
Date: 8 July 2026
Re: Transport Development Control response to the Technical Note prepared by Stantec UK (dated May 2026) in connection with the development proposals at Forbury Retail Park (Ref. PL/25/1706).

A Transport Assessment (TA) and Framework Travel Plan (FTP) were prepared by Stantec to assess the transport and highway impacts of the proposed development. Reading Borough Council (RBC) Transport Development Control provided initial consultation comments, raising a number of queries and concerns, which have been responded to within a Technical Note prepared by Stantec UK (May 2026).

The submitted Technical Note has been reviewed; however, it is considered that the following matters have not been adequately addressed and require further clarification and/or justification before the application can be fully assessed from a transport and highways perspective.

Further comments relating to the design codes document will be sent through under separate cover as these matters have responded to separately.

2. Active Travel

Table 2.1 presents the forecast hourly pedestrian movements under the proposed scheme. The results demonstrate a consistent demand for walking throughout the day, indicating that the proposed active travel routes would serve a broad range of trip purposes across the day, including commuting, education, and local journeys.

The distribution of trips suggests that walking demand is spread across the network rather than concentrated on a single route.

Time Period	Forbury Road (West)	Across Vastern Road	Across Forbury Road	Forbury Road (South)	Napier Road	Kenavon Drive	Total
07:00-08:00	23	11	11	23	23	23	92
08:00-09:00	44	22	22	44	44	44	176
09:00-10:00	49	24	24	49	49	49	195
10:00-11:00	55	27	27	55	55	55	220
11:00-12:00	63	31	31	63	63	63	251
12:00-13:00	72	36	36	72	72	72	287
13:00-14:00	66	33	33	66	66	66	265
14:00-15:00	68	34	34	68	68	68	273
15:00-16:00	67	34	34	67	67	67	270
16:00-17:00	72	36	36	72	72	72	286
17:00-18:00	74	37	37	74	74	74	298
18:00-19:00	61	31	31	61	61	61	244

Table 2-1: Proposed Development Walking Trip Generation - Distribution

Table 2.2 presents the forecast hourly cycling movements associated with the proposed development. The predicted cycling demand is distributed across all routes and throughout the day, with total flows generally ranging between 6 and 13 cyclists per hour.

Time Period	Forbury Road (West)	Across Vastern Road	Across Forbury Road	Forbury Road (South)	Napier Road	Kenavon Drive	Total
07:00-08:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	9
08:00-09:00	3	1	1	3	3	3	11
09:00-10:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	7
10:00-11:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	7
11:00-12:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	6
12:00-13:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	9
13:00-14:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	8
14:00-15:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	8
15:00-16:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	7
16:00-17:00	2	1	1	2	2	2	10
17:00-18:00	3	2	2	3	3	3	13
18:00-19:00	3	1	1	3	3	3	11

Table 2-2: Proposed Development Cycling Trip Generation – Distribution

The overall number of cycling trips appears relatively low, particularly when considered alongside the limited car parking provision proposed within the development. Reduced parking availability would typically be expected to encourage a greater proportion of trips by sustainable modes, including cycling.

Whilst the cycling forecasts are relatively modest in isolation, the overall active travel demand is substantial. The combined forecasts indicate that a significant proportion of trips associated with the development are expected to be undertaken by sustainable modes, supporting the need for safe, direct and convenient walking and cycling infrastructure within the surrounding highway network.

In response to the ATE and the Highway Authority concerns regarding the existing infrastructure provision, the applicant in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.10 states that there is a shared-use provision on Forbury Road and existing facilities are considered adequate to accommodate the forecast increase in demand and, therefore, the development is not expected to result in unacceptable impacts requiring off-site mitigation. The applicant further noted that parts of the route have been relatively

recently redesigned as part of the Forbury Road offices development and that good crossing facilities are already in place to meet the anticipated additional demand. However, given the predicted pedestrian and cycling trips associated with the development, the applicant is requested to undertake a further assessment of the existing footway widths to demonstrate that the existing infrastructure is designed to accommodate the proposed levels of pedestrian and cycling movements in accordance with the requirements within LTN 1/20.

The application includes a cycle route that runs along the site's internal southern edge. LTN 1/20 establishes that a two-way cycle track should generally be at least 3.0 m wide (for cycle flows of up to 300), and the absolute minimum width should only be used for sections where there is a physical constraint on an existing road. The applicant's response in paragraph 2.6 states that the indicative design meets the standards of LTN1/20. However, given that there is no "physical constraint" and this proposal represents a comprehensive redevelopment of the site, the Highway Authority considers that a 3.0m-wide cycle route should be provided in accordance with LTN 1/20 and the applicants justification is not accepted.

At the eastern access point, the cycle path terminates with no safe transition between the proposed off carriageway cycle facility and the on-carriageway cycle route on Kenavon Drive. The indicative cycle route connection onto the eastern access road creates confusion and forces cyclists to merge into traffic unexpectedly. The applicant's response in paragraph 2.7 states there would be scope to provide a raised-table crossing linking the site to the east if redevelopment has progressed at the time of construction. If not, the original cycle layout is considered more appropriate for the existing context. This approach is not acceptable to the Highway Authority as it relies on an uncertain future development and fails to address the immediate concerns raised. It remains unclear how cyclists travelling along the cycle lane will safely transition into and out of the development without being directed into the path of oncoming vehicles entering the site. The proposal therefore does not adequately demonstrate a safe, direct and coherent cycling route.

Pedestrian and cyclist visibility splays have been illustrated on the submitted drawings with Appendix B (Drawing Ref **50582-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0012**) however, these appear to pass through the existing tree line. The Highway Authority is concerned that future tree growth, particularly increases in trunk diameter and associated vegetation, could compromise the required visibility splays over time. The applicant is requested to demonstrate that an assessment has been undertaken of the future growth of retained trees and to confirm that the required visibility splays can be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

3. Crossing of Forbury Road

Given the predicted pedestrian flows outlined in Table 2.2 and Table 2.2, the Highway Authority maintains the view that improvements should be made to the western arm of the Forbury Road/Kenavon Drive roundabout to enhance crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. Such measures are necessary to accommodate the increased demand generated by the development and to address the concerns previously raised regarding the safety and quality of connections to the wider active

travel network. The applicant's response in paragraph 3.1 states that the site location is such that the clear desire lines from the site are west to the existing crossings on Forbury Road or east and south to the canal area or underpass crossing north under the railway. However, the proposed crossing would provide an important connection to key destinations south of the site, including bus stops on Kings Road, the hospital, schools and other community facilities. The Highway Authority does not agree that the bus stops on King's Road are more easily accessible by simply walking west.

The applicant's response goes on to say that the layout and proximity of the roundabout provide safety challenges for the provision of a new formal crossing. Investigations undertaken from past applications (Appendix C) indicate that four crossing options were considered. It is recognised that in accordance with DMRB CD116, a signalised crossing should be 20m from the give way marking to enable sufficient storage space and reduce signal confusion. Drawing 2C appears to provide sufficient scope for a crossing facility with some amendments to the design. It is considered that the crossing could be positioned against the Plummery Wall to the west with hatched markings on the circulation of the roundabout to achieve the required 20m vehicle stacking distance. The applicant is therefore requested to revisit the proposed arrangements and provide a more robust assessment of the feasibility of delivering a formal crossing at Forbury Road roundabout.

6. Waste Strategy

The Waste Strategy document states that residential collections will be undertaken from a designated collection point and returned to the bin store area after collection. The Transport Assessment (paras. 6.3.8-6.3.9) notes that, when required, servicing vehicles may enter the public realm to service the southern row of blocks, under management by the Estate Management Team.

The applicant has responded stating that swept path analysis of a refuse collection vehicle was included in Appendix D of the Transport Assessment and servicing bays are proposed on the southern edge of the servicing access route. However, the vehicle tracking diagrams provided in Appendix D demonstrate servicing movements along the service route only and do not illustrate how the central blocks (CB3 and CB4) will be serviced. Further clarification is therefore required on the proposed servicing arrangements for these blocks to ensure that servicing activities can be accommodated safely and efficiently without compromising the functionality of the public realm or the operation of pedestrian and cycle routes.

7. Trip Generation

Table 7.7 presents the proposed mode share proportions for the development including a food store (adjusted column). The applicant has clarified that the predicted food store's external mode share has been estimated using modal split data from the TRICS survey data. In doing so, the car driver and car passenger mode shares have been reduced to 29.5% and 12.4% respectively, with the walking mode share increased to 54.5%. However, no robust or substantiated evidence has been provided to justify these adjustments to the modal split assumptions. In the absence of supporting analysis, the Highway Authority does not consider the proposed

reductions in car driver and passenger trips to be sufficiently evidenced. Given that the adjusted mode shares have been used to inform the parking demand assessment, it is essential that a robust evidence base is provided to justify the proposed modal split and demonstrate that the parking demand forecasts are reliable. Further evidence is required.

Concerns were previously raised regarding the assumption applied in paragraph 7.7.4, which adopts a 35% pass-by rate on the basis that the site is located on a commuter route. The applicant contends that the 35% pass-by trips are a conservative estimate equating to 38 and 67 arrival trips in the AM and PM peak. It is stated that the existing retail park, via its two access points, currently captures 11 (1.2%) and 60 (6.0%) arrivals during the AM and PM peak periods respectively. However, the Highway Authority considers that these movements are likely to represent new trips destined for the retail park rather than genuine pass-by trips already present on the highway network. As such, a direct comparison cannot be made on this basis, and the data does not provide robust evidence to support the proposed pass-by trip assumptions.

Paragraph 6.41 the TRICS report clearly advises that any reduction must be dealt with on a site by site basis which requires surveys of comparable sites and that the report does not contain blanket percentages to which applicants can utilise to reduce trips from developments.

The applicant has not provided any site-specific survey data or robust evidence to substantiate the proposed 35% pass-by rate. As a result, the Highway Authority is unable to accept the proposed pass-by and diverted trip reductions. Appropriate evidence is required to justify the percentage applied and to demonstrate that the resulting trip generation forecasts represent a robust assessment of the development's impact on the highway network.

8. Parking

In accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards SPD, the proposed Class E food store would require 75 car parking spaces, based on a provision of 1 space per 40sqm. However, Parameter Plan 14 identifies only 53 spaces.

The Transport Assessment seeks to justify this reduced provision on the basis that the food store will serve a local catchment, with a high proportion of customers expected to walk or cycle. However, this conclusion is dependent on adjusted modal split assumptions, including a reduced car driver mode share of 29.5%, which have not been robustly evidenced.

The parking accumulation assessment for the commercial car park has been derived from TRICS-based trip generation data, with internalised shopping trips removed and the adjusted car driver mode share applied to estimate parking demand. As the assessment relies on modal split assumptions that have not been adequately justified, the Highway Authority cannot be satisfied that the resulting parking demand forecasts are robust or reliable. Further evidence is therefore required to substantiate the proposed modal split and associated parking demand. In the

absence of such evidence, the proposed departure from the Council's adopted parking standards cannot be supported.

No dedicated visitor parking spaces are proposed as part of the development. The applicant seeks to justify this on the basis of the site's proximity to the railway station and local bus services, together with examples of recently approved residential schemes where visitor parking was not provided.

The applicant also contends that visitors arriving by car could utilise nearby public car parks within walking distance of the site. However, reliance on off-site parking is not considered an appropriate substitute for dedicated visitor parking, as the availability and capacity of these spaces cannot be guaranteed. The absence of visitor parking may result in residential visitor demand spilling over into parking provision intended for the retail element and the wider public realm.

Given the Highway Authority's concerns regarding the shortfall in parking provision associated with the retail element, this is likely to exacerbate parking stress within the development and reduce parking availability for retail customers. The Highway Authority therefore considers that insufficient justification has been provided for the proposed departure from the Council's visitor parking standards.

9. Travel Plan

A Framework Travel Plan has been submitted to accompany the planning application. The modal share targets are set out in Table 4.1 which are not aspirational or representative of the low parking provision within the site. Stantec's response at paragraph 2.1 states that a Detailed Travel Plan will be submitted at the Reserved Matters Application (RMA) stage, providing further information on implementation and monitoring measures intended to increase, where possible, the proportion of active travel trips generated by the development. The Highway Authority considers that the current targets are insufficiently ambitious and should be strengthened to deliver a meaningful reduction in private car use and a greater shift towards walking, cycling and public transport. Given that the Travel Plan forms a key component of the sustainable transport strategy for the site, the modal split targets should be reviewed and revised at the outline stage.

The Highway Authority requests that additional and/or revised information and plans are submitted to address the points raised above prior to determination of the application. At this stage, the information provided is insufficient to allow a robust assessment of the development's highway and transport impacts.