

Markwell, Jonathan

From: Markwell, Jonathan
Sent: 12 August 2026 14:52
To: Markwell, Jonathan
Subject: FW: Forbury Retail Park, Reading (PL/25/1706) - Transport, ATE & Ecology

From: Tommy Cooney
Sent: 06 August 2026 17:27
To: Markwell, Jonathan
Cc: Julian Stephenson; Harry Manners
Subject: RE: Forbury Retail Park, Reading (PL/25/1706) - Transport, ATE & Ecology

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For the attention of
RBC Staff and Councillors

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Dear Jonathan,

Further to the latest consultation responses from Transport Development Control and Active Travel England, we have set out below our response on the outstanding highways and transport matters which follows our discussions with the team's highways and transportation consultants, Stantec. We have sought to respond positively to as many points as possible, and have highlighted the points where Stantec disagree.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the below with you and to understand your views on the remaining matters and to agree a pragmatic way forward, taking into consideration the planning balance to be applied to these remaining comments and in particular that many if not most can be addressed appropriately by conditions and/or through the subsequent submission of reserved matters.

We set out our position below on the points where we do not agree with the comments raised by Transport Development Control, including matters relating to active travel infrastructure, parking, trip generation, the Forbury Road crossing, servicing, waste collection, cycle parking, access arrangements and the Design Codes.

Active Travel England

Active Travel England's latest comments seek a mechanism to monitor cycle parking usage and secure additional provision if required. ATE has established that this could be addressed either through amendments to the Travel Plan, or by condition.

We would be willing to accept a suitably worded Travel Plan condition requiring the detailed Travel Plan to include cycle parking monitoring, review triggers and where required, provide additional cycle spaces. We consider that this would directly address ATE's request, while allowing the detailed monitoring and management arrangements to be agreed at the appropriate detailed stage of development.

Suggested condition wording:

"A. Prior to first occupation of the development, a Detailed Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Detailed Travel Plan shall include measures to encourage travel by sustainable modes, modal share targets, and arrangements for implementation and monitoring of cycle parking,. This monitoring shall include an annual survey of cycle parking occupancy, and include measures to provide additional cycle parking if required.

B. If cycle parking capacity is observed at maximum capacity, these measures will be implemented in accordance with the Detailed Travel Plan."

Transport Development Control – Stantec Response Note

We are of the view that the majority of the remaining points raised by the latest TDC comments are either repeated matters that have already been addressed in the submitted Transport Assessment and subsequent Note (provided 21

May 2026), prepared by Stantec, or relate to matters of detailed design which can be properly controlled through conditions, reserved matters and subsequent highway approvals.

Retail Parking and Trip Generation

TDC continues to question the assumptions relating to the foodstore modal split, pass-by trips and the level of retail parking provision. In particular, the response notes that the proposed foodstore would require 75 spaces under the Council's adopted standards, and the application proposes a total of 53 spaces to serve the foodstore, and raises concerns that the parking assessment relies on adjusted modal split assumptions.

Our position remains that the submitted Transport Assessment and Stantec Technical Note provide a robust basis for assessing the development. The proposed foodstore would serve a highly accessible, mixed-use Site, with a significant residential population accommodated within the development with the vast majority of people not having a car parking space. The location also benefits from the first phase of the wider allocation, provided by the new homes at Huntley Wharf which will also benefit from a foodstore being only a short walk away from their homes as well as the homes to the east of Decathlon on Kenavon Drive. The proposed use is also supported within the policy allocation of the Site.

The parking strategy should be assessed in the context of the site's highly accessible location on foot and by bicycle and the nature of the proposed development, rather than through a rigid application of parking standards. Nevertheless, the parking standards are stated as maxima, as such a provision below the parking standards is acceptable in policy terms. In summary, the parking provision of 53 spaces has been calculated on the basis of what is suitable for the development given its sustainable location and the anticipated local population that the unit is expected to serve (from both the proposed scheme and Huntley Wharf and other nearby residential areas).

Notwithstanding the fact that the assessment is robust, the location is sustainable and the standards are a maximum limit not a minimum, we are willing to discuss whether a condition could be applied to restrict the floorspace of a foodstore that aligns with the parking guidance to provide further comfort. The application proposals seek approval for a maximum of 3,000 sqm of Class E floorspace. As shown on parameter plan 06 this floor area is distributed within the foodstore and the ground floor of East Block 2, 3 and 4. As such the foodstore is not proposed to be a total of 3,000 sqm and we would be willing to agree a suitable floorspace cap on the maximum size of the unit. Based on the proposed 53 spaces we would be willing to agree a maximum floorspace cap of 2,120 sqm. Which would ensure that the parking provision of 53 spaces is provided in accordance with the maximum parking standards of 1 space per 40 sqm.

On the basis of the above, if it is considered necessary, we would be willing to agree to the following suitably worded condition:

"The maximum size of the commercial unit identified in parameter plan ref. 18111-SQP-ZZ-GF-DR-A-PL00006 P2 shall not exceed 2,120 sqm, without approval in writing from the LPA"

Forbury Road crossing

A further request has been made to consider a formal crossing on Forbury Road, at the western arm of the Forbury Road / Kenavon Drive roundabout. The response suggests that a crossing could potentially be accommodated close to the Plummery Wall.

Our position remains that the submitted material has explained why the Proposed Development would not give rise to an unacceptable highway safety impact that would require this off-site crossing. The principal desire lines from the site are towards the existing crossings (one of which is located metres west from the location proposed by TDC, along Forbury Road). We do not consider that the development creates a direct need for the specific crossing intervention requested.

We do recognise that this matter has remained a concern for TDC. On this basis, while maintaining our position that the planning case for the crossing is weak, we are willing to discuss whether an appropriate Section 106 contribution towards crossing improvements could be included within the S106 agreement (subject to agreement on scope and scale of the obligation).

Eastern Access and Cycle Route Termination

TDC remains concerned that the proposed cycle route terminates at the eastern access and does not provide a direct onward connection across the access to the east. The response considered that the current arrangement relies on uncertain future development of the eastern plot.

Our position is that the submitted layout identifies a clear termination point for the route within the application site, and that the detailed design of this can be further developed through the reserved matters process. We do not consider that it is reasonable to require a definitive off-site cycle route at this outline stage, particularly where this would be dependent on future development on the adjacent plot to the east, which has yet to come forward. At this stage, the current proposal is a reasonable and logical location for the cycle route to terminate. This will also reduce risk of piecemeal development, which may prejudice proper comprehensive development of the eastern plot and wider area. The proposed arrangement allows the route to come forward in a coherent manner, providing a fixed point to link to when and if development of the land to the east takes place.

We would suggest a compliance condition to read as follows:

A. The development shall safeguard the provision of a future raised-table crossing and associated cycle route connection across the eastern access road, enabling the route to connect into adjoining land to the east should that land come forward for development. No part of the development shall prejudice the future delivery of such a connection"

B. In the event that planning permission is granted for development on the land immediately to the east which provides for a connection to the approved cycle route prior to commencement of the phase of development containing the eastern access road, a scheme for the delivery of a raised-table crossing and associated cycle route connection to the application site boundary shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

C. If part B is triggered the approved scheme shall thereafter be implemented prior to the occupation of the phase of development containing the eastern access road in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing

Other Matters

Comments were also raised in relation to cycle route width, existing footway capacity, tree growth and visibility splays, servicing arrangements and waste collection. Our position is that these matters are capable of being addressed through detailed design at the reserved matters stage and/or by appropriately worded planning conditions, as suggested below:

- detailed design of pedestrian and cycle routes at reserved matters stage;

"Prior to the first occupation of the development, detailed designs of the pedestrian and cycle routes within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include route alignments, widths, crossing facilities, surfacing, and measures to ensure safe, direct and convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the development and to the surrounding highway network. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the development and retained thereafter."

- servicing and delivery management arrangements;

"Prior to first occupation of the development, a detailed Servicing and Delivery Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include details of servicing arrangements for all land uses within the development, including delivery vehicle access routes, swept path analysis, servicing locations, management procedures, and measures to ensure servicing activities can be undertaken safely without adversely affecting the operation of pedestrian and cycle routes. The approved Plan shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the development and servicing activities shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details."

- swept path analysis for relevant servicing vehicles;

To be incorporated into the above condition.

- a refuse and servicing management plan; and

"Prior to first occupation of the development, a Refuse and Servicing Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include details of

refuse collection and arrangements, servicing access routes, servicing locations and servicing management measures for all parts of the development. The details shall demonstrate that refuse collection and servicing activities can be undertaken safely and efficiently without unacceptable obstruction of servicing routes, pedestrian routes, cycle routes or emergency access. The approved arrangements shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the development and thereafter adhered to"

- details of visibility splays and landscape management where relevant.

"Prior to first occupation of the development, details of pedestrian and cyclist visibility splays shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall demonstrate that the required visibility splays can be maintained having regard to proposed landscaping and retained vegetation. The approved visibility splays shall be maintained free from obstruction thereafter."

Transport Development Control - Design Codes

We have also reviewed the separate Transport Development Control comments on the updated Design Codes. The response raises a series of points concerning the relationship between the Design Code and Parameter Plans, including access control on service routes, minimum route widths, the operation of the eastern square, stepped access, cycle store locations, servicing and waste collection arrangements. Our position is that these are matters of detailed design and management that can and should be addressed at the reserved matters stage, rather than matters that prevent the outline application from being determined, as detailed below:

Road Access Control on Service Routes

This can be addressed at reserved matters stage through detailed design. For example, if necessary, the use of bollards or similar measures could be implemented to prevent unauthorised vehicular access while maintaining emergency and maintenance access.

Minimum Route Widths and Consistency

The specific details of minimum route widths will be subject of the reserved matters and can be addressed and secured through a condition requiring reserved matters submissions to demonstrate the minimum widths in line with the requirements outlined by TDC, as suggested below:

"Prior to first occupation of the development, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority demonstrating that pedestrian, cycle and servicing routes have been designed to accord with the minimum widths set out within the approved Design Code, including a minimum 3.0m width for primary cycle routes, a minimum 4.5m width for Green Streets and a minimum 6.0m servicing route with associated footways where indicated on the approved parameter plans. The approved scheme shall thereafter be retained."

Stepped / Level Access

The illustrative scheme identifies multiple opportunities for level access into and through the Site. The detailed access strategy can be secured through reserved matters, as suggested below:

"Prior to first occupation of the development, details of the access strategy for pedestrians to the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall demonstrate the provision of safe, direct and inclusive routes for the development. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to first occupation and retained thereafter"

Cycle Store Locations

We would be willing to accept a condition requiring submissions to provide details of the location, access and layout of cycle stores for each relevant block (WB1 – 4), ensuring that cycle parking is accessible and appropriately distributed. The suggested condition wording is as follows:

"Prior to first occupation of each residential block, details of the cycle stores serving that block, including their location, capacity and layout, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority."

The approved cycle parking facilities shall be provided prior to first occupation of the relevant block and thereafter retained”

Servicing and Waste Collection

As stated above, we would be willing to accept a condition requiring a refuse and servicing management plan. This could include Waste collection / presentation locations, WB3 and 4 servicing from the south, CB3 and 4 basement servicing access not shown on parameter 14 and EB3 service access to the east, potential blocking of the access road. This suggested condition wording has been proposed above.

Conclusion

Overall, considerable progress has been made in addressing the matters raised by both Active Travel England and Transport Development Control. Whilst we recognise that Transport Development Control maintains a number of outstanding comments, in the view of the team's highways and transportation consultant, Stantec, a significant proportion of these remaining issues either relate to matters that have already been fully considered and responded to through the Transport Assessment and subsequent Stantec Technical Note, or comprise matters of detailed design that can appropriately be secured through planning conditions, reserved matters submissions and subsequent technical approvals. This is an outline, not a detailed planning application.

Nevertheless, we are willing to accept conditions relating to cycle parking monitoring and review mechanisms; detailed pedestrian and cycle route design; route widths; accessibility; visibility splays and landscape management; together with safeguarding measures to facilitate future cycle path connections to adjoining land. Taken together, this will ensure that the detailed design and management of the development can respond appropriately to the matters identified by these consultees. In our view, the remaining comments do not identify any fundamental issue that would prevent the outline application from being determined. We consider that the proposed approach represents a proportionate means of addressing those concerns, whilst remaining consistent with the fact that the application seeks outline planning permission rather than approval of detailed design.

We would therefore welcome a meeting to discuss the outstanding transport matters, understand the Council's position, and agree a pragmatic way forward. Given the extensive information already submitted which have sought to address the consultation responses, we are keen to avoid draw this matter to a conclusion.

I look forward to hearing from you on the above matters.

Kind regards,
Tommy

TOMMY COONEY
ASSISTANT PLANNER

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