

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Ward:** Abbey

**Application No.:** 221235/FUL

**Address:** 138-141, 142-143 & 144 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1EX

**Proposal:** Demolition of No's 138-141 & 142-143 Friar St, partial demolition of No. 144 Friar St and erection of ground, mezzanine and 1st to 6th floor (7 storey) hotel building with 163 bedspaces (Class C1), with ancillary ground floor lounge, bar and restaurant and associated works.

**Applicant:** The National Pub Portfolio Ltd

**Date Valid:** 09/09/2022

**Application target decision date:** Originally 09/12/2022, but a formal extension of time has been agreed until 21/12/2022

**26 week date:** 10/03/2022

### RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the outcome of further input from (the following specialist advisors to the LPA)  
a) the Building Research Establishment (BRE) in respect of daylight and sunlight matters and b) Hoare Lea in respect of sustainability and energy matters, delegate to the Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services (AD PTRS) to (i) GRANT full planning permission, itself subject to the satisfactory completion of a Section 106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the Section 106 legal agreement not be completed by the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (unless officers on behalf of the AD PTRS agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).

The Section 106 legal agreement to secure the following:

1. An Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) (construction and end user phases of development)

Provision and implementation of both a construction and end user phase Employment Skills and Training Plan or equivalent financial contributions, as calculated by the levels as set out in the adopted Employment and Skills SPD (all financial contributions index-linked from the date of permission)

2. Securing the Class C1 hotel use:

- Hotel Use (Class C1) only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in the same Use Class of the Schedule to the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification - (for example as an apart-hotel or serviced apartments (Class C1), self-contained residential units (Class C3), small/large houses in multiple occupation (Class C4 or Sui Generis)

- not to let or licence for occupation or permit or suffer occupation of any of the hotel rooms for a continuous period of more than 3 months to the same occupier or occupiers

- other than those customers staying in accordance with the above, not to let or licence for occupation or permit or suffer occupation of any hotel room for a continuous period for more than 3 months to the same customer or customers
- not to require customers of any hotel room to agree to any minimum period of occupation (of whatever duration)
- to provide to the Council within 14 days of written request evidence regarding the use or occupation of the hotel rooms or any of them

Conditions to include:

1. Time Limit - 3 years
2. Approved plans
3. Pre-commencement, barring demolition, details of all external materials to be submitted to the LPA (and sample details to be provided on site) and approved in writing with the LPA. Approved details to be retained on site until the work has been completed
4. Pre-commencement, barring demolition, ground floor shopfront details at 1:20 section and layout for new elements
5. Demolition works not to be undertaken before a contract for site redevelopment, as per submitted and approved details to LPA.
6. Pre-commencement level 2 photographic recording of No. 144 Friar St (The Bugle PH)
7. Compliance condition for the Friar Street frontage to retain 'active window displays'
8. Pre-occupation details of a public art strategy to be submitted and approved, and completed prior to first use of the proposed hotel
9. Pre-commencement demolition and construction method statement (including EP based matters)
10. Pre-occupation provision of cycle parking as specified
11. Pre-occupation provision of the number of refuse and recycling facilities as specified
12. Compliance condition in relation to deliveries and servicing to be in accordance with details submitted.
13. Compliance condition for glazing and ventilation to be carried out in accordance with the Noise Assessment specifications
14. Pre-occupation of hotel noise (including specific reference to structure-borne noise) assessment (relating to the ancillary gym)
15. Compliance condition for hours for deliveries and/or waste collection
16. Compliance condition for noise level of plant equipment to be restricted.
17. Pre-first occupation details of odour assessment to be submitted and approved
18. Pre development above foundation level details of air quality mitigation scheme to be submitted and approved
19. Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land site characterisation assessment
20. Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land remediation scheme
21. Pre-construction contaminated land validation report
22. Reporting of unexpected contamination at any time
23. Compliance condition relating to hours of demolition/construction works
24. Compliance condition relating to no burning of materials or green waste on site
25. Pre-occupation submission and approval of measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing bin stores
26. Pre-commencement, barring demolition, hard and soft landscaping details, specifically including brown roof details
27. Removal of roof tiles at The Bugle under supervision & various steps if bats are found
28. Pre-commencement, barring demolition, submission and approval of biodiversity enhancement works

29. Pre-commencement, barring demolition, submission of and approval of access control strategy
30. Pre-commencement, barring demolition to ground level, submission and approval of archaeological details
31. Pre-commencement, barring demolition, submission and approval of Sustainable Drainage Strategy
32. Compliance condition for SuDS approved in condition above to be completed prior to first occupation and managed/maintained thereafter.
33. Pre-occupation submission and approval of foul water details / strategy, in consultation with Thames Water.
34. Pre-occupation submission and approval of waste water details / strategy, in consultation with Thames Water.
35. Pre-occupation submission and approval of water network details / strategy, in consultation with Thames Water.
36. Pre-occupation details of an external lighting strategy to be submitted and approved, and installed prior to first use of the proposed hotel
37. Compliance condition relating to any lounge, bar or restaurant associated with the hotel to be ancillary to the hotel use.
38. Compliance condition stipulating a maximum of 163 bedrooms, including no fewer than 7 accessible bedrooms, within the proposed Class C1 hotel
39. Compliance condition relating to any lounge, bar or restaurant associated with the hotel only to be open to non-hotel guests between 08:00 - 00:00 on Mondays to Saturdays and 08:00 to 22:00 on Sundays or Bank Holidays
40. Compliance condition relating to any indoor gym being ancillary to the hotel use, for hotel guests only and not being open to members of the public.

**Informatives:**

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Highway works
3. Traffic Regulation Order
4. Section 106 Legal Agreement
5. Possible requirement for separate advertisement consent
6. Thames Water based informatives
7. Clarification concerning pre-commencement conditions
8. CIL
9. Party Wall Act
10. Building Regulations
11. Terms and conditions

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application site comprises three separate buildings and an access route/service yard known as Fife Court located on the south side of Friar Street, between the junctions of West Street and Queen Victoria Street in Central Reading. It is broadly rectangular in shape, level in terms of topography and 0.11 hectares in size. The exact site location is detailed below in figure 1:



Figure 1: Extract of Site Location Plan (not to scale)

- 1.2 As existing, the site first comprises the basement and 3-storey No's 138-141 Friar Street building, occupied by Revolución de Cuba bar. Based on the officer site visit on 14<sup>th</sup> October only the basement, ground and first floors contained floorspace. Neighbouring this is the 3-storey No. 142-143 Friar Street, occupied by Eyesite Opticians. Neither of these two buildings are listed or considered to be of any specific historical or architectural importance.
- 1.3 Thirdly, the vacant The Bugle Public House at No. 144 Friar Street is part single, part two and part-three storeys in height and also includes a cellar (inaccessible at the time of the officer site visit). Information submitted with the application states the public house was last occupied for its lawful use in October 2021. The Bugle is included on the Council's List of Locally Important Buildings, which although not statutory nationally listed buildings, are nonetheless significant to the heritage of the local area. The Bugle was resolved to be added to the list after consideration by the Planning Applications Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022, with the local listing specifying:

*The Bugle at 144 Friar Street is a former public house dating from the mid-19th century. Until its 2021 closure, it had been in use for the sale of beer since at least 1841 and represents the last traditional public house in the western part of Friar Street. It sits within Fife Court, which is one of the last examples of small courts in central Reading, with many other examples having already been lost.*

*The building was initially classed as a beerhouse, operated by Daniel David according to the 1841 Census, of which there were a number in Reading, under the simplified licensing system of the 1830 Beer Act. Despite changes to the licensing regime in 1869 that resulted in the closure of many of Reading's beerhouses, the Bugle retained its license. It received a wine licence in 1952 and a full publican's licence in 1955.*

*The name of The Bugle dates from at least 1866, and the current pub sign is from the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment at the Battle of Maiwand (1880), which is also commemorated by the Maiwand Lion monument in Forbury Gardens.*



*There is likely to have been an association between the pub and regiment, with the owner in 1850 being William Winkworth, a Captain and adjutant in the Berkshire Royal Militia, which took part in the Crimean War and was amalgamated into the regiment in 1881. The name prior to 1866 may have been The Sir John Barleycorn.*

*The building was in the Winkworth family ownership until being auctioned in 1882 along with the Fife Court cottages. In 1903, the freehold owner was the brewery H & G Simonds, which operated from Bridge Street until 1978, and which was an important part of Reading's 19th Century industries.*

*Whilst there have been changes made to the building over the years, the overall size, scale, massing and contribution to the Friar Street environment remain, as well as the flat clay tiles, single central timber framed window facing Friar Street, and angled corner. Alterations include a rearrangement of the bars in 1920 and changes to the smoke room in 1925.*

- 1.4 Also included within the red line boundary of the application site is some of the access route of Fife Court, which provides servicing access to the application site buildings and those which front onto Broad Street to the south and east from Friar Street (see below in Figure 2).



Figure 2: Site photograph from Friar Street looking south-west towards the application site

- 1.5 The following designations and information in relation to the application site is relevant:

- The site is not specifically allocated for development within the local plan;
- The site is within the boundary of the Reading Central Area, where policies CR1-10 apply;
- The site is within the Primary Shopping Area, Central Core and Office Core (Policy CR1);
- The Friar Street frontage is a designated primary frontage in Central Reading as existing (Policy CR7);
- The site is within an Air Quality Management Area (Policy EN15);
- The site is within an area of Archaeological potential (Policy EN2);

- Within the 'Station Hill and around' town centre district heating cluster (paragraphs 8.7 - 8.10 of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD)
- The site is in a Smoke Control Zone;
- Friar Street is part of the Classified highway network and a cycle route (see Policy TR4). Friar Street is used by buses and has access restrictions in place during certain times of the day. There is a 24 hour restriction in place for Friar Street westbound (except for buses and taxis) and time restricted access Friar Street eastbound between 7am - 11am and 4pm - 7pm and restricted access to Market Place. A section of a 'no stopping' red route has been introduced east along Friar Street. This restriction means vehicles will not be allowed to stop unless they are within a dedicated loading bay.
- The site is located within Zone 1 of the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, which is an area at the very heart of Reading Borough. This area is well served by rail and bus links and also contains the largest proportion of public car parking spaces;
- The site is outside one of the three major opportunity areas (MOA) within Central Reading, with the Station/River MOA being to the north of the site (Friar Street is the boundary);
- The site is outside a designated tall buildings cluster;
- The site is outside of the Reading Station Area Framework 'station area boundary' (figure 2.1);
- The site is outside of a designated conservation area, but is within 145m of Market Place / London Street Conservation Area (to the east);
- The site is nearby to a number of listed buildings and other locally listed buildings, as shown below in figure 3:



Figure 3: Listed and locally listed buildings at and nearby the site

- 1.6 The surrounding area comprises a mix of uses, predominantly commercial in use within Central Reading along Friar Street, Queen Victoria Street, Station Road (towards Reading Station), Broad Street and Union Street. Most notably the Novotel / Ibis hotel is directly to the north of the site, on the opposite side of Friar Street. There are a large number of retail and related shops at ground floor level, with a significant amount of office and related uses on the upper floors. There are also some limited residential uses in the immediate areas, exclusively on the upper floors of buildings. The surrounding scale and nature of buildings vary (as shown in

figure 4 below), with a range of styles and forms, with numerous listed buildings to the east (as already identified above).

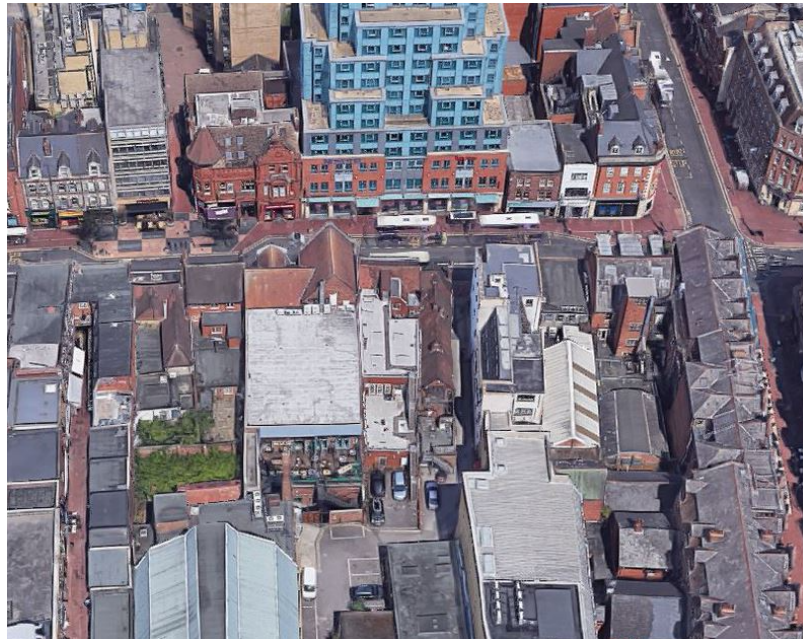


Figure 4: Aerial view looking north from the south of the application site

1.7 This applicant is specified on the application form as The National Pub Portfolio Ltd. The applicant has clarified that the parent company of the applicant is Thackeray Estates Group Ltd. Information submitted with the application states that Thackeray Estates also owns nearby sites at 145, 146, 147-148, 149-150 and 156-158 Friar Street, 1-15 and 2-4 Queen Victoria Street, 1 Station Road and 70-72 and 200-202 Broad Street. The applicant therefore owns three quarters of the buildings on the Station Road/Queen Victoria Street and Friar Street junction. In light of the separate current applications at 1-15 Queen Victoria Street and 145-148 Friar Street, Reading (221232 & 221233 - see relevant history section below, where the applicant is specified as Thackeray Estates Reading Investments Ltd - another separate Ltd company) a blue line has been shown on the location plan (figure 1) around the neighbouring site, but not other nearby sites owned by Thackeray Estates Group Ltd.

1.8 The application is being considered at Planning Applications Committee as it relates to a major application which is recommended for approval by officers.

## 2. PROPOSALS

2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the following works:

- Demolition of No. 138-141 Friar Street (existing Revolución de Cuba bar)
- Demolition of No. 142-143 Friar Street (existing Eyesite Opticians building)
- The partial demolition of No. 144 Friar Street (former Bugle Public House), specifically:
  - o The façades to the front and flank, alongside the roof would be retained and incorporated within the new development.
  - o Any internal historic beams would be removed carefully and reinstated in situ.
  - o Elements to the rear (south) of the building to be demolished in full.
  - o Infilling of the existing cellar.

- The full extent of the demolition and retention works are shown on the separate set of demolition plans submitted with the proposals.
- The erection of a ground, mezzanine and 1st to 6th floor (7 storeys but 8 floors of accommodation given the mezzanine level) hotel building with 163 bedspaces (Class C1), as follows:

Floor	Total number of bedrooms	Minimum & maximum floor areas	DDA units
Ground	5	20.5 - 23sqm	-
Mezzanine	17	19.8 - 31.9sqm	1
First	26	19.8 - 28.5sqm	1
Second	26	19.8 - 28.5sqm	1
Third	26	19.8 - 28.5sqm	1
Fourth	26	19.1 - 28.5sqm	1
Fifth	20	19.8 - 28.5sqm	1
Sixth	17	19.8 - 28.5sqm	1
Total	163		7 / 163 = 4.29%

- The proposed hotel would also include:
  - Double height foyer and entrance area, reception space, administration office, luggage area, two separate stair cores and three separate lifts.
  - An ancillary ground floor lounge, bar and restaurant (so within the Class C1 use, rather than being a standalone unit with a separate use) which will be a double height space towards the Friar Street frontage, with associated kitchen, staff canteen and changing facilities to the rear. The bar and restaurant are specified as being connected to the hotel use, but are also proposed for use by non-hotel guests
  - On site cycle parking, refuse facilities, external courtyard, plant, substation and services (all at ground floor level)
  - An ancillary gym for hotel guests only, located at mezzanine floor level.
  - At roof level, areas for brown roofs, photovoltaics, lift overruns and louvred screening for plant.
  - Areas of blue roofs (for the retention and slower draining of rainwater as part of the SuDS strategy) with the first and fifth floor roofspaces

2.2 During the course of the application further information has also been submitted by the applicant to address various issues which have arisen through consultation responses and feedback on the proposals. This has included matters in relation to transport, ecology, sustainability and energy, environmental protection matters, accessible rooms, CIL and daylight and sunlight matters. None of these changes are of a nature or extent which are considered to warrant formal re-consultation on the application.

#### Interaction with separate proposals at neighbouring 1-15 Queen Victoria Street & 145-148 Friar Street

2.3 The application has been presented by the applicant as “Queen Victoria Street Phase 2” or “QVS2” (despite none of the application site actually being on Queen Victoria Street and this not being a phased application). Further to the land ownership position outlined at paragraph 1.7 above, a separate proposal at 1-15 Queen Victoria Street & 147-148 Friar Street (Refs 210223 & 210224) was resolved to be granted by the Planning Applications Committee on 23/06/2021 (see relevant history below). The S106 Legal Agreement associated with the planning application

is, however, yet to be completed, so this is currently undetermined, pending the completion or otherwise of the S106 Legal Agreement. This is referenced by the applicant as “Queen Victoria Street Phase 1” or “QVS1”.

- 2.4 Furthermore, an altered proposal at an expanded site, the same as 210223/210224 but also including No's 145 & 146 Friar Street, is currently under separate consideration by the local planning authority (Refs 221232 & 221233 - see relevant history below). This is referenced by the applicant as “Queen Victoria Street Phase 1+”, “Expanded Phase 1” and “QVS1+”. In short, both the QVS1 & QVS1+ proposals involve reconfigured basement and ground floor retail uses, an upper floor apartment and a new public courtyard. The interaction between the sites is detailed below in Figure 4.



Figure 4 - interaction between QVS1, QVS1+ and the application site QVS2

- 2.5 The proposals subject to these applications have been submitted separately, but given the same parent company owns the two sites, linkages have been referenced in the submission. For example, the proposed works to Fife Court as part of this application are suggested to assist in the entrance / connection proposed within the QVS1+ proposal and through to the public courtyard. Paragraph 1.7 of the supporting Planning Statement also outlines that *“This current application, Phase 2 of the QVS applications, aims to expand and encompass Phase 1 & 2 together, working together (separate applications) so Phase 2 can further enhance and regenerate the Friar Street frontage, presenting active frontages, a food and beverage offer, which underpins the QVS1 market square and enlivens the space to compliment this comprehensive redevelopment. The aspiration is to achieve the ongoing enhancement and regeneration of this important town centre site”*.
- 2.6 The applicant (at Section 3.2 of the Design and Access Statement) also specifies that *“The redevelopment of 1-15 Queen Victoria Street & 147-148 Friar Street (QVS1) and 138-146 Friar Street (QVS2) has always been seen as one development in two phases with primary focus being on the repair, restoration, and regeneration of the listed buildings as the key catalyst for the redevelopment of the site and ultimately this part of the town centre”*.
- 2.7 However, officers are mindful to note that the applications have been submitted as entirely separate planning applications. Officers consider that they must therefore



be considered on their own individual merits, with it being entirely possible that only one of the schemes may be implemented (if permitted). Alternatively, both could be implemented, but may come forward at different times. Furthermore, land ownership could also change at any point in future too. The applicant has not specified that this proposal is unequivocally required to facilitate QVS1 or QVS1+, or put another way, the QVS2 proposal has not been presented as a form of enabling development. The applicant does however specify (at section 3.3 of the Design and Access Statement) that the proposal “*integrates with the Phase 1 and allows the expansion of the market square (Phase 1+), thus utilising the benefits of the said [public] square and further underpinning the deliverability of the Phase 1 development*”.

- 2.8 Furthermore, the submission specifies the intended future occupier of the hotel as the Jury's Inn hotel chain. Paragraph 1.11 of the Planning Statement specifies “*The Applicant has partnered with Jury's Inn, who have assessed at each stage the functionality of the scheme to ensure it is a viable and deliverable*”. Paragraph 6.63 of the Planning Statement expands on this by stating: “*The Applicant has a commercial partner who they have been working with and the future operator will be Jury's Inn, who have been consulted throughout the process on design and layout, as such, this is a scheme that will be delivered as opposed to speculative*”. Officers advise that whilst the submission has specified an intended future occupier, this is not material in the consideration of the planning application, with the application assessed on the basis of the proposed hotel use only.
- 2.9 In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the applicant duly completed a CIL liability form as part of the submission of this application. During the accompanied officer site visit on 14/10/2022 it was witnessed that some of the information provided in respect of the existing floorspace was inaccurate. This facilitated the submission of revised CIL evidence plans and a revised CIL form on 16/11/2022. The future CIL liability is likely to be in the region of £650,583.36, on the proviso that all of the existing floorspace is able to be counted to reduce the liability (which will be ascertained at the time of the future decision). This estimate is also based on the 2022 indexation rate (proposed floorspace of 6,264 x CIL rate of £156.24 per square metre = £978,687.36, minus the existing floorspace of 2,100 x CIL rate of £156.24 per square metre (£328,104) = grand total of £650,583.36. All floorspace figures are based on information submitted by the applicant).
- 2.10 Plans and documents submitted (only the latest versions of documents are referenced; those superseded during the application are not):

Plans:

P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1201 Rev P01 Location Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-00-DR-A-1200 Rev P01 Site Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1130 Rev P01 Existing North Elevation - Demolition  
P21109-FCH-BB-M1-DR-A-1301 Rev P01 Proposed Mezzanine Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-01-DR-A-1302 Rev P01 Proposed First Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-02-DR-A-1303 Rev P01 Proposed Second Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-03-DR-A-1304 Rev P01 Proposed Third Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-04-DR-A-1305 Rev P01 Proposed Fourth Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-RF-DR-A-1308 Rev P01 Proposed Roof Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1701 Rev P01 Typical Window Type 1 Detail  
As all received on 19/08/2022

P21109-FCH-BB-B1-DR-A-1105 Rev P02 Existing Basement Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-00-DR-A-1102 Rev P02 Existing Ground Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-01-DR-A-1103 Rev P02 Existing First Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-02-DR-A-1104 Rev P02 Existing Second Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-03-DR-A-1106 Rev P01 Existing Third Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-RF-DR-A-1107 Rev P01 Existing Roof Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1120 Rev P02 Existing North Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1121 Rev P02 Existing East Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1122 Rev P02 Existing South Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1123 Rev P02 Existing West Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1151 Rev P01 Section A-A

P21109-FCH-BB-00-DR-A-1350 Rev P01 Demolition - Ground Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-01-DR-A-1351 Rev P01 Demolition - First Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-02-DR-A-1352 Rev P01 Demolition - Second Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-03-DR-A-1353 Rev P01 Demolition - Third Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-RF-DR-A-1354 Rev P01 Demolition - Roof Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1131 Rev P01 Existing North Elevation - Demolition  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1133 Rev P01 Existing West Elevation - Demolition

P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1410 Rev P02 Street Scape Friar Street Elevations  
As all received on 08/09/2022

P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1551 Rev P01 Existing Bugle Section  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1400 Rev P02 Proposed Front Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1401 Rev P02 Proposed East Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1402 Rev P02 Proposed South Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1403 Rev P02 Proposed West Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1404 Rev P02 Proposed Courtyard Elevation  
P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1501 Rev P02 Section A-A  
As all received on 09/09/2022

P21109-FCH-BB-XX-DR-A-1132 Rev P01 Existing South Elevation - Demolition  
As received 27/09/2022

P21109-FCH-BB-00-DR-A-1300 Rev P03 Proposed Ground Floor Plan  
As received on 25/10/2022

P21109-FCH-BB-05-DR-A-1306 Rev P02 Proposed Fifth Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-06-DR-A-1307 Rev P02 Proposed Six Floor Plan  
As received on 10/11/2022

[CIL Plans]

P21109-FCH-BB-00-DR-A-1102 Rev P02 Existing Ground Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-01-DR-A-1103 Rev P02 Existing First Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-02-DR-A-1104 Rev P02 Existing Second Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-03-DR-A-1106 Rev P01 Existing Third Floor Plan  
P21109-FCH-BB-B1-DR-A-1105 Rev P02 Existing Basement Plan  
As all received on 16/11/2022

Documents and other supporting information:

Air Quality Assessment by Gem Air Quality Ltd, Ref AQ1917, dated July 2022  
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment by Oxford Archaeology, Ref 8149 v.2, dated 27/07/2022

Outline Construction Method Plan by Mode Transport Planning Ref 326670 V1.3 dated August 2022

Daylight and Sunlight Report by Delva Patman Redler Ref 22262 Version 1.1 dated 05/08/2022

Design and Access Statement by Falconer Chester Hall Ref P21109-FCH-XX-XX-RG-A-0001 Rev P01 dated August 2022

Drainage Survey Report by C J Uden & Co. Ref 220631/db dated 20/07/2022

Delivery and Servicing Plan by Mode Transport Planning Ref 326670 V1.4 dated August 2022

Fire Assessment Initial Report by Horner Salus Ltd Version 1.1 dated 25/05/2022

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (including SUDS) BY JM Enviro Ltd Ref JME263.138-144FriarStreet.FRA\_QVS2\_REVA, dated 12/08/2022

JME-P263 001 Proposed Drainage Strategy Layout dated 18/07/2022

Heritage and Townscape Visual Impact Assessment by Revive & Tailor dated August 2022

Heads of Terms by Town Planning Bureau Ref URB-482e-FN23, dated 11/08/2022

Noise Impact Assessment Report by KP Acoustics Ref 24329.NIA.01 Rev A dated 18/07/2022

Planning Statement by Town Planning Bureau Ref URB-482e-ST1, dated 12/08/2022

Community Involvement by Town Planning Bureau Ref URB-482e-SCI-1, dated 12/08/2022

Letter from Axiom Structures 'QVS 2 - Structural Strategy for Retention of Structural Beams within the Bugle Public House' Ref 21004 QVS2-RP-01 dated 08/08/2022 & 3 plans 21044-QVS2-ASL-S-SK-009 - Bugle PH Existing Beam Retention Framework Travel Plan by Mode Transport Planning Ref 326670 V1.1 dated July 2022

Transport Statement by Mode Transport Planning Ref 326670 V1.2 dated August 2022

As all received on 26/08/2022

Floor Areas by Town Planning Bureau Ref URB-482e-FN25, dated 08/09/2022

Application form

As received 08/09/2022

Technical Note to Transport Statement by Mode Transport Planning Ref 221021 326679 TN v1.0, dated 21/10/2022

As received 25/10/2022

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Including a Protected Species Appraisal & BREEAM Assessment by Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd dated 28/10/2022

Biodiversity Matrix 3.1 auditing and accounting for biodiversity calculation tool (excel document)

As submitted 30/10/2022

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Form 1: CIL Additional Information

P21-109-FCH-XX-XX-SA-A-0002 Rev P02 Schedule of Accommodation by Falconer Chester Hall

Low Zero Carbon (LZC) Study by Troup Bywaters + Anders Ref WA0305-TBA-Q2-XX-RP-N-00003 Revision P02 - dated 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Energy and BREEAM Statement by Troup Bywaters + Anders Ref WA0305-TBA-Q2-XX-RP-N-00002 Revision P03 - dated 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022

MEP Strategies Report by Troup Bywaters + Anders Ref WA0305-TBA-Q2-XX-RP-N-00001 Revision P04 - dated 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Comments on Planning Submission by Troup Bywaters + Anders



138-144 Friar Street - Sustainability Statement / Procurement Plan by TE Station Rd Limited

SuDSPlanter specification details

Mat 06 - Material Efficiency - BREEAM RFO 2014 - Design Stage

Email from Troup Bywaters + Anders 'LL0100 - QVS - BREEAM - BREEAM AP Appointment' dated 14/11/2022

Stage 1 Letter from The Environmental Protection Group Limited dated 18/10/2022

As received 16/11/2022

Access and Servicing - Inclusive Design statement by FCH

Email from Town Planning Bureau 'Re: 138-144 Friar St, Reading (221235) - access officer comments'

Email from Gem Air Quality Ltd 'RE: QVS 2", dated 10/11/22, as received 21/11/22

Air quality based email from Town Planning Bureau 'Re: 138-144 Friar St (221235)'

As received 21/11/2022

Letter from Delva Patman Redler Ref SG/sg/22262 dated 21/11/22

Email from Gem Air Quality Ltd 'RE: 138-144 Friar Street (221235) - air quality", dated 22/11/22

Email from Town Planning Bureau 'RE: 138-144 Friar Street (221235) - air quality", dated 22/11/22

As received 22/11/2022

### **3. PLANNING HISTORY**

#### **Application site**

#### **3.1 138-141 Friar Street**

900390 - New shop front. Approved 31/7/1990.

900884 - Externally illuminated fascia and projecting signs. Approved 31/7/1990.

930815 - Fascia sign and projecting sign. Approved 25/8/1993.

960623 - New internally illuminated fascia sign.

980283 - Change of use of ground and first floors to class A3 (Food and Drink) or class D2 (Nightclub). Withdrawn 17/2/2000.

990465 - Flat fascia sign and projecting sign. Approved 29/1/2001.

991081 - Refit of existing shop unit including new shop front and dividing wall between other occupant's entrance and Bon Marchi. Approved 21/3/2001.

991120 - Change of use of first floor from A1 (retail) to A2 (financial and professional services). Granted 11/10/2000.

991826 - Proposed change of use of building from A1 (Retail) to use for a café bar/restaurant use within Class A3 of the Use Classes Order, & for open class A3 at first floor level.

991960 - Halo effect fascia panel amenity board, 2 fabric banners & wall lights. Approved 24/12/1999.

991961 - Various alterations including new shopfront with external seated area. Approved 8/12/1999.

030543 - 2 No new face panels to existing fascia and projecting sign. Approved 19/5/2003.

091808 - Retention of replacement fascia sign and projecting sign (retrospective). Refused 28/10/2009. Appeal (Ref APP/E0345/H/10/2120682) allowed 19/04/2010.

141193 - Alteration to existing front doorway position and installation of 1 no. additional single entrance pedestrian door to front elevation. Approved 18/09/2014.

141673 - Change of use of building from Class A1 retail to Class A4 bar, installation of external plant and alterations to shopfront. Approved 19/02/2015.

### 3.2 142-143 Friar Street

010994 - Change of use of ground floor to use Class A2 (Financial and Professional services). Approved 23/01/2002.

030121 - New fascia sign with halo illuminated lettering. Approved 05/06/2003.

080759 - Installation of new entrance door at the front elevation to form separate entrance to upper floors. Change of use of upper floors from retail to office. Withdrawn 26/11/2008.

081468 - Change of existing ground, first and second floors from A1 use to A2 use. Installation of new entrance door in the front elevation to form separate entrance to upper floors. Refused 30/12/2008.

090809 - Change of use of existing ground floor and basement from A1 to A2 use. (Resubmission of 08/01539/FUL). Withdrawn 03/02/2009.

### 3.3 144 Friar Street

030948 - Single storey rear extension and formation of roof terrace. Approved 13/11/2003.

#### **Other relevant nearby sites**

### 3.4 1-15 Queen Victoria Street and 147-148 Friar Street

210223 & 210224 - Part demolition of rear of site. Repair and refurbishment of listed building. Change of use of upper floors from office (Use Class E(g)) to apart hotel (Use Class C1). Erection of a three - storey rear extension with mansard. Erection of a part-single, part-two storey rear addition (Use Class E(a) or (b)). Alterations to ground floor principle façade. Creation of public square, and associated works. Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent resolved to be granted by the Planning Applications Committee on 23/06/2021. The S106 Legal Agreement associated with the planning application is yet to be completed, so both applications are currently undetermined, pending the completion or otherwise of the S106 Legal Agreement.

### 3.5 1-15 Queen Victoria Street and 145-148 Friar Street

221232 - Demolition of No. 146 Friar St and structures to rear and partial demolition of No. 145 Friar St and various external works to other existing buildings, as part of redevelopment to provide: reconfigured basement and ground floor uses (Class E(a) or (b)) on Friar St and Queen Victoria St frontages and proposed apart-hotel (Class C1) at part-basement, part-ground and on all upper floors; part-two, part-three storey rear extension to No's 5-15 (odd) Queen Victoria St; replacement basement and five storey building at No. 145 Friar St and two-storey roof extension to No. 146 Friar St; proposed public courtyard accessed via Queen Victoria St walkway; roof level plant; and various other associated works. Current application under consideration.

221235 - Various internal and external works associated with No's 147 and 148 Friar St and No's 1 - 15 (odd) Queen Victoria St, including part-two, part-three storey rear extension to No's 5-15 (odd) Queen Victoria St, as part of redevelopment to provide reconfigured basement and ground floor uses (Class E(a) or (b)) on Friar St and Queen Victoria St frontages and proposed apart-hotel (Class C1) and on all upper floors. Current application under consideration.

### 3.6 136-137 Friar Street

150068 - Change of use of first and second floor Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwellinghouses) to comprise 2 x 1 bedroom apartments. Prior Notification under Class J, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). Prior Approval Given 12/05/2015.

220215 - Ground floor extension to existing shop. Granted 26/04/2022.

## 4. **CONSULTATIONS**

### i) **Internal and external consultees**

#### a) **RBC Transport**

- 4.1 The Transport Development Control section raised some initial queries which facilitated the submission of a technical note by the applicant in response. This addressed the outstanding issues and Transport therefore removed their objection to the application, subject to conditions.
- 4.2 With reference to the Council's adopted parking standards, the hotel element of the development would require 0.25 parking spaces per bedroom, but a car-free development is proposed. Given the site's town centre location, where extensive on street parking restrictions will prevent unauthorised parking, a car-free development is acceptable.
- 4.3 The submitted Delivery and Servicing plan seeks the development to take place in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner. The applicant ideally seeks to amend the existing loading restrictions to the single loading bay on Friar Street, allowing for an extended dwell time and a daytime loading window in order to service the development. This would involve changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which will require separate approval by the Traffic Management Sub Committee (TSUB) and will be subject to statutory consultation. Given TROs are under separate legislation to the Planning Acts there is a possibility they may not be approved. Accordingly, the applicant has also provided delivery/servicing details if amendments cannot be secured. The service entrance will be accessed from Fife Court and it is proposed daily linen collection/delivery and food deliveries would

take place with vehicles sizes not exceeding a 4.6 Tonne van, due to existing access constraints along Fife Court, and with the aid of banksmen. Satisfactory swept path analysis for a 4.6 Tonne van reversing along Fife Court and exiting in a forward gear has been provided

- 4.4 Fife Court is narrow and is only wide enough to accommodate single way traffic. It is stated that Fife Court will be retained as existing, and access will continue to be maintained for existing users to the units that front Broad Street. The 7-8 parking spaces for these units will remain unaltered, with satisfactory tracking provided to demonstrate access to these spaces would continue to be possible when a delivery to the proposed hotel is taking place.
- 4.5 Deliveries for the proposed restaurant and bar element of the proposal will be on a weekly basis from either the loading bay located on Friar or from Queen Victoria Street. Goods will be trolleyed along Friar Street and Fife Court to the service entrance located at the rear of the hotel. This is reflective of existing arrangements. In overall terms the delivery and servicing arrangements are considered acceptable and will be secured via condition.
- 4.6 In terms of cycle parking, a revised plan showing 3 Sheffield stands within the ground floor of the hotel has been provided, demonstrating sufficient provision (6 spaces) for 33 on-site staff in line with the Council's current standards. A compliance condition will ensure this is provided.
- 4.7 The submission anticipates refuse collection would be via the loading bay on Friar Street to the east of the hotel, as undertaken by a private contractor. Bins will be wheeled from the designated refuse store on Fife Court to Friar Street. RBC Transport are content with this approach and for a compliance condition to secure this.
- 4.8 Given the site's town centre location a CMS will be required demonstrating a commitment to ensuring the number of HGV movements are managed and controlled. The CMS must demonstrate that appropriate measures will be implemented to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists around the construction site. The agreed measures included in the CMS will be approved by the Local Highway and Planning Department and covered by condition, with the potential cumulative impacts of the neighbouring application (see relevant history) also taken into account.

**b) RBC Conservation and Urban Design Officer (CUDO)**

- 4.9 The LPA's CUDO has provided detailed comments outlining the background (including pre-application discussions undertaken) and the legislative and policy context (national and local, including case law) for proposals of this nature. In the interests of brevity, these are not detailed in full within this report. Further, the CUDO has then provided commentary on the significance of the existing buildings, before commenting on the proposals and the impact on the significance of the heritage assets.
- 4.10 In relation to the significance of the existing buildings, neither No's 138-141 nor 142-143 are considered to be of any particular architectural or historic importance. However, the former Bugle Public House is a recent addition to the Council's List of Locally Important Buildings, as explained in section 1 above. It has existing significance as a strong reminder of early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Reading, with the following of particular relevance:

- It is probably the last remaining example of small courts (Fife Court) and the buildings on Friar Street.
- The size, scale and massing of the building is still clear. Whilst there have been some cosmetic alterations, the original form can still be seen. The building still has flat clay tiles and a single central timber framed window facing Friar Steet. The angled corner is still there, but its door has been replaced, but could easily be reinstated.
- While it is understood that the building dates back to c.1840s, it's shape and form are clearly seen on earlier historic maps.
- The exteriors of the buildings facing Fife Court, while not of a standard for statutory listing, are getting rarer as examples of early 19th Century building in the centre of Reading. It is acknowledged that the physical condition of the buildings at the rear are poor.

4.11 The setting of nearby statutory listed buildings, as per figure 3 within section 1 above, must also be considered in the context of the proposals and the legislative framework.

4.12 The proposals are broadly welcomed, involving most significantly:

- The retention of front portion of The Bugle;
- Ground level facades which retain a plot grain of individual shop fronts (thereby retaining existing character); whilst the middle section of the proposed hotel façade at ground floor level does not include a stallriser (instead glazing extends to pavement level), as per the Shopfronts SPD, the overall ground floor façade strikes an appropriate balance between the contemporary and the historic, aligning with the character of the building as a whole and its function as a hotel;
- More specifically, the Friar Street elevation creates an interesting ground level façade of human scale. The proposal as a whole retains the Friar Street character and setting, to the west of the listed Queen Victoria Street buildings (which are also sufficiently protected).
- The proposals to the rear of the site are sufficiently stepped and set back from the street;
- The retention of the Fife Court access and part of the side façade (which is the most historic) closest to Friar Street.

4.13 In terms of the overall impact of the proposals on the significance of the locally listed building at the site, the proposed development, in accordance with paragraph 203 of the NPPF, is considered to have “less than significant harm”. Furthermore, the proposed design sufficiently and successfully incorporates The Bugle into the new Friar Street streetscape. Steps have been taken to include the most significant elements of the building into the proposed development. On balance, it is considered to have been done in a satisfactory manner. With regard to the impact of the proposed development on the setting of nearby statutory listed buildings, in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF, less than substantial harm would occur. The overall scheme combines old and new development. It has been carefully considered by officers, local groups and benefitted from input with Reading DRP [Design Review Panel]. Overall, there is general support for the proposal and no objection to the demolition shown, subject to the following conditions:

- Pre-commencement level 2 photographic recording of No. 144 Friar St (Bugle) for the Historic Environment Record (HER)

- Pre-commencement, barring demolition, proposed material details
- Ground floor shopfront details at 1:20 section and layout for new elements (expectation to comply with RBC Shopfronts SPD unless where already shown otherwise).

**c) RBC Environmental Health - Environmental Protection**

- 4.14 A series of initial comments were received, specifying satisfaction subject to conditions in a number of areas, and more information in relation to specific air quality matters. The applicant submitted a response on 21/11/2022, which officers further assessed. This reduced the areas of concern, facilitating a further response on 22/11/2022. Overall, the proposals are now considered acceptable from an Environmental Protection perspective, subject to a series of conditions.
- 4.15 More specifically in terms of the noise assessment submitted, this shows that the recommended standard for internal noise can be met, if the recommendations from the assessment are incorporated into the design. Hence, a compliance condition is suggested to ensure the proposed glazing and ventilation is installed as per the noise assessment. A further condition relating to the noise assessment is proposed in relation to the specific sound level of plant associated with the development, so that if it is louder than presently anticipated then mitigation can be enforced if necessary. In terms of potential noise arising from the development itself, possible concerns are raised in relation to noise arising from deliveries and waste collections, should these take place some distance from the hotel (as referenced in the deliveries and servicing plan submitted). As such, the specific timing of deliveries and waste collections are recommended to be secured via a standalone condition to protect nearby amenity from unreasonable disturbance.
- 4.16 In terms of odours, given an ancillary restaurant is specified on the proposed plans, assessment is required in this regard. It is considered that a pre-first occupation condition is reasonable, in order to safeguard the amenity of nearby occupiers and the general environment too. There is also a significant problem with rodent activity in Reading town centre. A condition will therefore secure details to ensure bin stores are adequately pest-proof.
- 4.17 Turning to consider air quality matters, firstly in terms of increasing exposure, the site is within an air quality management area and an identified pollution hot-spot; the proposed development introduces new exposure / receptors (i.e. hotel guests). While the submitted air quality assessment concludes the pollutant levels will be below the objective limit value, and some further information has been submitted during the course of the application, officers consider that a condition should secure further/final details of the exact mitigation measures to protect future occupants of the hotel rooms from poor air quality. In relation to the proposed development itself causing an increase in emissions, further information was submitted during the course of the application to satisfy officers that no specific mitigation measures are required.
- 4.18 With regard to contaminated land it is considered that an assessment is required. Officers are content in this instance for details to be secured via condition, in the absence of information being provided at application stage. As such, the standard four stage contaminated land based condition (1. Site characterisation; 2. Remediation scheme; 3. Validation report; 4. Reporting of unexpected contamination) is recommended to be included, with the first two conditions being prior to the commencement of any development, including demolition.

- 4.19 In terms of the demolition and construction phases of development, dust, noise and pest control measures are recommended within the demolition and construction method statement condition also recommended by Transport. Separate standard compliance conditions are also recommended in terms of hours of working and no burning of materials on site, all to protect amenity.

**d) RBC Planning Natural Environment**

- 4.20 The site is within a low canopy cover ward and within an air quality management area, hence sufficient greening is important to respond to policy requirements and aims of the RBC Tree Strategy. It is assumed that the relative lack of 'usable' landscaping is appropriate in this instance given the use proposed, but the provision of brown roofs at fifth floor and roof level is positive. Whilst a small ground floor courtyard is proposed, no landscape provision is shown here. It is acknowledged that the site's northern facing nature and constrained nature are likely to make additional greening, such as green walls on the frontage of the site, unfeasible. It is, however, unfortunate that greening provides no wider benefit to the locality. In the circumstances there are no objections to the proposals subject to details of the brown roof being secured via a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition.

**e) GS Ecology (Ecology consultants for RBC)**

- 4.21 The initial response raised some queries which facilitated the submission of a revised Ecological report and Defra Biodiversity Metrix calculation during the application. GS Ecology agrees with the conclusion of the report submitted that the site is currently of negligible ecological value due to its lack of natural habitats. GS Ecology therefore has no objections to this application on ecological grounds. However, given the report states that any works to the roof on The Bugle PH should be undertaken under an ecologist's supervision, a condition will secure this in practice to ensure bats are not adversely affected by the development.
- 4.22 With regards to biodiversity net gain, the calculation submitted concludes that the development is likely to result in an increase of 100%. A number of enhancements have been recommended by the applicant, including areas of brown roof, six sparrow terraces, six swift bricks, six bat boxes and a log pile, which will all enhance the development for wildlife. Exact details are recommended to be secured via condition.

**f) RBC Access Officer**

- 4.23 A series of initial comments raised a number of points of clarifications and queries. The applicant responded on 21/11/2022, more clearly illustrating the variety of measures proposed, including step-free external and internal access routes, lifts, stairs, two accessible toilets at ground floor level and seven accessible rooms. Furthermore, commentary explaining future compliance with Building Regulations Part M (e.g. doors and furniture) was also provided. These are shown below in figure 4a.
- 4.24 The Council's Access Officer has confirmed satisfaction with the information provided, with it welcomed that step-free access is possible throughout all floors of the building. It is considered reasonable and necessary to condition there being a minimum of seven accessible rooms, which is akin to other hotel schemes in the borough (close to 5%) and seeks to ensure that these are actually implemented in practice.



Figure 4a - Floorplans indicating a variety of inclusive design features.

**g) RBC Building Control**

4.25 Advise that there are no comments from a Building Control perspective.

**h) RBC Leisure**

4.26 No response received.

**i) RBC Lead Local Flood Authority**

4.27 Confirm that the drainage strategy will reduce surface water run-off through a combination of underground attenuation and blue/brown roofs, which in principle is deemed acceptable. Although full details have not been provided, given the strategy identifies a reduction, the technical design can be secured via the standard two condition approach. Subject to this there are no objections to the SuDS strategy.

**j) RBC Licensing**

4.28 No objection to the proposals, but the ancillary bar should be required to close to the general public after a specified time to align with other nearby hotels. The specific timings and licence conditions would be ascertained at the time of any separate application to RBC Licensing, but it is likely that alcohol hours between 8am and midnight would be appropriate in this location.

**k) RBC Waste Services**

4.29 Suggest that it would be beneficial for a condition to be secured to ensure that no bins are left on Friar Street before/after the agreed refuse collection times. This is to prevent bins causing an obstruction and attracting fly-tipping or litter. An alternative to this approach would be for all bins to be presented and collected on Fife Court, so away from the public highway.



**l) Berkshire Archaeology**

- 4.30 Agree with the recommendation of the Desk Based Assessment submitted that a scheme of archaeological works should be secured via condition. This is as there is potential for remains to be present at the site. The condition would be pre-commencement, barring any demolition to ground level.

**m) Reading's Economy & Destination Agency (REDA) (formerly Reading UKCIC)**

- 4.31 REDA strongly support the proposals and have provided a single response relating to this application and the separate neighbouring site application (221232 - see relevant history above). Comments which are specifically relevant to this proposal are summarised as follows:

- The mid-to-top-end market hotel is well located among a cluster of hotels in close proximity between the Station and the High Street.
- REDA research shows business tourism has regained momentum in Reading, with the town hosting an above national average number of events and associated room rate stays. It is therefore an opportune moment for the new hotel to enter the Reading market.
- The development removes the worst of the old architecture while enhancing the best parts including The Bugle public house, helping retain a connection with the past, consistent with the objectives of the High Street Heritage Action Zone initiative (in other parts of the town centre) and providing a unique marketing opportunity for the hotel.
- Strategically important site, acting as a further catalyst to the future wholesale upgrade of Friar Street

- 4.32 Overall (i.e. considering this application and that at the neighbouring site as one) REDA considers that the total mixed use redevelopment proposal on the corner of Queen Victoria Street and Friar Street represents a higher quality, appropriate and more comprehensive approach in-keeping with REDA's aspirations for Reading Town Centre and ultimately wholesale redevelopment further along Friar Street. More specific factors referenced include complementing the Station Hill development and driving down anti-social behaviour.

- 4.33 REDA also seek for a S106 Legal Agreement to secure a construction stage and end-user stage Employment and Skills Plan (as per the SPD) and hopes the LPA will seek a high standard of green construction, consistent with REDA's green Business Improvement District initiative and additional contributions to the public realm and street art in the surroundings.

**n) Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police**

- 4.34 No response has been received.

**o) CCTV Officer at Thames Valley Police**

- 4.35 Confirms that the development will affect CCTV cameras or views. Comments that attention should be paid to light sources from within and on the Friar Street frontage, given the vicinity of the site to two key cameras (Officer note: presumed concern is in relation to glare impacting on quality of CCTV images in the area).

**p) Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue**

- 4.36 Comment that there is no duty placed upon the Fire Authority to make any comment relative to the application. However, the application plans have been briefly examined and the applicant should be reminded that access for fire-fighting, particularly vehicular access, must comply with Part B5 of the Building Regulations guidance. Any structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirement too.

**q) Thames Water**

- 4.37 In relation to waste matters, Thames Water have been unable to determine either the foul or waste water infrastructure needs, having contacted the applicant. In the circumstances Thames Water recommends separate pre-occupation conditions to secure details.
- 4.38 Turning to water matters, Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal. Without agreement being in place with the applicant on water networks Thames Water recommends a pre-occupation condition to secure details.
- 4.39 Thames Water also provide comments in relation to the proximity of development to water mains, underground water assets and connecting to the public sewerage system. Although these have been provided to the applicant, they are recommended by officers to be included as informatives on the decision notice.

**r) Southern Gas Networks (SGN)**

- 4.40 No response has been received.

**s) SSE Power Distribution**

- 4.41 No response has been received.

**t) Hoare Lea**

- 4.42 Hoare Lea undertook an independent review of the sustainability and energy components of the application on behalf of the local planning authority. The initial review raised a series of concerns in relation to the level and nature of information submitted, which in overall terms meant the submission had not demonstrated compliance with the relevant RBC policies. Accordingly, the applicant submitted further information on 16/11/2022, which has been subject to further independent review by Hoare Lea on behalf of the local planning authority.
- 4.43 The applicant summarises its sustainability and energy strategies as follows:
- The scheme is targeting a BREEAM Excellent rating and includes
    - High performing fabric
    - High performance VRF heat pumps for heating and cooling
    - Air source heat pumps for DHW with gas top up
    - MVHR for ventilation
    - LEDs throughout with presence / absence detection and daylight dimming
    - 100m2 of roof mounted PV photovoltaics (PV)
- 4.44 Hoare Lea's follow up review, received on 24/11/2022, in summary advised that there were still some outstanding matters to demonstrate compliance with RBC sustainability and energy policies. This has been fed into the applicant for further

consideration and submission, which owing to the timings involved are subsequent to the completion of this report. Matters are however being progressed with view to these matters being able to be reported in full within an update report prior to the committee meeting. At the time of writing officers are confident that matters can be suitably progressed and hopefully resolved. However, at the present time the officer recommendation and conclusions are duly caveated with this in mind, although to reaffirm officers do initially consider that such matters can be resolved.

**u) BRE**

- 4.45 BRE undertook an independent review of the daylight, sunlight and overshadowing components of the application on behalf of the local planning authority (combined review with neighbouring application 221232, given the report submitted was combined too).
- 4.46 BRE's review confirmed that the development would have a negligible impact in daylight and sunlight terms on nearby No's 32 and 20-22 Friar Street, as assessed by the applicant. BRE also identified a number of other buildings to the north of the site which could/should have been assessed, but based on the buildings that were tested these would be expected to be similar and meet the BRE guidelines. To the south and west of the site, BRE considered that the impacts on anticipated residential uses at 46 Broad St and 8-9 Union St could be checked. In terms of cumulative impacts, whilst the submission by the applicant did not assess the impact of either the under construction Station Hill or the current application at 35-39 Friar St (Ref 220933), BRE considered the proposed development was unlikely to cause a significant loss of light to these sites. BRE commented that whilst the applicant has not assessed the daylight and sunlight provision to the proposed development, provision to hotel rooms may be considered less of an issue since they are only likely to be occupied briefly.
- 4.47 On the basis of the BRE review the applicant was asked on 4/11/22 to provide a response in relation to (for this application) the impact on 46 Broad St and 8-9 Union St. The applicant provided a response on 22/11/22, but BRE was unavailable to provide further feedback prior to the completion of this report. Accordingly, this matter will be reported in an update report prior to the committee meeting and the officer recommendation and conclusions are duly caveated with this in mind, although officers do initially consider that such matters can be resolved.

**v) Reading Design Review Panel (DRP)**

- 4.48 In the latter stages of the pre-application process the proposals were considered by the Reading Design Review Panel (on 30/06/2022). The DRP was broadly supportive of the proposals, barring some matters of detail which benefit from refinement. A summary of the DRP feedback is:
- The approach of considering the role for the proposals beyond the immediate confines of the site is welcomed. A potential route through the neighbouring proposed courtyard to/from Fife Court requires the design of 138-144 to facilitate, promote and safeguard this. Openings/uses along Fife Court could be advanced to address anti-social use and provide passive surveillance.
  - The applicants have applied skill to illustrate a significant building within the proposals, that in the view of Panel would substantially be acceptable in massing and townscape terms save for the following comments:

- The overall extent of five storey frontage to Friar Street is excessive - the proposals are split into three main sections, instinctively the Panel consider a setback to either of the outer elements would benefit the scheme. Further finessing of the upper levels of articulation may also be required as the building tiers back.
  - To Friar Street, the proposals are split into four different layers vertically, a base, the main body, and then two forms of 'roof top' or 'mansard' accommodation. This is a little confusing and the complexity will lead to additional challenges delivering quality at implementation stage. Simplifying the upper elements should be explored.
  - The proposals have the potential to provide a significant townscape benefit to this key intersection at the heart of Reading. The overall vertical hierarchy applied to the scheme is sound, with a public / civic base of 2 storeys and then functional accommodation above. The challenge that remains to be addressed is how can The Bugle be retained as more than just a shell? It's historic volume, entrance and qualities should be respected and referenced in the proposals.
  - The application has drawn strong reference to Reading's rich brick heritage, the Panel applaud the integration of detail and the limited diversity of palette applied.
  - Detailed bay elevations, sections and plans should be provided to ensure sufficient allowance is available to deliver the aesthetic shown. Current concern that the external walls to Friar Street do not allow enough depth for the articulation / reveal steps shown.
  - Whilst outside the scope of the review, the proposals for 145 - 146 Friar Street show great promise. The renewal of 141 - 148 Friar Street could act as a valuable catalyst to support wider improvements within this part of the Town Centre
- 4.49 Given the relatively minor nature of the DRP comments, it was not considered necessary by officers to specifically re-engage DRP at application stage, but officers have naturally been mindful of the comments made and the responses made by the applicant.

## ii) Public consultation

- 4.2.1 Notification letters were sent to nearby occupiers on 15/09/2022, expiring on 06/10/2022. Two site notices were erected on 14/09/2022, expiring on 05/10/2022. The case officer witnessed that the notices had been removed prior to the expiry of the statutory time period. Whilst technically compliant with section 15 (6) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the applicant agreed to replace the signs on 29/09/2022. The case officer witnessed that both were still present at the site on 07/10/2022. On 14/10/2022 one of the two site notices was still in place. As such, the site notice requirements have been met. A press notice was published on 22/09/2022, expiring on 13/10/2022. A total of 22 separate responses in support of the proposals and 1 objection has been received.
- 4.2.2 A response (as part of three separate submissions) which amounts to an objection has been received on behalf of the owners of the adjoining property to the west on Friar Street, summarised as follows:
- Do not object to the principle of the proposed development, providing planning officers are satisfied that it does not rely upon, light, air or amenity that is borrowed from 136 & 137 Friar Street.
  - The neighbouring owner intends to submit an application in early 2023 for the retention of the shop on the ground floor and formation of a five storey apartment

hotel above, retaining the existing building that fronts onto Friar Street and is likely to include a long wall along the common boundary between 137 and 138 Friar Street that may be up to six storeys in height.

- The proposed development should not rely upon borrowed light from 136 & 137 Friar Street. Concerns are raised in relation to:
  - o the rear wing of the proposed hotel contains bedroom windows that face onto a courtyard that abuts 136-137 Friar Street and
  - o the extent of the available light / aspect for the west facing windows between the rear wing and the western site boundary.
  - o The submitted Daylight and Sunlight Report does not appear to make specific reference to 136 - 137 Friar Street. It is not clear that proposed development does not rely upon borrowed light or air into the hotel bedrooms from the site along the western boundary.

4.2.3 The applicant responded on 23/11/22 advising that based on the proposed plans it is shown that the windows of the hotel are set back from the site boundary at this point and ventilation and light is gained from this set back. Annotated plans showing the direction of windows facing the courtyard and ventilation being taken from the courtyard too.

4.2.4 10 separate responses, all in support of the proposals (although the specified 'comment type' in each instance was referenced as an 'observation', the nature of the comment indicated support for the proposals) have been received from separately named persons at an address on Friar Street occupied by Haslams Estate Agents (1 response was received in duplicate). The comments received in these responses are (in full):

- Looks brilliant, I approve
- I approve
- Looks great and Friar Street could do with a facelift, I approve.
- Great scheme, brilliant for Reading
- This scheme would be great for Friar Street
- Very needed in Reading
- Great looking scheme providing diversification, investment and variation within the town centre. A fresh approach most welcome to maximise the space the town has to offer.
- Good scheme, well needed in Reading
- An interesting & attractive scheme. Well needed in Reading.

4.2.5 Responses in support have also been received from individuals at the following 12 addresses: Aviator Place, Crescent Road, RG1; Bath Road, RG1; Bluebell Meadow, Winnersh, RG41; Foxcombe Drive, RG31; Harrison Close, Twyford, RG10; Jersey Drive, Winnersh, RG41; Luscinia View, RG1; Milestone Avenue, Charvil, RG10; Northcourt Avenue, RG2; Parkhouse Lane, RG30; St Francis Close, Crowthorne, RG45; and, Seaford Road, Wokingham, RG40. It is noted that 2 of these respondents have the exact same name as Friar Street respondents. A summary of the comments in support received in these responses are:

- Great scheme
- All development of the town centre should be supported because of the benefits for employment in the local area.
- Beautiful Development, excited to see the benefits it will provide to Reading Town
- Scheme looks great

- Looks great, well needed in Reading.
- Friar Street has been in need of re-generation for years now. This will really improve that area and sit well alongside the other developments that are happening.
- Really excited about the development - keen interest in seeing run down areas being redeveloped.
- a good proposal and will bring the dilapidated building into use
- A positive addition to a main street in the town centre which is currently full of run down shops and closed buildings
- A treasurer and supporter of the Reading Civic Society attended the presentation about the development on 2 November 2022 at Haslams and would like to express support for the QVS 1 and QVS 2 schemes. It seems that proper consideration to the heritage of an important Reading architectural site has been made and it will enhance the town.

### iii) Local Groups

#### a) Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

4.2.6 Reading CAAC was formally consulted and support the application, with comments summarised as follows:

- As part of pre-application consultations the CAAC was concerned about the potential demolition of The Bugle and adjoining Fife Court cottages, leading to a successful nomination to Reading's Local List. The CAAC are delighted that the applicant worked with the CAAC and has not only retained Bugle and integrated it into the hotel but also the historic façade of the cottages on Fife Court.
- In strongly supporting the retention of The Bugle and elements of the Fife Court façade the CAAC believe the variation provided to the Friar Street roofscape will be welcomed by passersby and hotel guests. The integration with the proposed hotel works well and provides additional interest to Fife Court.
- The retention of The Bugle is very important in character and cultural heritage terms. The retention of the external fabric of the Fife Court cottages (the last court surviving on the south side of Friar Street) is an important remnant of Reading's social history.

#### b) Reading Civic Society

4.2.7 RCS was formally consulted on the application and support the application (as part of a combined response with application 221235). RCS advise that they have been actively and positively engaged by the applicant since November 2020. RCS also advise that they arranged 3 separate "*public engagements*" with the applicant in March 2021, June 2022 and November 2022, with these events said to have attracted 120 people from local groups and businesses as well as RCS. Feedback from the events is quoted, with the overall summary being that on the basis of the "*engagement / outreach*" events and the RCS committee views, the planning applications are supported and RCS are "*convinced that, all things being equal, they [the applicant] will get on with this should PP be granted*".

## 5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the

desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

5.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which means 'approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay' (NPPF paragraph 11).

5.4 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant national / local policies / guidance are:

5.5 **National**

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The following NPPF chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- 7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.6 The relevant Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC4: Decentralised Energy
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets
- EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
- EN9: Provision of Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality

EN16: Pollution and Water Resources  
 EN17: Noise Generating Equipment  
 EN18: Flooding and Drainage  
 TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy  
 TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters  
 TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities  
 TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging  
 RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres  
 RL2: Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development  
 RL6: Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses  
 OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines  
 CR1: Definition of Central Reading  
 CR2: Design in Central Reading  
 CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading  
 CR4: Leisure, Culture and Tourism in Central Reading  
 CR7: Primary Frontages in Central Reading  
 CR11: Station/River Major Opportunity Area

## 5.7 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

### Topics:

Affordable Housing (2021)  
 Design Guide to Shopfronts (2022)  
 Employment, Skills and Training (2013)  
 Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)  
 Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)  
 Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

### Sites:

Reading Station Area Framework (2010)  
 Station Hill South Planning and Urban Design Brief (2007)

## 5.8 Other relevant documentation

BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A guide to good practice, (BR 209 2022 edition)  
 Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)  
 Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)  
 Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)  
 The National Design Guide (2019)  
 The National Model Design Code (July 2021)  
 Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015)  
 Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition) The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017)  
 Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance (Historic England 2008)  
 Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Pub. BS 7913:2013, 2015)

## 6. APPRAISAL

### 6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Land use considerations



- ii) Design and Heritage matters - including demolition, scale, appearance, design and effect on heritage assets
- iii) Quality of accommodation for future occupiers/users
- iv) Amenity for nearby occupiers
- v) Transport and Highways
- vi) Landscaping and ecology
- vii) Sustainability, energy and SuDS
- viii) Other matters - Archaeology, Thames Water, S106, pre-commencement conditions & Equality

i) **Land use considerations**

6.2 As a starting point from a purely land-use perspective, the proposal involves the loss of two Sui Generis uses (Revolución de Cuba bar and the former Bugle Public House - both formerly Class A4). Policy RL6 generally seeks the retention of such facilities, but provides instances where losses will be accepted. This includes where the function of the facility can be adequately fulfilled by an existing facility, or one proposed as part of the development. In this instance there are considered to be numerous other nearby facilities in Central Reading, while the proposals also incorporate an ancillary bar and restaurant too. Accordingly, the loss of the two existing uses is justified.

6.3 The proposals also result in a loss of a Class E(a) retail use (formerly Class A1). The site is located within the wider Friar Street primary frontage, where under Policy CR7 proposals which involve the loss of Class A1 or A2 uses (now Class E(a) or E(c)) such that the proportion falls below 50% will not be permitted. Based on an officer audit, the Class E(a) or E(c) percentage along Friar Street is already below 50%, at 42%. However, given the proposal results in 3 units (1 Class E(a) and 2 non E(a) or E(b) becoming 1 non-E(a)-or-E(b) use, the loss is equalised out in reality. Accordingly, there is no reasonable basis to resist the loss of a Class E(a) use in this instance.

6.4 Turning to the proposed hotel use, whilst there are no specific policies relating to hotels, this use does generally align with the thrust of Policies RL1, RL2, CR1, CR4 and CR7. The use would attract a wide range of people into the centre (and support other centre uses) and is therefore broadly welcomed in land use terms. A Class C1 use is compatible with those uses required at ground floor level along designated primary frontages such as this (see Policy CR7), with the submission also specifying that an ancillary lounge, bar and restaurant is proposed at ground floor level too. In principle, there is no issue with this, although a condition will ensure these facilities remain ancillary in nature. The hotel use as a whole will be secured via legal agreement, as per the terms stated in the Recommendation at the outset of this report. Amongst other matters, this robustly guards against the scheme being occupied for other uses without first applying for planning permission. The internal layout also specifies that a mezzanine level gym is proposed. Again, this would be ancillary to the primary hotel function, be for hotel guests only and, accordingly, will be secured via condition as such. In overall terms the principle of the hotel use, with its ancillary functions, are appropriate in this town centre location.

- ii) Design and Heritage matters - including demolition, scale, appearance, design and effect on heritage assets

6.5 The initial matter for consideration concerns the demolition of No's 138-141 and 142-143 Friar Street, together with the partial demolition of No. 144 Friar Street,

The Bugle Public House. As per the Council's CUDO comments at section 4b) above, neither No's 138-141 nor 142-143 are considered to be of any particular special architectural merit to warrant their retention. In terms of the Bugle, the Council's CUDO is content in itself in relation to the extent and nature of demolition proposed, which relates to the later additions to the rear of the building, rather than the original component fronting onto Friar Street (see figure 5 for a summary of the extent of demolition proposed). However, given this is a locally listed building, Policy EN4 needs to be considered.

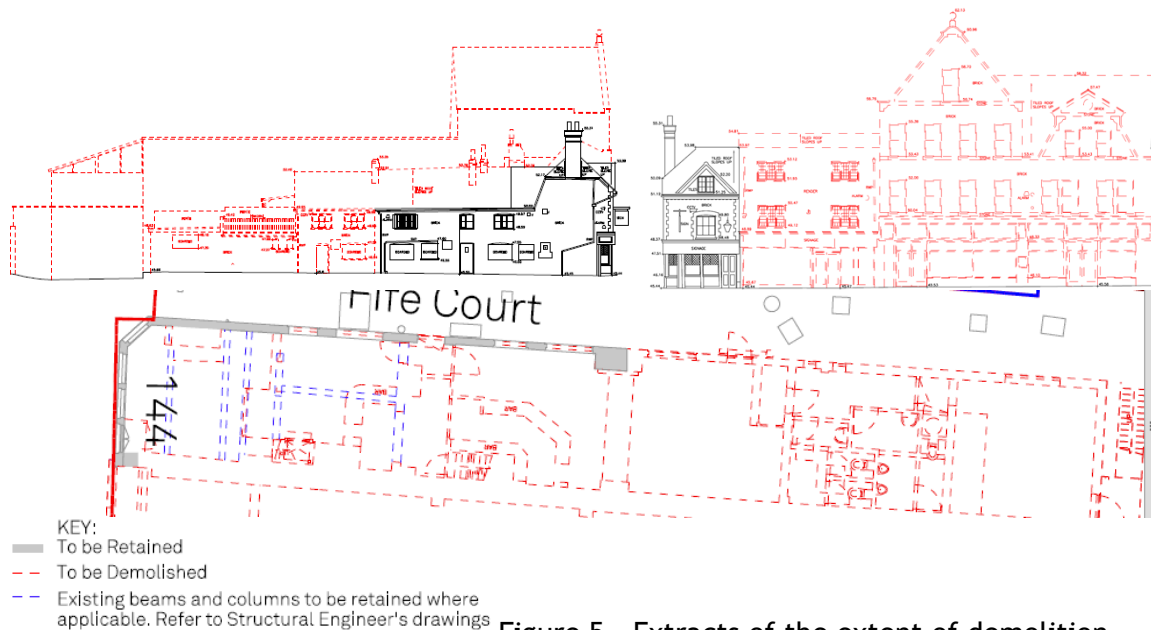


Figure 5 - Extracts of the extent of demolition

- 6.6 There are two main tests within Policy EN4, namely that (1) the benefits of the development significantly outweigh the asset's significance in instances such as this where harm would occur and (2) that the development conserves, architectural, archaeological significance, which may include the appearance, character and setting of the asset. In terms of test 1, this requires a wider assessment of the application as a whole, which can only be specified in full within the planning balance section of this report. Accordingly, that matter is referenced at section 7 of this report. As a starting point however, it is initially referenced and accepted that some harm would occur, as the building would be partly lost and its setting would change owing to the proposed development. Notwithstanding test 1, in terms of test 2, the Council's CUDO has specified in section 4b) above that the proposals do sufficiently conserve the architectural and historical significant of the asset, with the most important elements of the existing building retained and cleverly incorporated into the proposed redevelopment proposal. As such, test 2 of Policy EN4 is considered to have been met, with test 1 returned to at section 7 of this report.
- 6.7 With the above in mind, it is relevant to note that a condition will be secured to record the Bugle, as per Historic England level 2 recording and recommended by the CUDO. Furthermore, it is also considered necessary to include a condition specifying that demolition shall not be undertaken before a contract for the carrying out of the works of redevelopment of the site has been made (with details submitted to demonstrate this to officers for approval). This is considered necessary given the risk of partial implementation of any permission, involving demolition works only, would cause a harmful impact in the street and townscape terms, while it would also prevent the unnecessary (in that context) partial loss of

the locally listed building and also the active current uses at No's 138-141 and 142-143.

- 6.8 In scale and massing terms the applicant has sought to advance rationales suggesting that the proposal is a transition between Broad Street and the north side of Friar Street (see Figure 6 below), whilst also showing the scheme from a variety of long viewpoints. However, these are not considered to be the most convincing arguments, as the area is not especially appreciated in this context and given the surrounding townscape, it is almost inevitable that the proposals will not be seen from key long views usually only assessed for tall buildings, which as per the Policy CR10 definition is not proposed in this case.

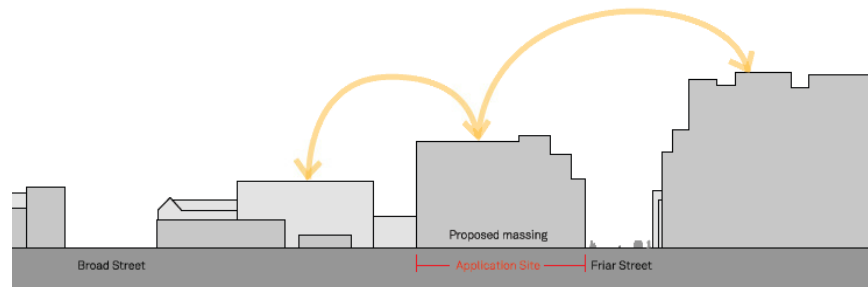


Figure 6 - South-North section extract from Design and Access Statement

- 6.9 Instead, the character along the south side of Friar Street is considered by your officers to be key in ascertaining whether the proposed scale and massing is appropriate. The streetscape along the south side of Friar Street is acknowledged to be varied in terms of the architectural styles and ages of the buildings, the heights of those buildings and the roof forms and profiles too (see figure 7 below). This means there is not one overriding pattern which dominates, which provides an opportunity for the proposed development to add to that variety. The proposed scheme is essentially 5 storeys on the Friar Street façade, with the ground floor incorporating almost a double height space to create the internal layout entrance/ancillary restaurant for the hotel and a mezzanine floor level internally. An additional two storey addition is then set back from the front façade and is also inset from both side boundaries (at the northern end of the site).





Street Scale Elevation: Existing QVS1 + Proposed QVS2



Street Scale Elevation: Proposed QVS1 + Proposed QVS2

Figure 7 - Friar Street streetscene, as existing (top), as proposed (middle) and cumulatively including the separately proposed QVS1+ scheme too (bottom)

- 6.10 It is considered that the set backs and insets in the massing of the upper most floors (see figure 8 below) assist in mitigating some earlier concerns raised by officers at the outset of pre-application discussions relating to the proposed massing. While the overall building height would be greater than the prevailing context along the southern side of Friar Street, the recessive nature of the upper most two floors (assisted by the contrasting material choice) means the level of harm is reduced. Furthermore, this has been tested extensively by officers, while Reading DRP (see section 4v above) did not raise any in-principle issues with the proposed massing. When considered within the context of the north side of Friar Street and beyond (e.g. the Station Hill development), whilst this area is subject to separate specific designations, this provides a further basis for justifying the proposed scheme.



This is the long view west view from Friar Street of the proposed design of QVS2 with the existing QVS1.

Figure 8 - View from the west, as existing and a visualisation as proposed.

- 6.11 Particular attention is also paid to the assimilation of the remaining elements of the existing Bugle building into the overall composition of the proposed building. It is considered that this has been carefully handled, with the reduced scale and insets on the east side of the proposed building (in comparison with the proposals as a whole) helping both clearly define the new and the old, but achieving this in a sensitive and appropriate manner. The Council's CUDO (see section 4b above) considers that the scheme successfully incorporates The Bugle into the new Friar Street streetscape.
- 6.12 In addition, the applicant has helpfully provided streetscene elevations with and without the separate QVS1+ proposals being included too (see figure 7 above and the visualisations in figure 9 below). Whilst it is considered that the proposals assimilate better into the streetscene if the QVS1+ are included too, with the upper most floors proposed at the application site being more comfortable in that



scenario, the application must be considered on its own merits without a cumulative assessment. If the QVS1+ proposals were not to come forward it is considered that on a standalone basis the proposed massing is acceptable. Although taller than the prevailing existing character, the wide existing variety of building forms means the application proposal would be adding a further new chapter to the evolution of the south side of the street. The proposed massing, in the context of this specific proposal, is not considered to cause significant harm along Friar Street as a whole. Whilst undoubtedly a significant addition to the south side of Friar Street, in particular from the west looking eastwards, on balance, it is therefore considered that the proposed scale and massing is satisfactory. This conclusion is reached in part owing to the proposed materials and detailed design approach to the proposals, which is discussed in more detail below.



Figure 9 - existing view looking west (left), proposed visualisation QVS2 only (middle) and proposed cumulative visualisation (QVS1+ & QVS2 combined)

- 6.13 In terms of the detailed design and materials, the Friar Street elevation has been carefully considered (see figure 10 below). The rhythm of the street and buildings are maintained with the front façade of the building broken down into separate distinct elements. There are three vertical sections, each in red brick but the middle section would have a darker finish to provide a subtle contrast, which Reading DRP strongly supports. The fourth floor includes a set back in both of the outer wings, to address DRP comments at pre-application stage (see section 4v above).



Figure 10 - The Friar Street elevation (officer note: it is unclear whether the visualisation is fully accurate - e.g. showing no indication of the upper two storeys)

- 6.14 The shopfront base, main body and two-storey roof top elements of the building are considered to be well-defined and have evolved well following extensive pre-application discussions. The base ground level shopfronts complement others along Friar Street. The arched colonnades echo No. 147 Friar Street to the west, in a

more contemporary manner (e.g. tinted acid etched pre-cast panels), with the outer wings being more traditional in form (in line with the Shopfronts SPD) and relating well to the retained Bugle and other nearby shopfronts. A compliance condition is recommended for the for the Friar Street frontage to retain 'active window displays', together with a separate condition to secure 1:20 section and layout details for the new shopfront elements. Within the main body of the building detailing around the aluminium framed windows have been submitted at application stage (see figure 11 below), which demonstrate a suitable richness in the detailed design which Reading DRP sought. This, together with the proposed banding and setbacks help create a varied and high quality façade. The uppermost two floors set back from the Friar Street frontage and are proposed to be more lightweight in nature, with curtain wall glazing framed by aluminium panels. This is considered to provide a suitably recessive upper section to the building, whilst contrasting to the floors below doing so in a compatible manner (e.g. a terracotta colour is shown to complement the red brick below) to create a coherent and attractive finished appearance.

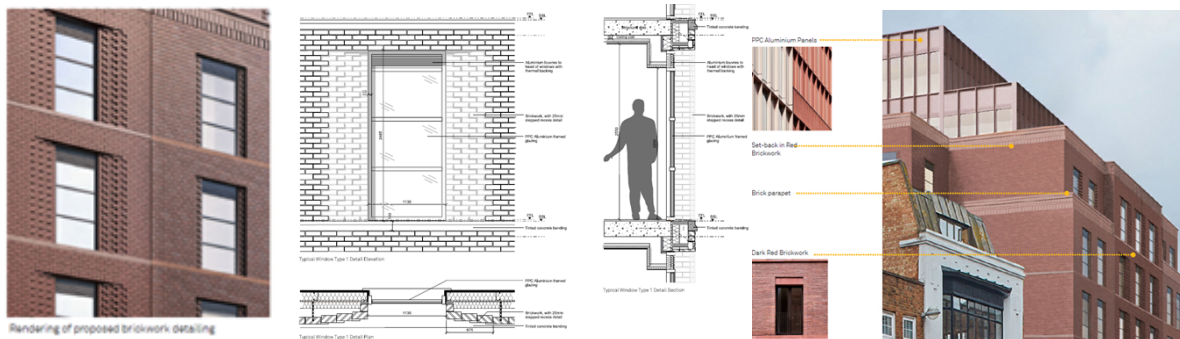


Figure 11 - Brickwork detailing and upper floor materials

- 6.15 On the side elevations a significant depth of these facades are proposed to be finished in brickwork, prior to the material altering towards the rear of the building to a render finish, which continues on the rear (south) of the building outside of public vantage points. In particular, the provision of brickwork on the west elevation above the retained Bugle (see figure 12 below) is welcomed in assisting the transition between retained and new elements of the scheme.

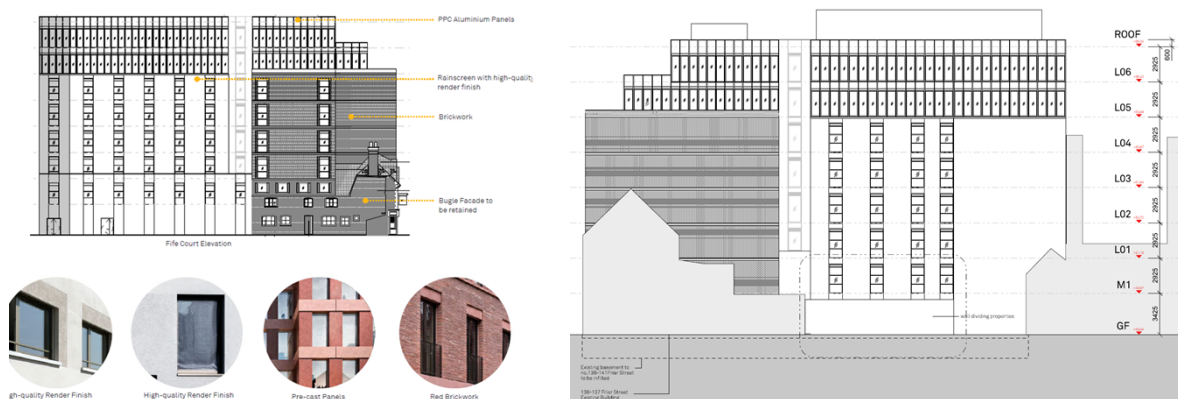


Figure 12 - the east (left) and west (right) proposed side elevations

- 6.16 While the design intent is supported, to ensure design quality it is essential for all external materials to be secured via condition, including the provision of sample construction panel details being erected on site prior to approval. This is to guarantee the design quality in this acknowledged sensitive location.

- 6.17 Having regard to Policies CR2 and CC7, it is also considered that a significant town centre development such as this has the potential to incorporate a scheme of on-site public art. While officers at this juncture have no fixed views on the exact nature or extent this should take, it is considered that there would be scope for some form of art to be incorporated into the scheme and for this to become a wider public and planning benefit of the proposals. Given the significant width of frontage along Friar Street, together with the glimpsed public views of Fife Court, it is considered that there is considerable scope for this to be incorporated into the scheme. It could be, as with other schemes in Abbey Ward (e.g. application 170326 at Weldale Street) that this could include engagement with local art groups, for example. Accordingly, a pre-occupation condition will be secured for details of a public art scheme to be submitted and approved. In this instance it is considered that a condition is more appropriate than this being a legal agreement obligation.
- 6.18 Officers are also mindful that Policy CR2f specifies that development should be designed with consideration of adjacent development sites, and should not prevent or cause unreasonable burdens on the future development of those sites. In this regard, it is considered that the proposals have been advanced with the neighbouring site to the east in mind, which is subject to a separate current application. It is considered that in design terms, if both schemes were to be implemented then they would essentially complement one another and not compete or conflict. In terms of land to the south and west, the absence of windows on the site boundaries, together with the proposed hotel use, demonstrates that sufficient steps have been taken to not prevent neighbouring sites, which are not subject to any specific site allocation, to reasonably come forward in due course. To the north, the width of Friar Street and the existing building context means no undue harm to the future development of those sites are envisaged.
- 6.19 In terms of the effects of the proposed development on heritage assets, beyond the already referenced Bugle Public House, the Council's CUDO is satisfied (as per section 4b) above) that the proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of nearby listed buildings, with the distance and existing townscape between the site and listed buildings to the east being mitigating factors, together with the sensitive and positive proposed materials and design approach. The conclusion section of this report will return to this specific matter, as the NPPF paragraph 202 test requires this less than substantial harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. These are weighed accordingly within the planning balance section below.

iii) **Quality of accommodation for future occupiers/users**

- 6.20 The hotel accommodation provides 163 bedrooms in total, with each room being regular in size and the vast majority are regular in shape, providing suitable levels of outlook for all future guests. The proposal also includes 7 dedicated accessible rooms, which are welcomed and will be secured via condition (as will the maximum total number of bedrooms). Following clarifications, the Council's Access officer is content with the proposals (see section 4f above). The double height reception lobby is a key feature which will assist in creating a good quality hotel environment for guests. From a fire safety perspective, although there is no requirement for a fire statement to be submitted (only required for residential buildings of a certain height), the applicant is cognisant of these matters and has submitted a Fire Assessment, which is welcomed. Importantly the building includes two separate staircores as well as three separate lifts, with the report also stating



the other various technical standards the building will meet. Transport and Waste officers are content with the proposed servicing arrangements, with Environmental Protection officers seeking for a separate condition to secure details of the exact servicing hours. No specific details in relation to external lighting (either on Friar Street, as may or may not be proposed) or along Fife Court have been specified, so any external lighting details will be secured via condition.



Figure 13 - Proposed ground, mezzanine and sixth floor levels

- 6.21 The hotel as proposed is shown to include a range of ancillary hotel facilities, most notably a ground floor lounge, bar and restaurant and mezzanine floor gym (see layouts above in figure 13). Both spaces will be secured via condition to be ancillary to the hotel, with the gym solely for hotel guests too. With specific regard to the ancillary gym use, a condition will secure a noise assessment, including specific reference to structure borne noise, to be submitted and approved prior to the first occupation of the hotel. Structural-borne noise at low frequencies causing vibrations is a known potential issue associated with gyms, adversely affecting the amenity of occupiers/users of other floors of the same building. The lounge, bar and restaurant will have the option of being open to the public too, but only between the hours of 08:00 - 00:00 on Mondays to Saturdays and 08:00 to 22:00 on Sundays or Bank Holidays. This aligns with RBC Licensing observations and is also considered necessary and appropriate from a planning perspective along Friar Street, to be managed via condition. All the usual supporting facilities associated with a hotel, such as luggage areas and housekeeping rooms are provided. Indicative areas for advertisements are proposed, but no separate advertisement consent is sought at this time. An informative will remind the applicant of the possible need for separate advertisement consent in the future.
- 6.22 It is noted that no comments have been received from the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police, despite a number of attempts to engage. In the circumstances, and mindful of similar proposals for hotel schemes in the town centre in recent years, and the proposed layout showing an ancillary lounge, bar and restaurant alongside the hotel, it is considered necessary for submission of and approval of access control strategy to be secured via condition. On this proviso of this being secured it is considered that the proposals are appropriate in this regard. In overall terms, with the conditions secured, a good standard of accommodation is proposed for future hotel guests.

iv) **Amenity for nearby occupiers**

- 6.23 The immediate surrounding context is largely non-residential, which consequently means that the impacts on amenity are inherently less sensitive than had a proposal of this nature been sought which adjoined a series of existing residential buildings. However, officers are mindful of the requirements of Policy CC8, and also Policy CR2f too, which seeks to ensure that sites are designed with consideration of adjacent sites too.
- 6.24 In terms of daylight and sunlight impacts, BRE's independent review of the information submitted (see section 4u above) demonstrates that the properties the applicant originally assessed are within the BRE guidelines. BRE however raised a number of other nearby buildings which it considered could be checked. The applicant has recently provided a response, with BRE's comments scheduled to be specified in an update report prior to committee. As such, conclusions in respect of daylight and sunlight impacts will follow in the update report.
- 6.25 Given the relative absence of existing residential uses in the immediate vicinity, it is considered that the proposed hotel use raises little concern in respect of privacy and overlooking matters in terms of Policy CC8. Mindful of the possible future redevelopment of nearby sites, there are no windows on the site boundary, barring the existing Friar Street elevation. With particular regard to the west elevation, directly facing hotel windows are set back 8 metres from the boundary and given the proposed hotel use, this will not cause an unreasonable burden on any separate proposals for the neighbouring site. In terms of outlook, visual dominance and overbearing impacts, again the lack of immediate residential uses downplays the existing impact. Obviously in comparison with the existing height and massing at the site, the proposal does result in a significantly taller and bulkier building across the site. Given the proposed footprint and position of windows, this however is not considered to cause unreasonable burdens on neighbouring sites.
- 6.26 In terms of noise and disturbance, artificial lighting, vibration, dust and fumes, smells, crime and safety, as per the quality of accommodation section above, as well as various conditions recommended by officers (in particular Environmental Protection and Transport), the proposals are considered appropriate subject to conditions.

v) **Transport and Highways**

- 6.27 As per section 4a) above, in overall terms from a transport perspective the proposals are considered to be acceptable, following clarifications during the application. This is subject to a number of planning conditions, including a demolition and construction method statement, which in this particular instance will especially need to consider potential cumulative impacts of other nearby development sites, given the nature of the surrounding area. The servicing elements have also been carefully considered, given the existing nature of Fife Court.

vi) **Landscaping and ecology**

- 6.28 The existing site is devoid of landscaping and opportunities for proposed soft landscaping are limited given the site coverage of the proposed building. It is therefore a challenging site in this regard. However, the applicant is proposing brown roofs at fifth and roof level. These are welcomed and exact details will be secured via condition. However, in the context of this major town centre proposal, this only provides a small contribution and offers limited wider benefits to the town centre, where the need for greening is clear. It is considered that an altered

layout or building footprint could have resulted in more soft landscaping being proposed. Accordingly, this is considered a shortcoming of the scheme, with this therefore becoming part of the weighing of issues in the planning balance section of this report.

- 6.29 From an ecology perspective, as per the GS Ecology observations at section 4e) above, the current site has a negligible ecological value and the proposal incorporates a number of wildlife enhancing features which means a significant biodiversity net gain will be achieved. Subject to conditions securing more details, the proposals are therefore considered appropriate in ecology terms.

**vii) Sustainability, energy and SuDS**

- 6.30 Given the scale and nature of the proposals sustainability energy strategies have been submitted, with these being independently reviewed by Hoare Lea on behalf of the local planning authority. As per section 4t) above discussions regarding various details regarding the reports are presently on-going, but it is anticipated that they will be able to be resolved prior to the committee meeting. It is therefore intended for Hoare Lea's final comments to be specified in an update report prior to committee. As such, conclusions in respect of sustainability and energy matters will follow in the update report.

- 6.31 Turning to SuDS matters, as per section 4 i) above, the combination of underground attenuation and blue/brown roofs proposed are considered appropriate in principle, with the exact details to be secured via condition.

**viii) Other matters**

- 6.32 Archaeology: As per the Berkshire Archaeology observations at section 4l) of this report, a scheme of archaeological works will be secured via condition.
- 6.33 Thames Water: Three separate conditions are recommended by Thames Water, as per section 4q) above. These are all proposed to be secured in line with the request.
- 6.34 Section 106 Legal Agreement: The head of term in relation to securing the hotel use has already been referenced within section 6i) of this assessment. Another required element is to secure an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) for both the Construction and End User phases of the development. This is required in line with Policy CC9 and the Employment, Skills and Training SPD. The applicant has not yet indicated whether this will take the form of an actual ESP to be progressed on site, or the payment of an equivalent financial contribution, as per the SPD formula. The legal agreement will be worded flexibly to enable either eventuality.
- 6.35 It is considered that each of the obligations referenced within the Recommendation section of this report would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that they would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. These Heads of Terms have been agreed in principle by the agent on behalf of the applicant on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022 and therefore a S106 Legal Agreement is in the process of being prepared to secure these matters.
- 6.36 Pre-commencement conditions: the number of pre-commencement (any development, including demolition) has been limited, in line with national

guidance. The exact wording of the pre-commencement conditions will be sought to be agreed with the applicant prior to the determination of any approval, in line with section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act.

- 6.37 Equality: In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities characteristics protected include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

## **7. CONCLUSION, INCLUDING THE OVERALL PLANNING BALANCE**

- 7.1 The planning application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 7.2 As such, the harmful impacts of the development need to be weighed against the benefits. Based on the above assessment harmful impacts include the less than significant harm caused to the locally listed Bugle Public House, the less than substantial harm to the setting of nearby listed buildings, the lack of soft landscaping included within the scheme and, at the time of writing, the unconfirmed impact on daylight and sunlight of nearby residential properties (pending further input from BRE, as outlined above) and appropriateness of the sustainability and energy strategies (pending further input from Hoare Lea, as outlined above).

- 7.3 The harmful impacts of the development are required to be weighed with the benefits of the proposals. The applicant has put forward a series of planning benefits, the majority of which are summarised below:

- Visual improvement to Friar Street with enhanced frontages and a high quality design.
- Introduction of a hotel use which provides visitor accommodation and supports the needs of, and attracting, working professionals and visitors to Reading, as well as assisting in remedying an identified under-provision.
- 4\* hotel accommodation with 163 bedrooms, all of which will benefit from windows, mechanical ventilation, generous sizing, five bedrooms at ground floor, all floors are accessible by two separate lifts and level thresholds and 7 units will be specially designed as accessible rooms.
- Significant investment in the town centre which includes the associated local economy boost as a consequence of constructing the building.
- Job creation during operation, referenced in the planning statement to be 50 direct jobs. Furthermore, the proposals would create secondary and tertiary employment, with visitors making use of the town centre amenities or visiting for business.
- Provision of a town centre destination that will attract visitors, shoppers and workers to this part of the town centre, enhancing the activity, vitality and viability of this part of the centre.
- Sustaining The Bugle and creating a catalyst for the further regeneration of Friar Street and the local town centre environment, playing an important role in the post-Covid19 recovery of the town centre.
- Car free development, promoting more sustainable forms of transport such as cycling and walking
- Create and inviting environment that provides sufficient security and deters crime.

- Provides significant enhancements to Fife Court in comparison with existing.
- 7.4 Officers acknowledge the applicant has presented a range of planning benefits which when combined result in the scheme being one which will be a welcome addition to the town centre in multiple respects.
- 7.5 In conclusion officers therefore consider, pending the further input from BRE in relation to daylight and sunlight matters and Hoare Lea in relation to sustainability and energy matters (which will be reported in an update report - officers consider it reasonably likely that BRE's and Hoare Lea's comments will be able to be addressed), that the conflicts with the development plan are significantly outweighed by the benefits of the proposals in this instance. Returning to test 1 of Policy EN4, as referenced at section 6ii) of this report, it is concluded that it has been demonstrated that the benefits of the development significantly outweigh the harm to The Bugle's significance. It is also confirmed that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. A similar conclusion is also reached in relation to paragraph 202 of the NPPF, where the public benefits of the scheme are considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm caused to the setting of nearby listed buildings.
- 7.6 Accordingly, pending the outcome of further input from BRE and Hoare Lea, the proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, providing BRE and Hoare Lea based matters are resolved, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of the S106 Legal Agreement.

Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell

A selection of photographs from Friar Street





A selection of photographs from the rear of the site and Fife Court



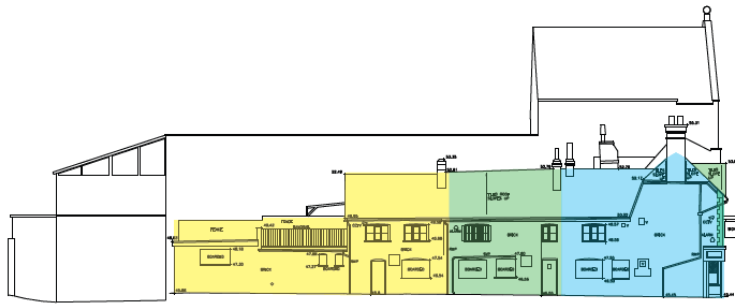


Figure 4.21 Phasing diagram assessed for the Bugle PH, West elevation

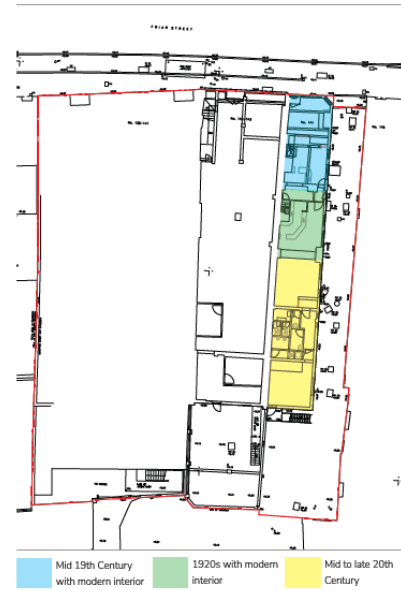


Figure 4.22 Phasing diagram assessed for the Bugle PH, Ground Floor existing

Extract from Heritage and Townscape Visual Impact Assessment by Revive & Tailor dated August 2022



Extract of Structural Plan for retention of existing Bugle beams



Interior of ground floor of the Bugle Public House, 14/10/2022

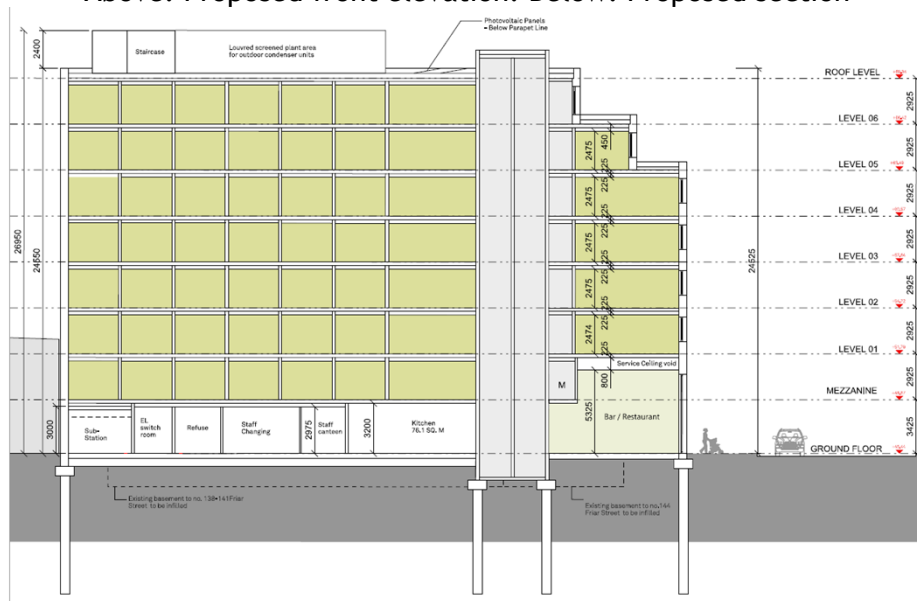


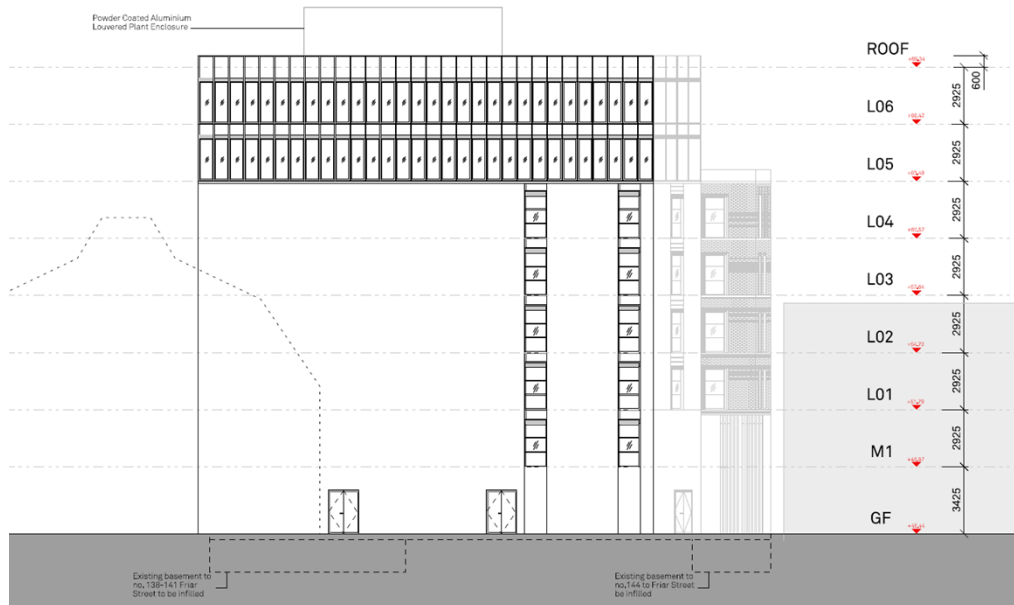


Proposed first floor, fifth floor and roof plans



Above: Proposed front elevation. Below: Proposed section





Above: Proposed rear (south) elevation. Below: Proposed east elevation.



Street Scale Elevation: Existing QVS1 + Proposed QVS2

# Extracts from Design and Access Statement by Falconer Chester Hall Ref P21109-FCH-XX-XX-RG-A-0001 Rev P01 dated August 2022

The front facade of the building consist of a podium level at ground floor in tinted acid etched pre-cast concrete supporting four levels of red brickwork above.

The brickwork surrounding the windows features two different decorative motifs which are enriching the overall look and feel of the building. The top two set back levels, not visible in proximity of the building, consist of a lightweight metal curtain wall system in terracotta color matching the color tone of the building.

The Bugle pub facade is restored and integrated in the scheme. The rear of the building features a Rainscreen cladding system with high-quality render finish.

Brick Parapet

Louvers for Hotel rooms ventilation

Red Brickwork

Darker Red Brickwork (Central Facade)

Pre-cast Banding

Tinted Acid etched Pre-cast Panel



The top two floors of the building are made in a lightweight curtain wall system in terracotta colour to match the tone or the red brickwork underneath.

Level 4 set-back level on Friar Street are will be in red brickwork and are set back from the front facade.

Every levels is defined by a slim tinted concrete banding, matching the colour tone of the brickwork above and below.

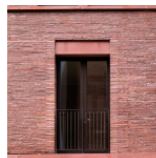
PPC Aluminium Panels



Set-back in Red Brickwork

Brick parapet

Dark Red Brickwork



This detail drawing illustrates the decorative motif of the brickwork surrounding the windows.

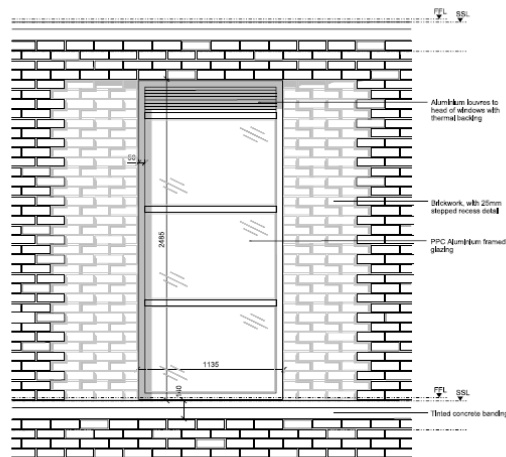
Every window features an aluminium lower panel for air intake and air exhaust as required by the ventilation strategy for every single hotel's room.



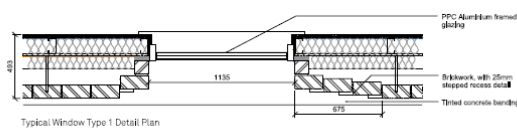
Rendering of proposed brickwork detailing



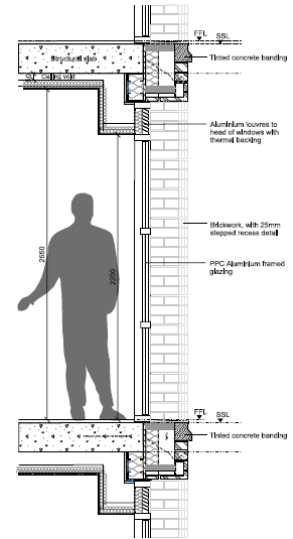
QVS II - CONSIDER CREATE CONNECT



Typical Window Type 1 Detail Elevation



Typical Window Type 1 Detail Plan



Typical Window Type 1 Detail Section

## 4.11 FRIAR STREET ELEVATION

The proposed Friar Street elevation has been developed to incorporate officer comments and refined through a series of detailed facade studies and local heritage influences.

The principal facade will be subdivided into 3 vertical sections, articulated through a subtle change in brickwork tone, which references the historical plot widths and building frontages along Friar Street. This will sit alongside and set-back from the retained Bugle PH building, to acknowledge the scale and historical street rhythm of the time.

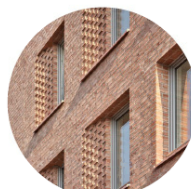
Local shopfront design has influenced the scale, materiality and proportion of the proposed facade at ground level. A glazed in arched colonnade references the historical arched shopfront at 147 Friar Street (QVS Phase 1) and is used to define a double height space within, flooding the ground floor food & beverage spaces with natural light. The arched frontage is flanked by two lower proportioned frontages which acknowledge the scale of the retained Bugle PH building and historical shopfronts elsewhere along Friar Street.

At upper levels brickwork is proposed with articulated brick detailing around window openings. The use of Redding brickwork with intricate detailing elsewhere in surrounding area has informed the design and appearance of this. The proposed elevation will make a subtle yet contemporary acknowledgement of the architectural qualities unique to the area.

The uppermost floors are set-back from the principal building line along Friar Street. An alternative material and architectural language is intended for this portion of elevation which will provide a natural break to the facade below. The use of curtain wall glazing with a thin profiled capping and recessed aluminium panels will provide a crisp lightness that will contrast to the textures and detailing present in the facade below. Visible only in long views from street level, it is intended this contrast will create visual interest and variety along the street scape.



FRIAR STREET ELEVATION



Brickwork detailing



Pre-cast Panels



Aluminum Panels



Red Brickwork

FCH

QVS II - CONSIDER CREATE CONNECT



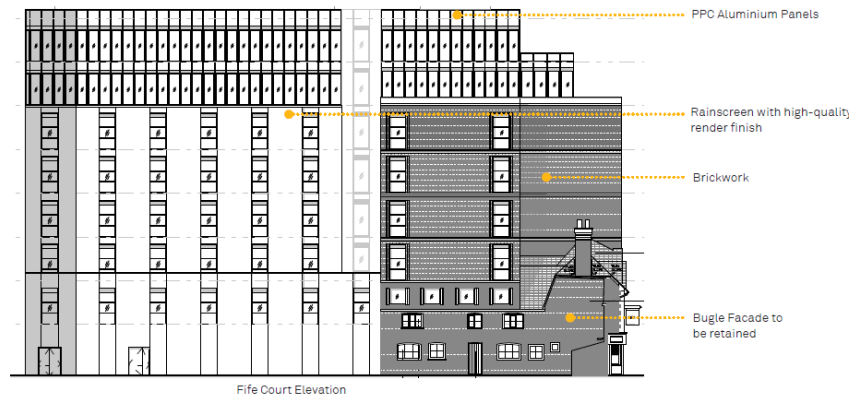
## 4.12 FIFE COURT ELEVATION

The proposed Fife Court elevation has been developed to incorporate officer comments and refined through a series of detailed facade and material studies.

The existing Bugle facade is will be retained, restored and integrated with the new brickwork above.

To the rear of the site, an alternative rainscreen system with rendered finish is proposed to provide a visual break between the brickwork along Friar Street.

The upper floors will continue the curtain walling and aluminium facade which wraps around the building at this level.



FCH

QVS II - CONSIDER CREATE CONNECT



High-quality Render Finish



High-quality Render Finish



Pre-cast Panels



Red Brickwork



This is the long view east view from Friar Street of the proposed design of QVS2 with the existing QVS1.



This is the long view west view from Friar Street of the proposed design of QVS2 with the existing QVS1.



Proposed Scheme - Friar Street Long Distance View





Figure 6.13 Front elevation CGI [taken from DAS by FCH Architects]

[Heritage and Townscape Visual Impact Assessment](#) |

(officer note: it is unclear whether this visualisation is fully accurate - e.g. showing no indication of the upper two storeys. Furthermore, the visualisation appears to show the proposed massing of the separate neighbouring proposal of 221232 to the east)