

Ola Operation

Ola offer an app-based ride hailing service for Private Hire Vehicles. The operation of the service is detailed as follows:

- A user downloads the smartphone app and sets up an account using a debit or credit card
- The user enters their trip details and reviews the fee quotations provided based on the proposed route and type of vehicle
- Once a quotation is accepted, the trip is confirmed by a driver. No manual intervention from the driver or passenger is required with the exception of each party accepting the fare quotation or ride request. Unlike in traditional PHV operations, no 'despatching' is required from a call handler or coordinator by virtue of Ola's servers and the apps used by driver and passenger
- The driver's app guides the driver to the collection point by GPS
- The passenger enters the vehicle and is taken to their end destination
- On completion of the trip, the fare is automatically deducted from the customer's credit / debit card

The above operation does not require the input of any third parties. A traditional PHV operation requires a despatch office within which a call handler takes calls from members of the public and despatches cars to carry out pre-booked rides. Many such offices also include a public-facing office into which members of the public can visit in order to book trips on an ad hoc basis. In order to facilitate this, PHVs generally congregate at or in the area around these offices so as to be in a position to accept rides booked at short notice from members of the public.

The Ola model does not require a physical presence in which to house a call handler as all journey are booked via Ola's app. Similarly, drivers are routed to customers via the app. Drivers do not congregate at a despatch office in order to accept ad hoc bookings as customers are not able to access a booking office and all bookings are taken through an app. Occupation of the premises will be within normal office business hours of approximately 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

Ola Premises Requirement

Ola require a location in each licencing authority area for two reasons as detailed below.

1. Administrative Function

Ola require a B1 business premises from which to carry out business support functions including:

- Record Keeping – Ola are required to keep records of all bookings and journeys made for administrative, monitoring and legal purposes
- Marketing – Ola require a presence in all regions in order to prepare and action local and regional marketing strategies
- General Administration – various 'back of house' tasks required in the day to day operation of any business
- One Off Meetings – new drivers with Ola may be required to participate in interviews and or training with Ola representatives by means of pre-existing appointments. In such an instance, Ola would carry out this work within their office suite or make use of existing conferencing facilities within the business centre

There would be no requirement for drivers to visit the premises on a regular basis. New drivers would visit the site on a one off basis by means of appointments, the frequency and intensity of which would be ancillary to the main use of the premises as a B1 office use. The frequency and intensity of visits would be in line with and proportionate to the normal operation of a B1 office which may include the interviewing of staff, business meetings and staff training.

2. Licencing Function

In most cases in the United Kingdom, the local authority is responsible for licensing PHVs and taxis within the borough. In order to support a licencing application in each authority requires that the licence is issued to a relevant business address within the borough. A traditional PHV operation would use the despatch office as the licenced location.

As detailed above however, Ola will not operate a despatch office. Licencing Officers within each authority must be satisfied that the address included in the licensing application is appropriate by requesting that a licencing application is supported by planning permission or confirmation in writing from the planning department that planning permission is not required.