Memo

From: (e)Transport Development Control Floor 1 North Rear Civic Offices Bridge Street Reading RG1 2LU

To: Jonathan Markwell Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk

Date: 19th March 2021

Re: Consultation on Planning Application

Application Number: 200188
Application Type: Full Planning Approval
Address: 55 Vastern Road Reading RG1 8BU
Proposal: Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road

Transport Comments

The Old Power Station on Vastern Road forms part of the former SSE office and depot. It is bounded by the River Thames to the north, retained SSE electrical transformers and associated works to the east, Vastern Road to south and residential properties fronting
Lynmouth Road to the west.

The development seeks permission for the 'Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and leisure floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road.'

Table 3.1 sets out the development schedule for the site for the proposed 209 new homes and Café.

Table 3.1 Indicative Development Schedule

Unit Type	Number of Homes
1 Bedroom Flat	60
2 Bedroom Flat	137
3 Bedroom Flat	12
Total	**209**

Leisure	Size (sqm)
Café	**17.9 sqm**

To accompany the planning application a Transport Statement has been submitted and I comment on this as follows:

Accessibility

The site is located within extremely close proximity to Reading Station and the surrounding bus interchanges that provide access to extensive public transport alternatives to the private car.

Given the excellent location of the site, walking will form a widely available and attractive method of travel for residents.

The site fronts onto Vastern Road which provides pedestrian footways on both sides connecting the Caversham Road / Great Brighams Mead roundabout to the west and to the Reading Bridge roundabout to the east.

There are currently three signalised crossings along Vastern Road all of which are of a staggered arrangement providing north/south connections.

South of Vastern Road, Trooper Potts Way provides access to the northern station entrance and the station underpass which leads to the main station entrance on the southern side and in turn the town centre.

To the north of the site, the Thames Path lines the southern side of the River Thames which leads to Reading Bridge, Kings Meadows, Tesco to the east and Caversham Bridge to the west. Christchurch Bridge is located centrally along the northern boundary of the site and provides a pedestrian and cycle connection to the northern side of the river.

The site has a range of existing cycling facilities available to the future occupiers of the site with access to local on and off road routes and the national cycle network.

Locally to the site, the northern footway on Vastern Road provides a shared footway / cycleway facility past the southern site boundary from Lynmouth Road to Reading Bridge to the east.

Norman Place to the east of the site currently provides the off-road cycle link from Vastern Road to the Christchurch Bridge over the River Thames which in turn leads to the cycle routes through Christchurch Meadows and Hills Meadow.

National Cycle Network (NCN) 5 is directly accessible from the northern boundary of the site along the Thames Path. This route connects the site with Caversham to the west via Christchurch Bridge, and Thames Valley Business Park to the east. To the east NCN 5 joins NCN 4 where the River Thames and Kennett meet. NCN 4 dissects the Reading area connecting Theale in the west through to Sonning and Charvil in the east.

The site fronts onto Vastern Road which forms part of Readings Inner Distributer Road (IDR). This section of Vastern Road is a two way dual carriageway with a 30mph speed limit. A kerbed central island separates each direction of traffic therefore requiring all vehicle access to the site to be from the west and all exiting traffic from the site required to travel east along Vastern Road.

At the western end of Vastern Road is the roundabout with Caversham Road. This junction provides the connections to Caversham to the north and west Reading and the A33 to the south. To the east of Vastern Road the Reading Bridge roundabout has five junction arms that provides access to Caversham to the north, Tesco supermarket to the east, A329 Forbury Road (continuation of IDR) to the south, and the Station Car park to the west.

The IDR links Reading town centre with the major corridors of A33, A329, A4 which in turn give access to the M4 at Junctions 10, 11 and 12.

<u>Access and Internal Layout</u>

Pedestrian

A key consideration of the site is to enhance the pedestrian and cycle connection between Christchurch Bridge and Reading Northern interchange, which via the Station underpass also connects the site with the Town Centre Area. This link is identified in RBC Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) as a key movement corridor, see extract below.

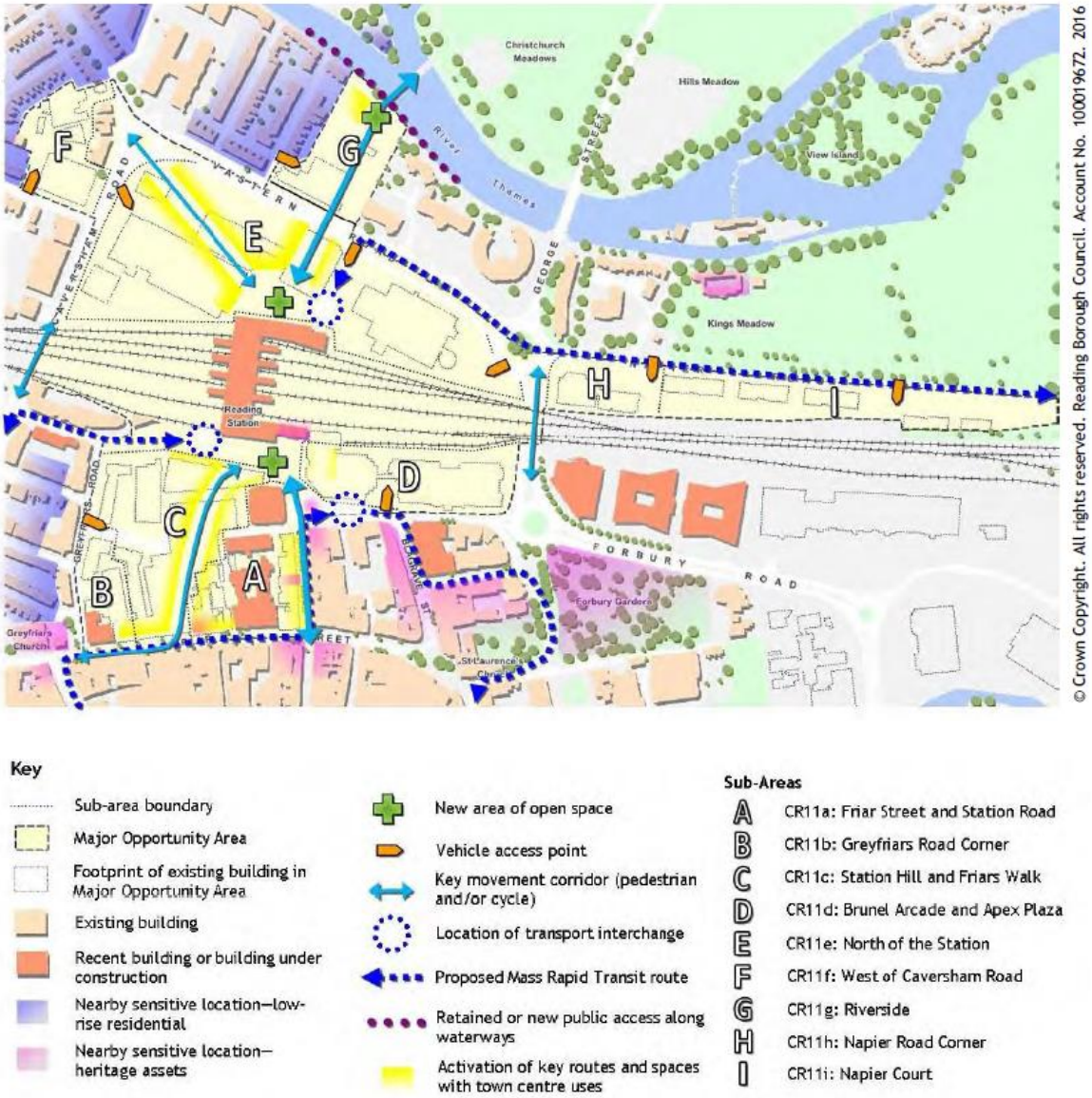


Figure 5.3: Station/River Major Opportunity Area Strategy

I also refer to Paragraph 5.4.6 of the Local Plan which states:

The successful development of this area hinges on improved accessibility by public transport, and improved permeability for pedestrians and cyclists. In terms of permeability, improving links for pedestrians and cyclists through the centre, particularly in a north-south direction, is one of the key principles for the spatial strategy of the centre, along with removing barriers to access within the centre. If visual links are also provided, this will help change the perception of the area north of the station as a separate entity. The opening of the underpass under the station and the provision of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Thames have recently helped to achieve this vision, but further improvements can still be made. Ensuring active frontages along these routes will assist these to become attractive links, as will the provision of new areas of open space. This is particularly important on the route between the shopping core, the station and the Thames. ***In particular, on the Riverside site (CR11g), achieving this north-south link is the***

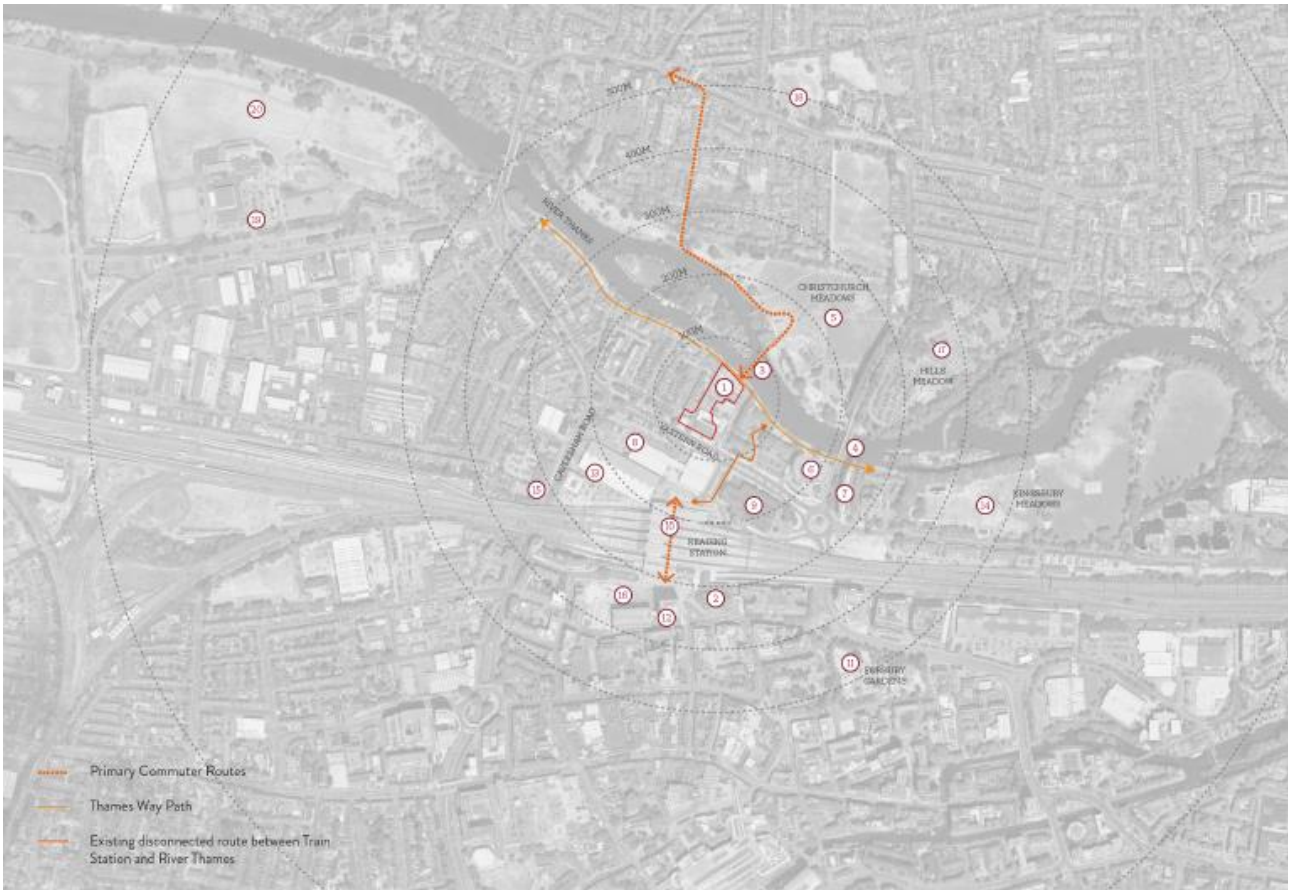
main priority for the site, and this should be given substantial weight in development management.

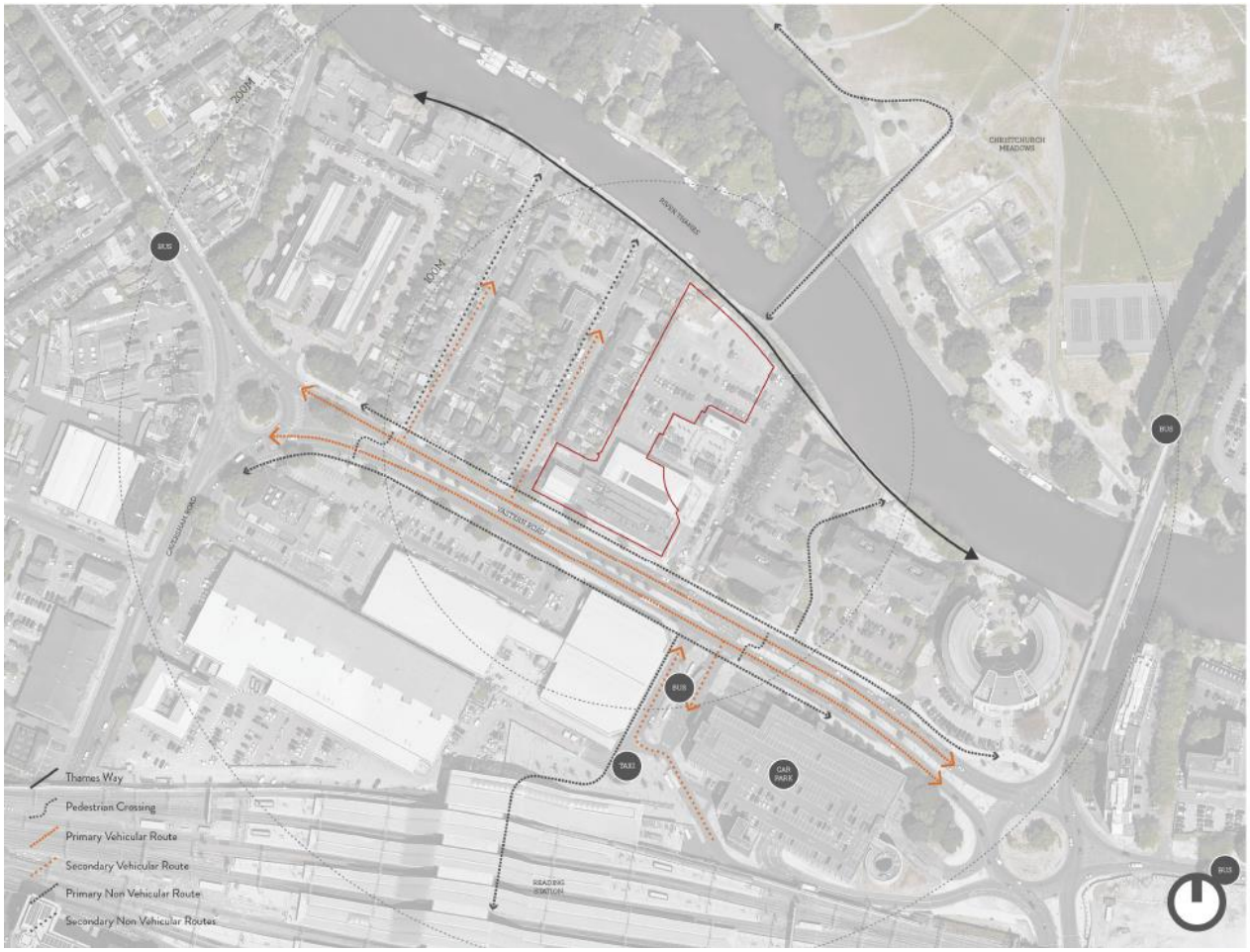
It is therefore clear from Figure 5.3 and Paragraph 5.4.6 from the Local Plan (both above) that an acceptable design of the north south route through the site is fundamental to any development of the site.

The application scheme comprises of the following components in designing the pedestrian / cycle route through the site:

- Podium level connection to existing Christchurch Bridge across River Thames;
- A new 1:21 ramp from the podium level to the ground level of the new development;
- A 1:21 ramp allowing pedestrian access to the River Thames towpath; and
- 3.0m dedicated footway/ cycleway on the eastern side of the internal access road linking the podium ramp to Vastern Road;

However, it is clear that the proposed scheme does not provide a direct pedestrian cycle route as has been requested during the pre-application discussions. This is to ensure that the route is as clear, legible and as convenient as possible. I reference the two images below form the Design and Access Statement which in themselves highlight the importance of the route through the site.





A Technical Note has been submitted that aims to address the Highway Authorities concerns regarding the proposed pedestrian and cycle connection to Christchurch Bridge. It is acknowledged that this provides some level of justification for the proposed layout however this has not provided sufficient justification for the Highway Authority to alter its view and I comment on this Technical Note as follows:

The applicant has stated that during the design consultation for the bridge it was agreed with Reading Borough Council (RBC) Officers and later endorsed by Members at planning committee that the associated connections and bridge would provide a shared pedestrian / cycle facility. This was to ensure that the route provided a free low speed connection suitable for all users, which reflected the sub-urban to urban environment which the bridge connects. Design rationale was to create a new piece of public realm with a traffic free connection suitable for all users, which reflected the wide range of people using the facility; from families with children and buggies, to wheelchair users and commuter pedestrians and cyclists.

Although the design does meet with some of these principles the scheme albeit traffic free from vehicles travelling along the route itself does include two points at which vehicles would have to cross the pedestrian / cycle route.

I am happy that access to The Goods Warehouse is acceptable given that vehicles entering and exiting the site would be doing so in forward gear however the access to The Turbine Hall car park is also a turning head for refuse and service vehicles.

The updated tracking information illustrates the turning head at the northern end of the site would require refuse and delivery vehicles to drive and reverse over the dedicated footway / cycleway.

As stipulated at the pre-application stage the Highway Authority have concern over this movement given the importance of this pedestrian / cycle route and the potential for conflict with service vehicles.

The submitted drawings confirm that the proposed turning area to the north of the site can accommodate large cars, 4.6t light vans and food delivery type vehicles which would provide the majority of internet deliveries without impeding the pedestrian / cycle route and are therefore acceptable.

The movements for refuse collection will be weekly and as identified by the applicant deliveries by HGVs may be required, the applicant has stated that these will be infrequent with the applicant stating within Stantec Technical Note TN005, RBC Highway 2nd Response that between 0 and 1 HGVs per day might be expected, this includes refuse collection. Extrapolated this would equate to between 3 and 4 per week, again this includes refuse collection.

It has also been stated as part of Stantec Technical Note TN006 RBC Highway 3rd Response & Vastern Road Crossing that a larger 10-12m long 'white goods type' HGV delivery lorry will be able undertake the turn forwards across the foot/cycleway, so will in fact easily be able to check the path is clear prior to crossing it. It will then be 'sat' in the foot/cycleway momentarily before reversing into the turning head to complete the manoeuvre. This will occur for a matter of seconds and is a 'forward facing' manoeuvre in terms of visibility of the foot/cycleway.

However, following a review of the tracking diagrams provided it is noted that no tracking has been provided for a 12m HGV, given that the applicant has now stipulated that vehicles of this size would serve the site this tracking would be required.

Irrespective of the above it is envisaged that a proportion of the delivery vehicles will wish to have the rear of the vehicle adjacent to the north south link for ease of transporting goods to and from the vehicle. In order to facilitate this the vehicle would have to undertake the opposite operation to that specified by Stantec which would result in vehicles towards the footway cycleway.

It is also noted that for a refuse vehicle to serve that to serve Blocks D and then E, F and G a refuse vehicle would have to drive / reverse over the pedestrian cycle route numerous times to get to the optimum position to serve each building.

I reference the following points from Manual for Streets below, to which the application would be at odds with.

6.8.8 Reversing causes a disproportionately large number of moving vehicle accidents in the waste/recycling industry. Injuries to collection workers or members of the public by moving collection vehicles are invariably severe or fatal. BS 5906: 2005 recommends a maximum reversing distance of 12 m. Longer distances can be considered, but any reversing routes should be straight and free from obstacles or visual obstructions.

7.10.3 Routeing for waste vehicles should be determined at the concept masterplan or scheme design stage (see paragraph 6.8.4). Wherever possible, routing should be configured so that the refuse collection can be made without the need for the vehicle having to reverse, as turning heads may be obstructed by parked vehicles and reversing refuse vehicles create a risk to other street users.

I appreciate that the number of servicing movements maybe low but the interaction of vehicles reversing over the pedestrian / cycle route which would be utilised by commuters and leisure users including children would be detrimental to highway safety and cannot be supported.

The applicant has also referred to the development of Colliers Way as a comparison to this application however, the servicing arrangements for that site did not include any reversing movements over the pedestrian / cycle route and a dedicated off carriageway turning head within the development car park was provided.

The submitted information therefore does not provide suitable tracking information for all vehicles the applicant has stated would serve the site and what has already been submitted would be contrary to both Local Policy and the NPPF and cannot be supported by the Highway Authority. As identified at the pre-application stage a layout must be provided that does not result in reversing or parking on the pedestrian / cycle route through the site.

The scheme also does not provide a route that is as direct as possible by including the switchback at the northern end of the site. I refer to Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design dated July 2020, which does not recommend such facilities, see extracts below:

18) Cycle routes must flow, feeling direct and logical.
Users should not feel as if they are having to double back on themselves, turn unnecessarily, or go the long way round. Often, cycling schemes - when crossing a main road, for instance - require cyclists to make a series of ninety-degree turns to carry out a movement that a motor vehicle at the same location could do without turning at all. Schemes should be based on a proper understanding of how people actually behave rather than how they might be expected to behave.

4.2.2 When people are travelling by cycle, they need networks and routes that are:
a Coherent;
a Direct;
a Safe;
a Comfortable; and
a Attractive

4.2.7 Directness is measured in both distance and time, and so routes should provide the shortest and fastest way of travelling from place to place. This includes providing facilities at junctions that minimise delay and the need to stop. **Minimising the effort required to cycle, by enabling cyclists to maintain momentum, is an important aspect of directness.** An indirect designated route involving extra distance or more stopping and starting will result in some cyclists choosing the most direct, faster option, even if it is less safe.

The proposed design would be harder to cycle up given the switch back arrangement than if a straighter more direct route were provided and therefore cannot be supported. I agree that the switch back design may aid in reducing speeds travelling south down the ramp however this could be achieved through various different designs as was identified at the pre-application stage. It should also be stated that the route would be used by significant numbers of pedestrians and cyclists whether they are residents, commuters or those travelling through for leisure purposes and that level of use will aid in reducing speeds of cyclists as is the case on the bridge itself.

The applicant has suggested within the Policy Assessment Note: North/South Shared Pedestrian Cycle Route (dated 24th Sept 2020) that the proposal would be safer than a direct route through the site but to date no evidence or design criteria has been provided that would confirm this view. As previously stated the creation of a direct ramp to the bridge would reduce conflict with vehicles within the site and also the potential for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. It has been confirmed in writing and at meetings with the applicant that Christchurch Bridge already includes straight ramps on either side and the Highway Authority have no knowledge of any speeding cyclists, conflicts or concerns along this existing route and therefore do not believe that any conflicts would arise from providing a direct / straighter route within the site.

Although it is acknowledged that the development will increase the density of pedestrian movements given residential flows attributed to the proposal however, Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design states the following on shared use design:

6.5.9 Research shows that cyclists alter their behaviour according to the density of pedestrians – as pedestrian flows rise, cyclists tend to ride more slowly and where they become very high cyclists typically dismount. It should therefore rarely be necessary to provide physical calming features to slow cyclists down on shared use routes, but further guidance on this, and reducing conflict more generally, is given in Chapter 8, section 8.2.

It has also been advised to the applicant that there could be other design features that could aid reducing speeds if this was necessary, including the alignment of the route on the podium in the same way as the 90^0 turn does on the southern side of the bridge and as was included within the initial designs at the pre-application stage.

The Highway Authority are therefore not provided with any justification to suggest that the proposed route has any greater safety benefit than a more direct route which is specified by Policy

The applicant has stated within the Policy Assessment Note: North/South Shared Pedestrian Cycle Route (dated 24th Sept 2020) that by providing a route through the development site and removing the existing barrier of the existing SSE buildings that it is complying with Policy CR11g and the RSAF and continues at paragraph 4.3 to state:

Wayfinding will be an important element to the strategic route as pedestrians and cyclist journey from the station to Christchurch Bridge. It is not possible to look down the entire route from the station given the urban form across the two development sites and such a route was not envisaged as part of the RSAF or Local Plan. Therefore, clear and visually legible wayfinding will be provided as a key element of the proposals, increasing permeability in the area.

However, the Reading Station Area Framework includes numerous illustrative diagrams that clearly illustrate what can only be described as a straight visual link between the station and the river and I explicitly refer to paragraph 7.10 which states the following:

The new development will result in new views being opened up within the Station Area itself. ***Of particular significance are views along the direct north-south link, between the Station and the Thames, where there should be an unbroken line of sight.***

It is therefore clearly evident that the RSAF required a straight route to help facilitate clear and legible wayfinding to the Christchurch Bridge and beyond.

It should be added that given the application is not for the whole site and is of a complex shape it already makes the legibility of any route through the site to the bridge difficult. The proposed design to include the switch back at the rear of the site and the building along the eastern boundary of the site worsens this legibility and does not provide a clear visible destination, which is referred at Paragraph 5.4.6 of the Local Plan and 7.10 of the Reading Station Area Framework referenced above. The image below clearly identifies this and would be contrary to Policy in this regard.

It is noted that a new additional route has been provided between the site and the towpath as identified during the pre-application discussions. The Highway Authority had previously identified that a 1:21 gradient (4.7%) was proposed for this link and clarification was requested that the actual distance complied with the Table below taken from the CD 195 Designing for cycle traffic.

Longitudinal gradients

E/3.9 Cycle track gradients shall be provided in accordance with Table E/3.9.

Table E/3.9 Maximum length for gradients

Gradient	Maximum length of gradient (metres)
2.0%	150
2.5%	100
3.0%	80
3.5%	60
4.0%	50
4.5%	40
5.0%	30

The applicant has however stated that the route would be dedicated for pedestrians only as such the proposed gradient of 1:21 is seen as acceptable for the future uses and that to achieve the level change from the site down to the river a small number of steps are needed however an alternative step free route is conveniently provided for those who may have impaired mobility.

The Highway Authority do not agree that this route should be pedestrian only as it will provide cycle access from the cycle route along Vastern Road to the Towpath along the River Thames, which to the east is National Cycle Network Route 5. This route will become the desire line to NCN Route 5 and the towpath from the town centre and as such must accommodate cyclists. It should also be noted that the Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (LCWIP) identifies the Towpath as being dedicated as a cycle route and therefore it is imperative that this link is suitable for cyclists. It is also anticipated that once the route through the site is opened it will form the strategic route as opposed to the existing route along Norman Place, whether this is to travel further north or to link to the Towpath itself.

The Technical Note also contradicts the applicants Strategic Shared Cycle Footway document as it stipulates the route to the Towpath as being for cycles, I attach an extract below of the document identifying this, for ease of reference.

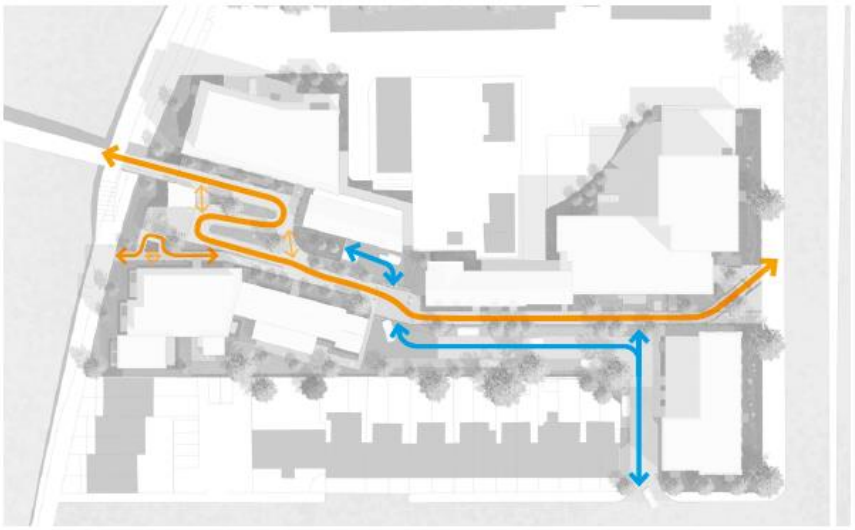
Access and Movement

Through the central part of the site sits a dedicated 3m wide cycle footway, flanked by landscaped elements and tree planting. This route connects the town centre from Vastern Road, through to the Thames Towpath and Christchurch Bridge to the north.

With the changes in level between the site, towpath and Christchurch Bridge, gentle deviations are introduced to the routes to maintain a DDA-compliant route at 1:21 or less throughout the site. This is supplemented through the introduction of shorter and more direct, stepped pedestrian routes that provide a more convenient pedestrian journey. These more direct pedestrian routes, should also reduce the number of pedestrians using the cycle footway through the meandering section.

As the dedicated cycle footway runs through the centre of the scheme, we have introduced a switchback as a speed calming measure for cyclists. The switchbacks themselves widen to 4m to provide safe manoeuvring space for all users.

Vehicles access the site through Lynmouth Road.



On reviewing the latest drawing within the Technical Note it is noted that the section of ramp that has a gradient of 1:21 would be within the maximum length specified in the table above. The revised drawings have however indicated that the gradient to the south of this particular link would be at a gradient of 1:14 approx. instead of the 1:21 previously illustrated. Given that the route should accommodate cyclists a gradient of 1:14 cannot be accepted. In response to the gradient of 1:14 Section 3.2 of DfT document Inclusive Mobility states the following:

These figures may be regarded as a counsel of perfection as the terrain in many places imposes steeper gradients than 2.5 per cent, ***but the standard of 5 per cent should be borne in mind when designing new footpaths and pedestrian areas****.*

Although lesser gradients are accepted within Inclusive Mobility this is a comprehensive redevelopment of the site and not alterations to an existing development where there is less scope to alter levels, therefore the gradient of 1:21 should be adhered to throughout the site and should not extend further than the specified lengths.

Overall the proposed scheme does not comply with Policy with regards the pedestrian / cycle route through the site which Policy regards as the main priority for the site as stated within paragraph 5.4.6 of the Local Plan, below:

In particular, on the Riverside site (CR11g), ***achieving this north-south link is the main priority for the site, and this should be given substantial weight in development management****.*

The Highway Authority therefore cannot support the proposal in this respect.

The applicant has proposed a contribution of £200,000 towards the provision of a toucan crossing on Vastern Road this will provide the continued link between Christchurch Bridge through the application site and towards Reading Station.

A design has been submitted that provides a dedicated cycle crossing facility along side a pedestrian crossing however I note the following:

- DfT Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20 states that the cycle crossing should be shared with pedestrians where a shared use path leads to the crossing as is the case in this instance. It is also stated that should a separated facility be provided the cycle track be on the approach to the crossing should be of a different material / level to pedestrians. See paragraphs below:

  10.4.17 Toucan crossings should be used where it is necessary to provide a shared facility, for example when there are space restrictions or where there is a shared use path or area leading to the crossing.

  10.4.23 The design of the cycle crossing should make it clear that it is not to be used by pedestrians. The footway and cycle track on the approach to the crossing should be paved in contrasting materials and preferably at different levels, separated by a kerb.

  As such the proposed crossing design does not comply with the relevant design criteria.

- It is also noted that the central island for pedestrians is only 2.64m in width however DfT Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20 states the refuge area should be a minimum of 3m in long and should be wide enough to cater for the number of people who would typically wait on them, as specified below:

  10.4.7 Refuges can be used to divide the crossing movement into stages (Figure 10.4). Refuges should be free of clutter, and at least 3.0m long (in the direction of travel for the cyclist) to protect users, including the cycle design vehicle, wheelchairs and mobility scooters. The refuge should be wide enough to accommodate the cycle design vehicle, and the number of people who may typically wait on them, including pedestrians at toucan and other shared crossings.

  Given that the central island is not wide enough and no information has been provided to confirm that the number of pedestrians could be accommodated the proposed design would again not comply with the relevant design criteria.

- The pedestrian crossing facility would be located too close to the existing street tree on the northern side of Vastern Road which would result in conflict between pedestrian and cyclists crossing and those travelling along the footway.

However regardless of the above concerns the Highway Authority are happy to accept the proposed contribution of £200,000 towards the design and delivery of a crossing on Vastern Road to provide an improved link between Reading Station and the application site.

It is noted that along the southern boundary of the Coal Drop Building an east west path is provided that circumvents the building, following previous comments this path has been extended further east to connect to the north south route given that residents will wish to use this as their desire line.

Vehicular

The primary vehicle access to the site will be via Lynmouth Road. The existing junction which currently only accommodates vehicles exiting the site will be improved and widened to 6m and reduced to 4.8m once 17m into the site to accommodate two-way vehicle movements.

Visibility splays of 2.4m x 17m have been illustrated at the proposed junction in line with Manual for Streets (MfS) for 15mph roads which the applicant considers an appropriate road speed for Lynmouth Road. However, as per Manual for Streets should a reduced visibility splay be proposed this would need to be evidenced by speed surveys. In this instance I would not require speed surveys as this is an existing access where the number of movements to and from the site are to reduce, the proposal is therefore not worsening the existing situation and therefore is acceptable.

Vehicle swept path analysis has been undertaken and include the following vehicles:

- Large Car
- RBC approved refuse collection vehicle (length 8.75m); and
- Heavy goods vehicle (length 10m).

Tracking diagrams have been provided to address the revised access layout and I am happy that these identify an acceptable route through the site. This does not remove the concerns highlighted above regarding the turning of vehicles within the site.

Given that the access is to now take the form of a bellmouth tactile paving has been provided on the footway.

The existing vehicle access off Vastern Road is to be retained as per its current arrangement but will only be for access to the retained SSE infrastructure adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. This has been accepted as this allows for a separation between the uses on the wider SSE site.

The 3.0m shared footway/cycleways runs adjacent the internal road and has two crossing points to allow for vehicle access into the parking courts.

At both of the vehicle cross over points pedestrians are to be given priority through managed vehicle speeds, signage, markings and materials. The vehicle cross overs are there to provide the required access into the parking areas and as such the vehicle trip generation is estimated to be low given the parking areas comprise of 30 spaces to the north and 13 in the southern area.

In principle this is deemed acceptable subject to the servicing comments found previously within this consultation response.

Trip Rate / Traffic Impact

The applicant undertook traffic surveys when the site was occupied by SSE on Tuesday 18th October 2016. Manual classified turning counts were carried out at each of the three vehicle access points into the site for a 12-hour period between 07:00 to 19:00. In addition, the occupancy of the existing parking was recorded across the same 12-hour period. I am happy that this is an acceptable form of reviewing the existing trip generation at the site.

The resulting network peak hour vehicle trip generation for the existing site is summarised in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Recorded Site Trip Generation (Existing Passenger Car Units)

Time Period	Vehicle Trip Generation		
	Arrive	Depart	Two Way
AM Peak (08:00 to 09:00	85	5	90
PM Peak (17:00 to 18:00)	1	64	66
Daily (07:00 to 19:00)	238	228	466

The traffic survey identifies that the existing use generated 90 and 66 two-way vehicle trips in the AM and PM peak hours respectively. Across a daily period (0700 to 1900), 466 two-way vehicle trips were recorded.

It is acknowledged that the substations and associated kit that will be retained on the SSE owned site which has approximately 20 car parking spaces. Vehicle trips associated with the remaining SSE kit will be minimal and associated with maintenance and storage only. I am therefore happy that no assessment is required to calculate the retained SSE element on the site.

The proposed trip generation has been calculated based on surveys of comparable sites within the TRICS database. Table 5.2 provides the total person trip rates and predicted people generation for the AM (08:00-09:00), PM peak hours (17:00-18:00) and Daily (07:00-19:00).

Table 5.2: Proposed Residential Total People (-OGV) Trip rates and Trip Generation (209 homes)

Time-Period	Trip Rate (per home)			Trip Generation (209 homes)		
	Arrive	Depart	Two Way	Arrive	Depart	Two Way
AM Peak (08:00 to 09:00	0.094	0.477	0.571	20	99	119
PM Peak (17:00 to 18:00)	0.364	0.200	0.564	76	42	118
Daily (07:00 to 19:00)	2.476	2.560	5.036	515	532	1,047

Table 5.2 (above) summarises that the proposed development of 209 homes will generate approximately 119 and 118 total person trips in the AM and PM peak period respectively. Across the daily period it is forecasted that 515 arrivals and 532 departures would be generated.

As agreed during the pre-application discussions the proposed leisure trips will be predominately pass-by or/and link trips and therefore I am happy that no further analysis is required for this land use.

To understand the modal split of the development people trips the 2011 Census Travel to Work Data has been used for the 'Reading 011' E02003399 Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) which is shown on Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Reading 011 MSOA

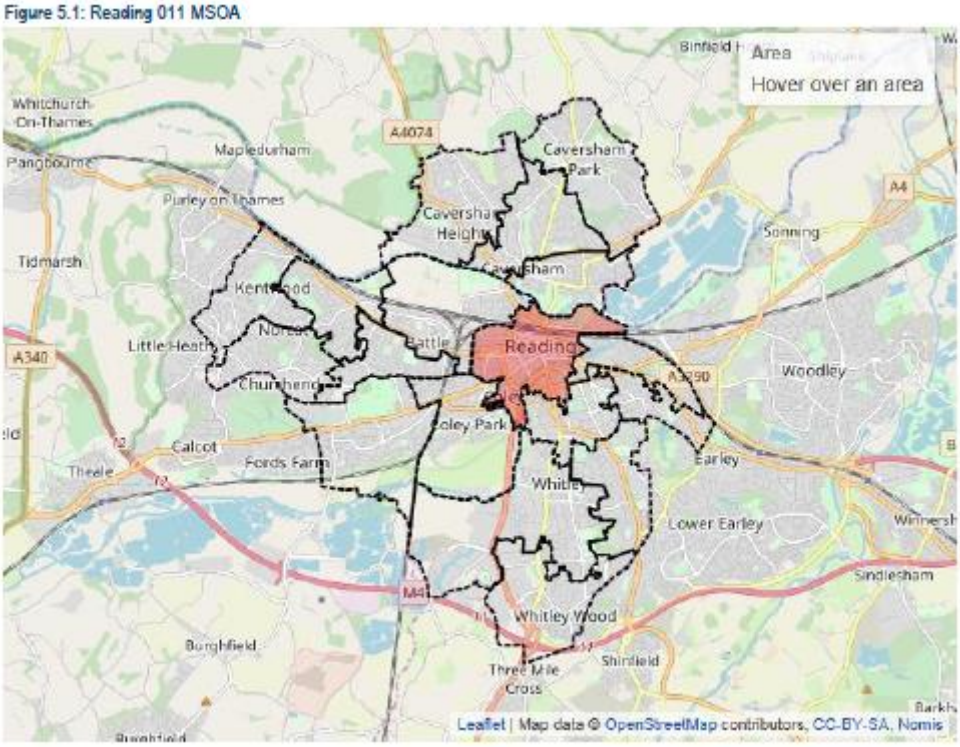


Table 5.3 (below) shows the modal split breakdown of trips generated by the proposed development.

Table 5.3: 2011 Census Modal Split and Multimodal Trip Generation

Time Period	Modal Split (%)	AM Peak (08:00 – 09:00)			PM Peak (17:00 – 18:00)		
		Arrive	Depart	Two Way	Arrive	Depart	Two Way
Underground, metro, light rail	0.4%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Train	20.4%	4	20	24	15	8	24
Bus/ Coach	11.5%	2	11	14	9	5	13
Taxi	0.3%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Motorcycle	0.4%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Driving a car or Van	30.4%	6	30	36	23	13	36
Passenger in a car or van	3.2%	1	3	4	2	1	4
Bicycle	3.5%	1	3	4	3	1	4
Foot	29.5%	6	29	35	22	12	35
Other	0.5%	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	**100%**	**20**	**99**	**119**	**76**	**42**	**118**

**May be some rounding errors*

Due to the sustainable location of the site, sustainable transport modes (car share, train, buses, walking, and cycling) accounts for 68.5% of trips. Of these sustainable modes walking (29.5%) is predicted to be the most common method of travelling to work with 35 two-way walking trips to/from the site in both peak periods.

Table 5.4, below, presents the net comparison of car trip generation of the existing SSE office and the proposed residential development.

Table 5.4: Net Difference Trip Generation

	AM Peak (8:00-9:00)			PM Peak (17:00-18:00)		
	Arrive	Depart	Two Way	Arrive	Depart	Two Way
Existing	85	5	90	1	64	65
Proposed	6	30	36	23	13	36
Residual Impact	-79	+25	-54	+22	-51	-29

As summarised in Table 5.4, the redevelopment of the former SSE site is predicted to result in an overall reduction of two-way car trips across both the AM and PM peak hours and therefore the principle of the development is acceptable.

Parking

RBC's Parking Strategy was adopted in October 2011, and contains residential parking standards, along with standards for cycle and motorcycle parking provision. The parking standards in Reading are based on RBC's zonal scheme. The site is located within Zone 2 however on the edge of Zone 1, therefore it was agreed with applicant during the pre-application stage that Zone 1 should be used given the sites high accessibility.

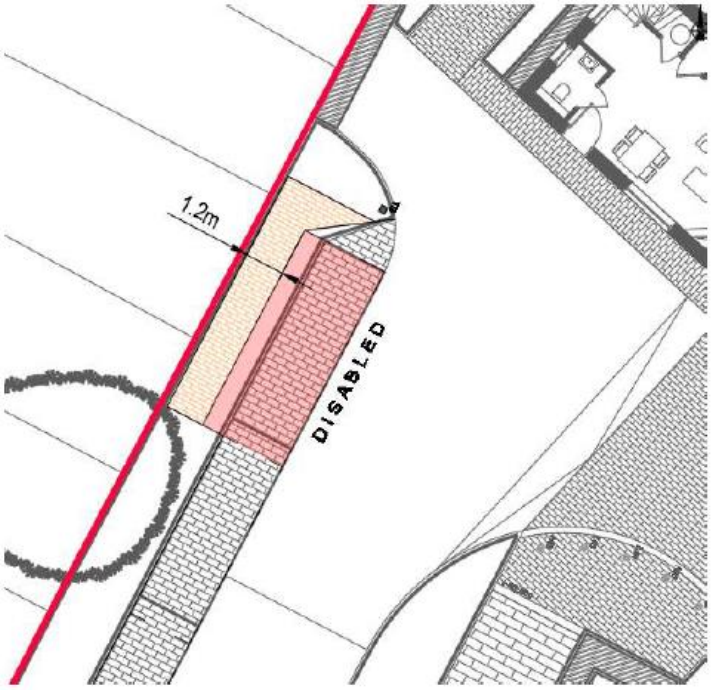
Based upon the accommodation mix the required car parking provision allowed on site is 111 spaces; based on all 1 and 2 bed flats having 0.5 spaces and 3 bed flats having 1 space each.

The development is proposing a total of 55 car parking spaces which equates to a provision of 0.26 parking spaces per dwelling which is below the required standard within the SPD. However, given the parking restrictions surrounding the application site and the good alternative transport links I am happy to accept the reduction in this case. This is also subject to the development not being eligible for parking permits.

It should however be noted that the application drawings illustrate a provision of 56 spaces with the car parking layout including the provision of tandem spaces. In principle I have no objection to this subject to these tandem spaces being allocated to a 3 bed unit. This has been agreed by the applicant and will be dealt with by way of a condition.

In line with RBC parking standards, all developments providing up to 200 spaces are required to provide 3 disabled spaces or 5% of total capacity, whichever is greater. In accordance with this, it is stated that the development will provide a total of 3 disabled spaces. The submitted drawings illustrate this provision and therefore this is acceptable in principle.

These spaces are to the correct dimensions but it is noted that the two on street bays will be provided with hardstanding to the west to aid access and egress to the vehicle, similar to the arrangement identified below and this is identified on drawing BHOC.448.LA.101 Landscape General Arrangement plan.



However, the revised plan does not include the provision of any dropped kerbs on both sides of the surrounding carriageways to provide suitable access to and from the disabled parking bays and it is noted that the route for the southern bay is not send pedestrians to a suitable footway location but towards a vehicle access point. This is contrary to DfT document Manaul for streets which states the following at Paragraph 6.3.30:

Vehicle crossovers are not suitable as pedestrian crossing points. Blind or partially sighted people need to be able to distinguish between them and places where it is safe to cross. Vehicle crossovers should therefore have a minimum upstand of 25 mm at the carriageway edge. Where there is a need for a pedestrian crossing point, it should be constructed separately, with tactile paving and kerbs dropped flush with the carriageway.

The proposed pedestrian access to and from these bays is therefore not compliant with design standards and is not supported by the Highway Authority.

It is stated that the provision of electric parking will be in accordance with the Reading Borough Local Plan adopted in November 2019, which states the following;

▫ Communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point."

A provision of 6 car parking spaces has now been proposed to be electric charging spaces with four electric vehicle charging points provided in the northern undercroft car park and a further two charging bays in the southern car park. This is deemed acceptable and although a drawing has not been submitted I am happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

The proposed development will provide cycle parking in accordance with RBC's Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, 2011. It had initially been proposed that 61 Sheffield stands (122 spaces) were to be provided in secure, covered and lit cycle stores within the proposed buildings, which is in excess of the Councils requirement of 105 cycle spaces. This was to be alongside an additional 4 stands (8 spaces) provided adjacent to the proposed café and outside seating area for visitor use.

However, it had previously been stipulated that the submitted cycle stores would only be sufficient to accommodate a provision of 40 cycle spaces should Sheffield type stands be used and 98 cycle space should a josta two tier cycle storage be used. This has subsequently been confirmed within the Technical Note. Either of these scenarios would result in a provision below the required standard.

Updated information has been provided on the cycle storage provision and it has been confirmed that each block would be provided within the following level of cycle parking, I can confirm that this provision would comply with Policy.

Building Ref	Accommodation Schedule	RBC Cycle Parking Requirements	Previous Cycle Parking Provision	Revised Cycle Parking Provision
Building A:	8 x 1 bed 19 x 2 bed	14 spaces	14 spaces *(7 josta stands)*	14 spaces *(7 josta stands)*
Building B:	29 x 1 bed 49 x 2 bed	39 spaces	30 spaces *(15 josta stands)*	40 spaces *(20 josta stands)*
Building C:	3 x 1 bed 7 x 2 beds	5 spaces	6 spaces *(3 josta stands)*	6 spaces *(3 josta stands)*
Building D:	8 x 1 bed 35 x 2 bed 12 x 3 bed	34 spaces	28 spaces *(14 josta stands)*	34 spaces *(17 josta stands)*
Building EFG:	13 x 1 bed 26 x 2 bed	20 spaces	20 spaces *(10 josta stands)*	20 spaces *(10 josta stands)*
Overall	209	112 spaces	98 spaces	114 spaces

I have however reviewed each Block and I comment on each as follows:

Block A – This is deemed acceptable.

Block B - This is deemed acceptable.

Block C – Comments below

The cycle store positions/access points have been revised for Block C following previous comments and these are illustrated on drawing 448.PL.BC.100C. Having reviewed this drawing it is however noted that access to this store is through the bin store and would not be desirable and therefore dedicated external access doors should be provided.

It should also be stressed that Block C provides a provision of 22 cycle spaces when this block only requires a provision of 6 cycle spaces. This layout should be altered to reduce the cycle parking numbers and provide a dedicated access route. I would however be happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

Block D – This is deemed acceptable.

Block E,F & G – This is deemed acceptable.

The proposed cycle parking provision is therefore acceptable subject to conditions.

Servicing and Emergency Access

It has been stated that the delivery and servicing strategy for the proposal has been developed in accordance with RBC guidance and MfS and that all servicing and delivery requirements will be undertaken internally within the site boundary.

It had previously been commented that the Design and Access Statement appeared to illustrate at least one of the refuse stores to be located in excess of 10m from where a vehicle would collect. Clarity was therefore requested to ensure that refuse storage areas are in line with MfS.

The applicant has responded to state that the arrangement of the internal roads and shape of the site has meant that some of the bin stores are located outside of the recommended 10m carry distance for refuse operatives. Stantec drawing **47500/5500/005 Rev A** provides a swept path strategy for refuse collection from the 6 bin stores on site and the route between the store and collection vehicle, the distances are summarised below for each bin store:

Bin Store 1 (Building EFG) – 11m
Bin Store 2 (Building D) – 3m
Bin Store 3 (Building C) – 7m
Bin Store 4 (Building B, north) – 10m
Bin Store 5 (Building B, south) – 11m
Bin Store 6 (Building A) – 10m

The distance to the bin stores at building EFG and B (south) are only 1m over the recommended distances for operatives. Given that this is a minimal difference from the 10m carry distance this has been deemed acceptable.

The below diagram identifies the fire strategy for the site which includes the requirement of a fire tender accessing beyond the bollards to the northern section of the dedicated footway / cycleway. Tracking diagrams have now been provided to confirm that a fire tender could get to and from the area in question and this is deemed acceptable.

Given the above the Highway Authority objects to the proposal on the following grounds.

Reason for refusal

The proposed development does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of a direct and legible footway/cycleway provision through the site and, as a result, is in conflict with Local Plan Policies TR3, TR4 and CR11g and the Reading Station Area Framework.

The layout does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of vehicle parking for those with disabilities and is in conflict with Local Plan Policy TR5.

Darren Cook
Transport Development Control Manager