

04 February 2026



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	PLANNING APPLICATION UPDATE REPORT
Ward	Abbey/Katesgrove
Planning Application Reference:	PL/22/1916/FUL & PL/22/1917/FUL
Site Address:	PL/22/1916/FUL – Former Debenhams Department Store, west of Yield Hall Place ('Yield Hall Place 1'), The Oracle, Reading, RG2 2AS PL/22/1917/FUL – Existing Vue cinema complex west of Yield Hall Place/London Road ('Yield Hall Place 2'), The Oracle, Reading, RG2 2AG
Proposed Development	<p>PL/22/1916/FUL - Mixed use development comprising part demolition of former department store and erection of new buildings comprising up to 218 build to rent residential dwellings (Class C3) & 1,209sqm commercial uses within Uses Class E and/or bar (Sui Generis Use). Reconfiguration and change of use of up to 5,866sqm remaining department store floorspace (Class E) to uses with within Use Class E and/or bar (Sui Generis Use) and/or experiential leisure use (Sui Generis Use). Associated public realm, infrastructure works & external alterations to shopping centre, including creation of new shopping centre entrance (amended description) (accompanied by an Environmental Statement)</p> <p>PL/22/1917/FUL - Mixed use development comprising demolition of existing buildings and erection of new building comprising up to 218no. build-to-rent residential dwellings (Class C3) & up to 3,046 sqm commercial floorspace comprising cinema (Sui Generis) and ground floor commercial uses within Use Class E and/or Bar (Sui Generis Use). Associated public realm and infrastructure works (amended description) (accompanied by an Environmental Statement)</p>
PL/22/2916/FUL - Yield Hall Place 1 The Oracle, Reading RG2 2AG	
Deadline	Target decision date: 20 th March 2023 Extension of time date: 31 st March 2026
Recommendations	<p>Amended as follows from the main agenda report: Deletions crossed through and additions in <i>bold and italics</i></p> <p>Delegate to the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (ADPTPPS) to:</p> <p>i) GRANT full planning permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of a s106 legal agreement and delegate to ADPTPPS to make such minor changes to conditions or such additional conditions required, make such minor changes to Heads of Terms and details of the legal agreement as may be reasonably required to issue the permission; or</p> <p>ii) Refuse full planning permission if the legal agreement is not completed by 13/02/2026 31/03/2026 (unless officers on behalf of the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement)</p>

<p>S106 Heads of Terms</p>	<p>As per the main agenda report but with following amendments: Deletions crossed through and additions in <i>bold and italics</i></p> <p>2. Affordable Housing Deferred Payment Mechanism</p> <p>Details agreed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review trigger which will be the earlier of 80% occupancy or 12 months from Practical Completion (PC) (Review at PC is excluded) • Profit - 12.5% on Gross Development Value of BTR dwellings and 15% on Commercial • Finance rate - 2% over base rate (increased from the agreed 4.25%) and evidenced at review • OPEX to be evidenced at review (capped at 25%) • Professional fees – 7% based on actual build cost and evidenced at review • Build Cost – full disclosure of build contract and actual build costs incurred • Cost of s106 review to be covered by developer – including legal, accounting, viability, QS, valuation, and any other costs as deemed necessary by the Council • YHP1 Benchmark Land Value - £300, 000. YHP2 Benchmark Land Value - between £7, 000, 000 and £8, 600, 000 (final figure to be agreed with LPA post committee) £7, 600, 000
<p>Conditions</p>	<p>As per the main agenda report</p>
<p>Informatives</p>	<p>As per the main agenda report</p>
<p></p>	
<p align="center">PL/22/1917/FUL - Yield Hall Place 2 The Oracle, Reading RG2 2AG</p>	
<p>Deadline</p>	<p>Target decision date: 20th March 2023 Extension of time date: 31st March 2026</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>Amended as follows from the main agenda report: Deletions crossed through and additions in <i>bold and italics</i></p> <p>Delegate to the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (ADPTPPS) to:</p> <p>i) GRANT full planning permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of a s106 legal agreement and delegate to ADPTPPS to make such minor changes to conditions or such additional conditions required, make such minor changes to Heads of Terms and details of the legal agreement as may be reasonably required to issue the permission; or</p> <p>ii) Refuse full planning permission if the legal agreement is not completed by 13/02/2026 31/03/2026 (unless officers on behalf of the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement)</p>
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Conditions	As per the main agenda report
Informatives	As per the main agenda report

1. Affordable Housing Deferred Payment Mechanism (DPM)

- 1.1 The 3rd December PAC update report set out the s106 Heads of Terms for the affordable housing deferred payment mechanism (obligation no. 2) for both applications. This set out that the benchmark land value (BLV) for the YHP2 development to be used as part of the deferred payment mechanism for both applications was to be agreed between the applicant and the LPA post-committee and that this would be a figure between £7,000, 000 and £8,600,000 (BLV is the value of the site without the benefit of the planning permission sought). Since the 3rd December PAC meeting this figure has been reviewed further by RBC Valuation Officers and their viability consultant who have now confirmed that this figure can be fixed at £7,600,000 The s106 Heads of Terms for both applications are amended accordingly in the recommendation box at the top of this report.

Development Views

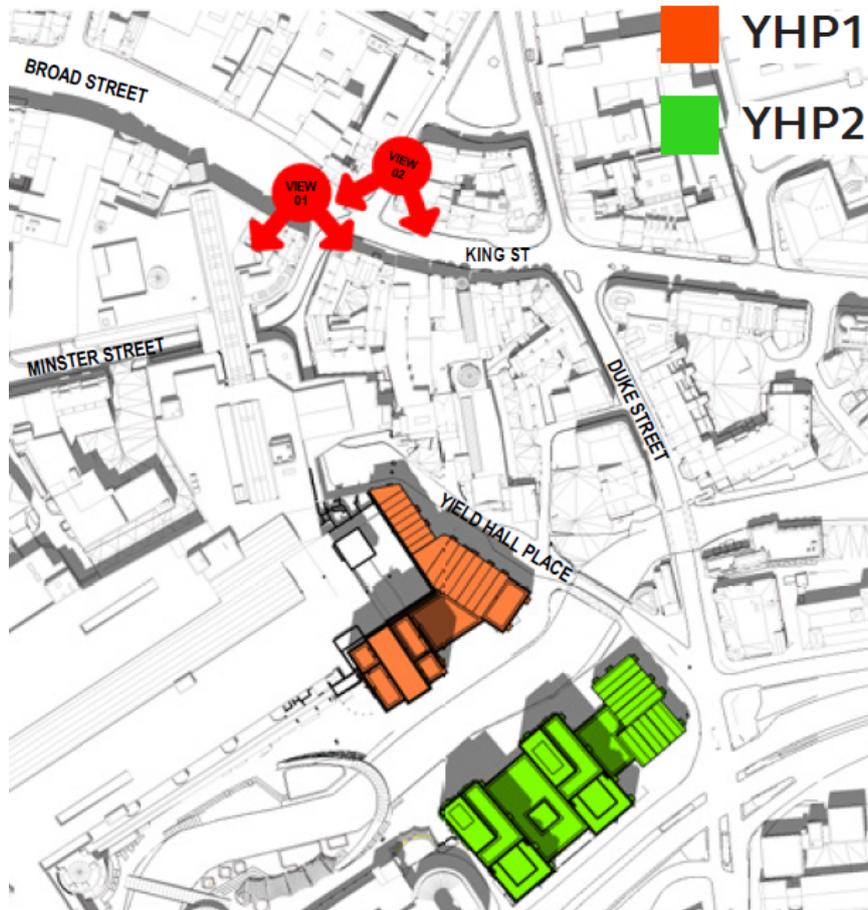
- 1.2 At the PAC site on 22nd January there was discussion from Councillors around the visibility of the proposed developments from the junction of Broad Street, Market Place and King Street. The applicant has provided two indicative views of the proposed developments one directly from this junction (view 01 as referenced below) and one from slightly further back east along Market Place (view 02 as referenced below).



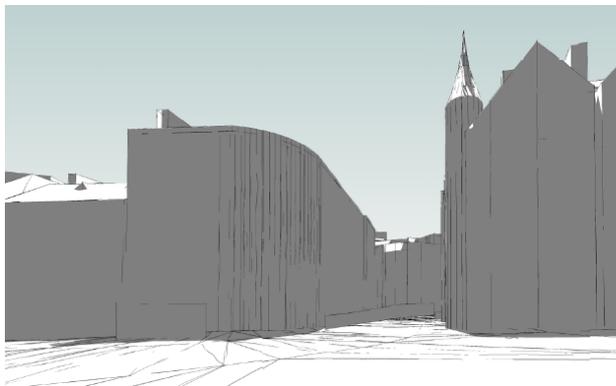
View 01



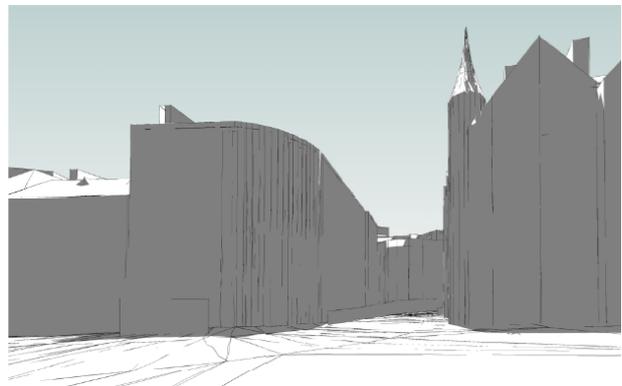
View 02



Location of proposed views 01 and 02 in relation to the YHP1 and YHP2 proposals



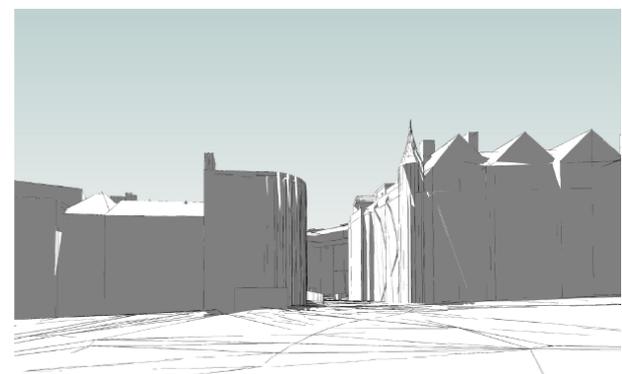
View 01 as proposed



View 01 as existing



View 02 as proposed



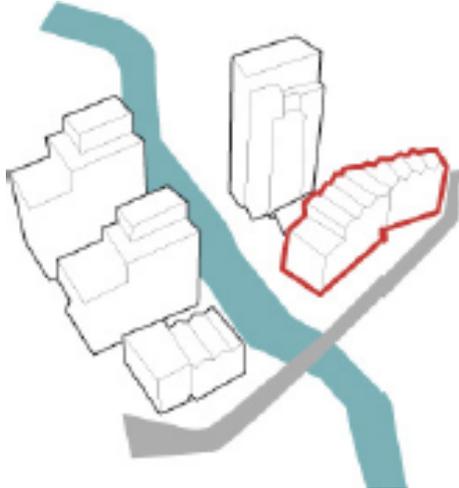
View 02 as existing

1.3 The existing and proposed indicative views above indicate that from viewpoint 01 taken directly from Broad Street there would be no direct visibility of either proposed development. This is as a result of the density of buildings and tight street pattern and

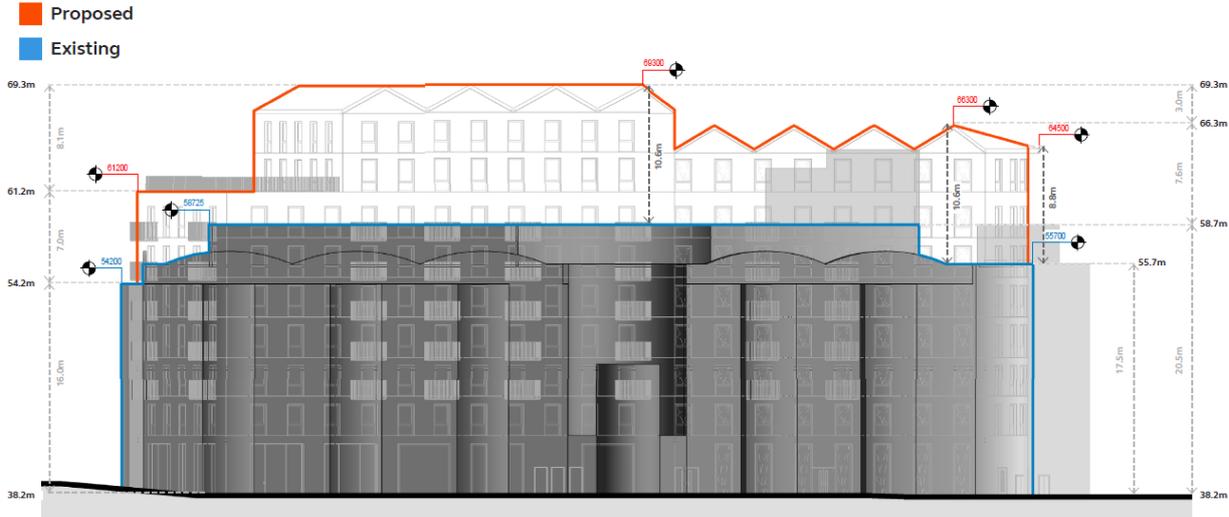
layout of this part of the town centre which shield the proposals from street level. From viewpoint 02 the above existing and proposed indicative views indicate that there would be some visibility of the top-most storeys of the 21 storey tower proposed as part of the YHP1 development. This view is taken from further back on the western edge of Market Place. Larger images of the above indicative views are attached at the end of this report. The visual impact of the proposals and impacts upon the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area and Listed Buildings surrounding Market Place are considered within paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4 of the 3rd December PAC update report and paragraphs 7.2.68 to 7.2.71 of the 3rd December main agenda PAC report. The additional view above and visibility of the YHP1 proposal from the western edge of Market Place do not change the officer assessment and conclusions reached in respect of these impacts which remain as per the 3rd December PAC main agenda and update reports.

Existing and Proposed YHP1 Heights along Yield Hall Place

1.4 At the PAC site visit, Councillors requested clarification of the difference in height of the part of the YHP1 development directly fronting Yield Hall Place, compared to the existing former Debenhams department store building to this part of the site. In response the applicant has provided the sectional drawing along Yield Hall Place shown below which overlays the existing and proposed buildings to this part of the YHP1 site. A larger version of this sectional drawing is attached at the end of this report.



Drawing showing location of the proposed YHP1 building directly fronting Yield Hall Place



Overlay of existing (blue outline) and proposed (red outline) YHP1 building heights to Yield Hall Place

1.5 The above sectional drawing shows that the proposed varied roofline and height of the 6, 8 and 9 storey YHP1 building to Yield Hall Place would exceed the height of the existing

YHP1 building to this part of the site by between 2.5m at its lowest point and 10.6m at its highest point. The officer assessment of the YHP1 building proposed along Yield Hall Place is discussed under 7.2.39 and 7.2.42 of the 3rd December PAC main agenda report and the officer conclusions in this respect remain unchanged.

Materials

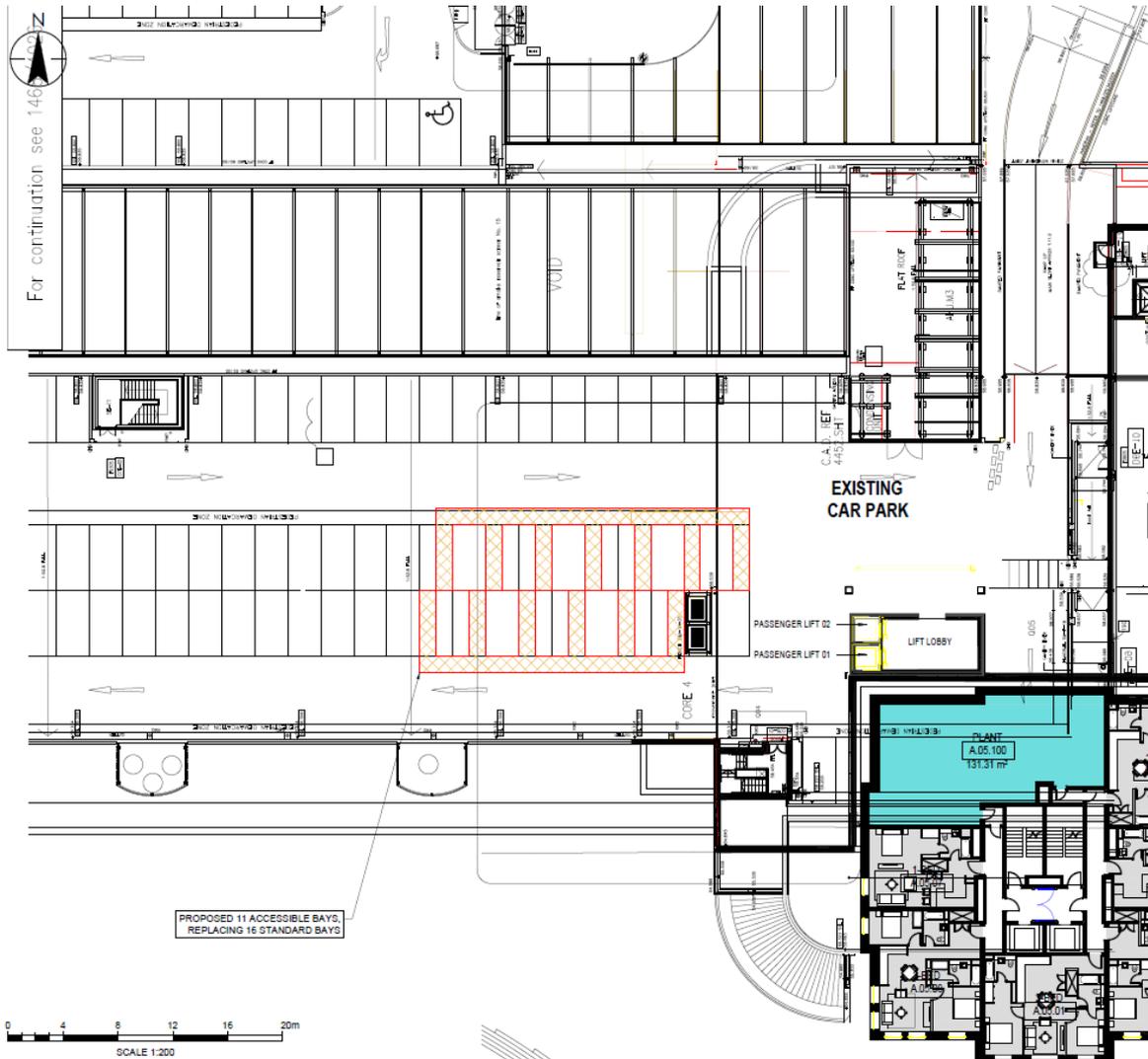
- 1.6 At the PAC site visit Councillors also requested further information in relation to the proposed materials to be used in both the YHP1 and YHP2 buildings. The proposed materials are discussed within paragraphs 7.2.43 and 7.2.46 of the 3rd December PAC main agenda report. The applicant has provided some further visuals in respect the proposed materiality of the different parts of the buildings which is attached at the end of this report.

Accessible Dwellings

- 1.7 Paragraph 3.17 of the main agenda advised that officers were seeking to understand from the applicant if more detail information about the location and mix of the 11 wheelchair user dwellings to be provided within each of the YHP1 and YHP2 developments could be provided. The response officers have received is that at this stage of the development's design, the proposed plans do not specifically identify which dwellings will be designated accessible dwellings. The applicant advises that both developments have been designed to allow flexibility in this respect with all units being wheelchair user accessible with lift access and corridor and doorway widths and that there are units within each size type (eg. 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units) that are suitably sized and laid out to allow adaptation to meet wheelchair user occupancy. As per the 3rd December main agenda PAC report recommended condition 47 for YHP1 and condition 29 for YHP2 requires full details of at least 11 accessible dwellings within each development to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation of any dwelling.
- 1.8 Paragraphs 3.18 of the main agenda report sets out that since the 3rd December PAC meeting the Applicant had submitted further information in respect of blue badge/accessible parking arrangements for both developments. This information proposes that 11 such spaces would be provided for each development, which reflect the minimum number of accessible dwellings to be provided.
- 1.9 It is proposed that for YHP1 these spaces would be located on level 5 of the existing Holy Brook car park which would result in loss of 16 standard visitor parking bays for The Oracle. Plans showing the location of these spaces and the most direct route from the parking spaces to the dwellings by lift is shown below. Larger versions of these drawings are attached at the end of this report.

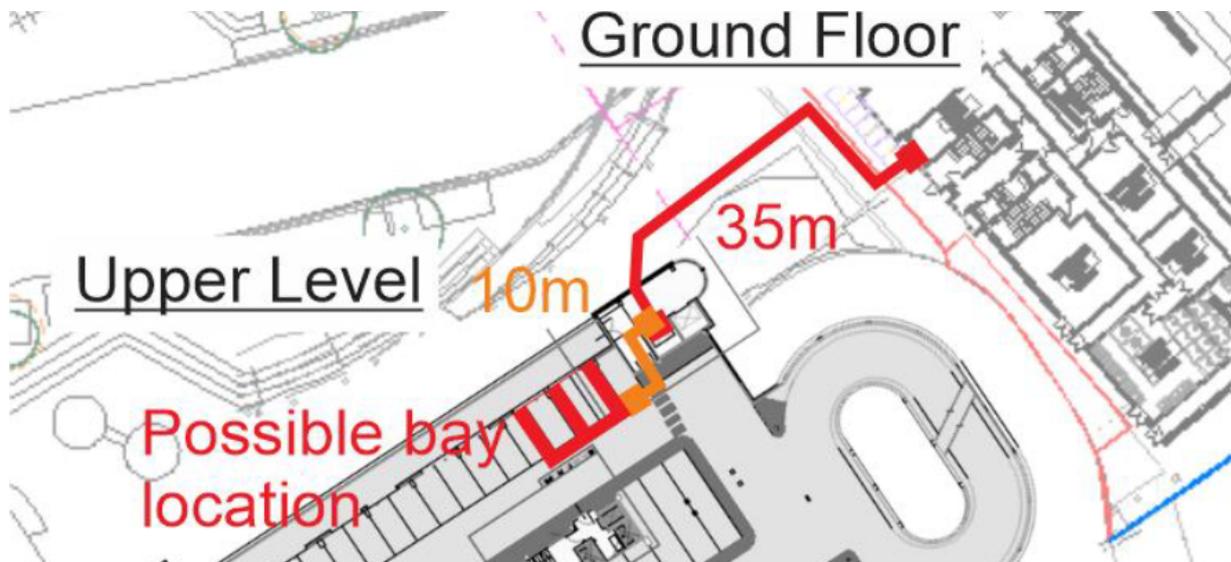


YHP1 – Proposed route from accessible parking spaces to proposed residential dwellings

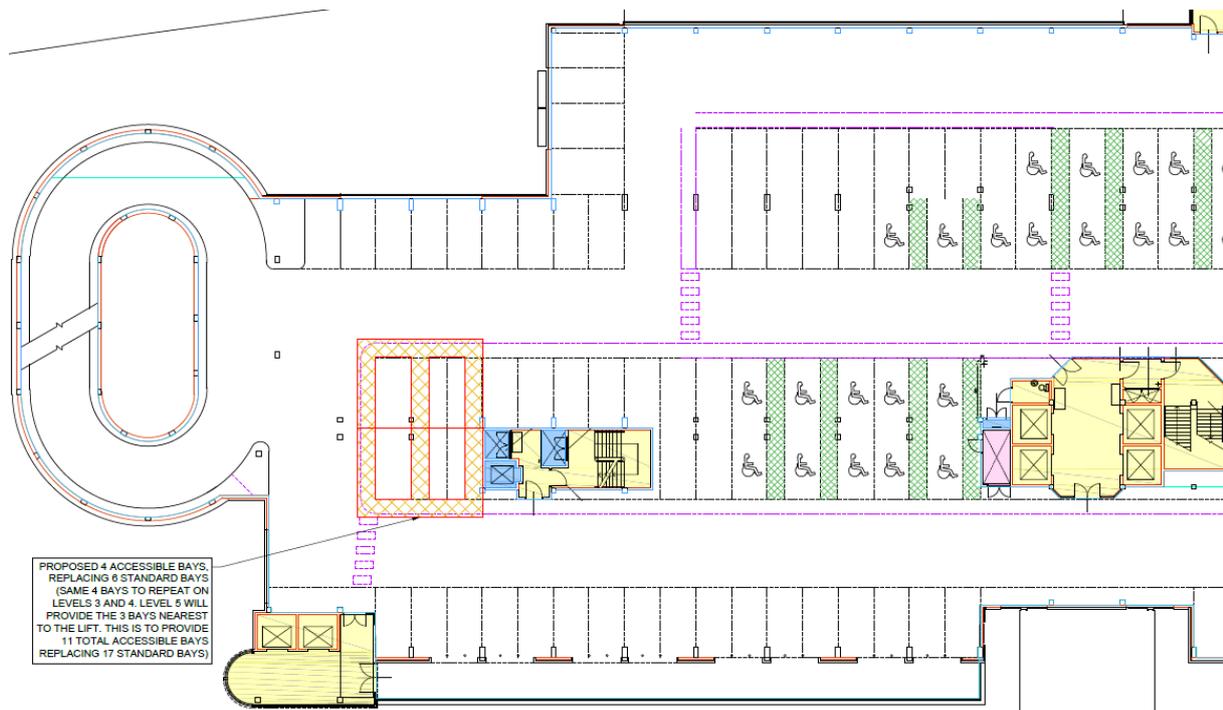


YHP1 – Proposed location of 11 accessible parking spaces to level 5 of Holy Brook Car park

1.10 For YHP2 it is proposed that these spaces would be located across levels 3, 4 and 5 in the north eastern corner of the Riverside Car Park which would result in loss of 17 standard visitor parking bays for The Oracle. A plan showing the location of these spaces and the most direct route from the parking spaces to the dwellings by lift is shown below. Larger versions of these drawings are attached at the end of this report.



YHP2 – Proposed route from accessible parking spaces to proposed residential dwellings



YHP2 – Proposed location of accessible parking spaces to level 3 of Holy Brook Car park (spaces also proposed to levels 4 and 5)

- 1.11 RBC Transport officers advise that national Department for Transport Inclusive Mobility guidance outlines that users of accessible parking spaces should not have to travel more than 50m to access such spaces. For YHP1 the internal route proposed from level 5 of the Holy Brook car park to the YHP1 residential lobby would be around 48m along an entirely covered link (18m from the spaces to the level 5 car park lift and then 30m from the lift to the accessible entrance to the lobby). RBC Transport officers advise that for some of the spaces furthest from the level 5 car park lift, the total distance would be slightly over 50m. The applicant advises that residents with an accessible parking space would be provided with an access fob to enter the mall lobby and access the lift between the lobby and level 5 of the car park but that this would not provide access to the shopping mall. Residents would be able to enter/exit the Holy Brook car park outside of public hours using their access fob.
- 1.12 For the YHP2 proposals the route from the proposed accessible parking spaces at levels 3, 4 and 5 of the Riverside car park to the YHP2 ground floor residential lobby would be around 45m. Given the Riverside car park is a separate building and would not be physically connected to the proposed YHP2 development (as is the existing situation) this route would not be fully covered, with users having to travel along the riverside (for 35m) between the two buildings and use existing car park lifts and proposed residential lobby lifts within YHP2. Access to the lifts at the Riverside car park is available 24/7 so no access controls would be required.
- 1.13 RBC Transport officers advise that the number and location of accessible parking bays to be provided is considered to be acceptable. As per paragraph 5.2 of the 3rd December PAC update report, a s106 obligation is recommended for each application to secure full details of the accessible parking provision and management arrangements, as well as to ensure regularisation of any loss of existing visitor parking spaces at the Holy Brook and Riverside car parks which is currently controlled by historic planning permissions and is likely to require separate planning applications to be submitted.

Case Officer: Matt Burns

Material Palette Yield Hall Place 2

Bay Studies of the Corner Blocks



1. Cladding and Roof

Graphite-coloured metal cladding is proposed at upper levels, including the roof, to provide a consistent and coherent appearance across the building's upper storeys.



2. Brick

The use of red brick reflects and reinforces the historic character of Reading, ensuring the proposed development responds appropriately to its local context.



3. Balconies

Balconies are finished in a dark powder-coated paint to provide a durable and visually cohesive appearance

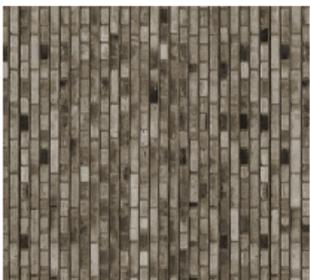
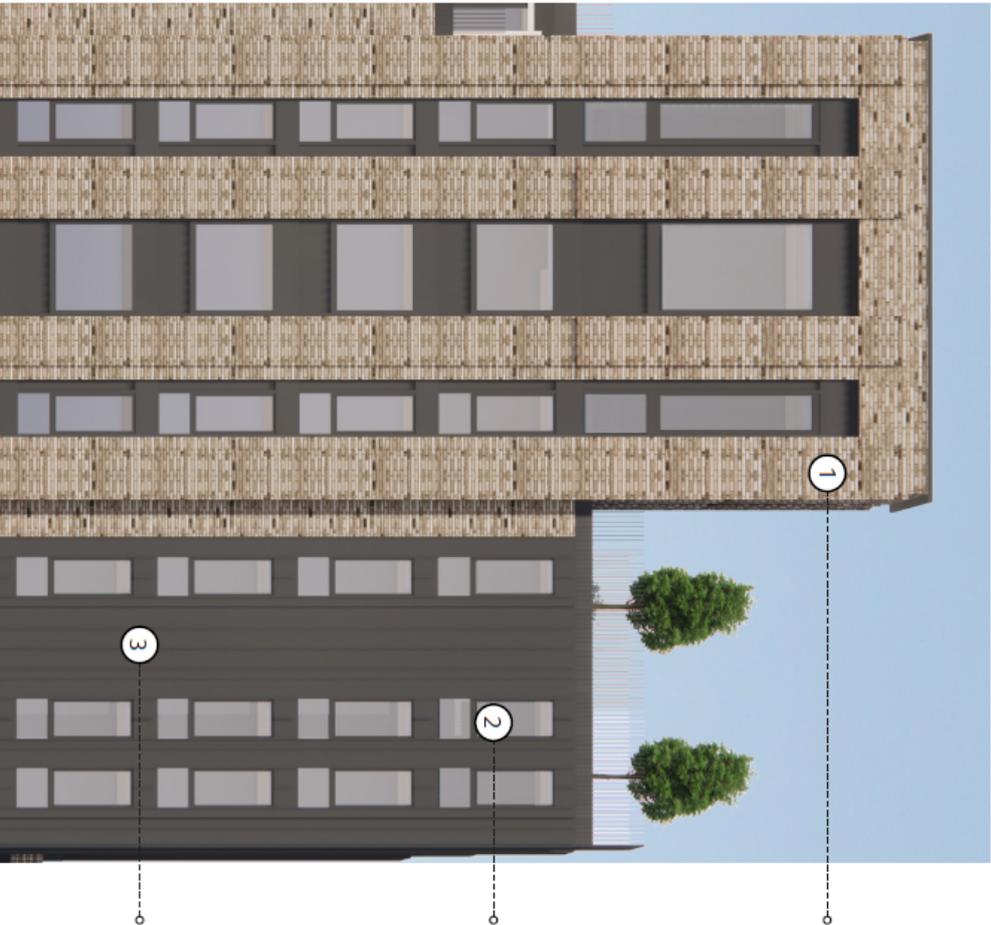


4. Window Frame

Powder-coated window frames in a matching graphite colour are proposed to reinforce the building's contemporary character and provide a cohesive overall appearance.

Material Palette Yield Hall Place 1

Bay Study of the Tower Block's Main Façade



1. Brick

Beige brick is incorporated into the design to introduce a contemporary element that complements and visually relates to the adjacent shopping centre's colour palette.

2. Window Frame

Powder-coated window frames in a matching graphite colour enhance the building's contemporary character and contribute to a cohesive overall appearance.



3. Cladding

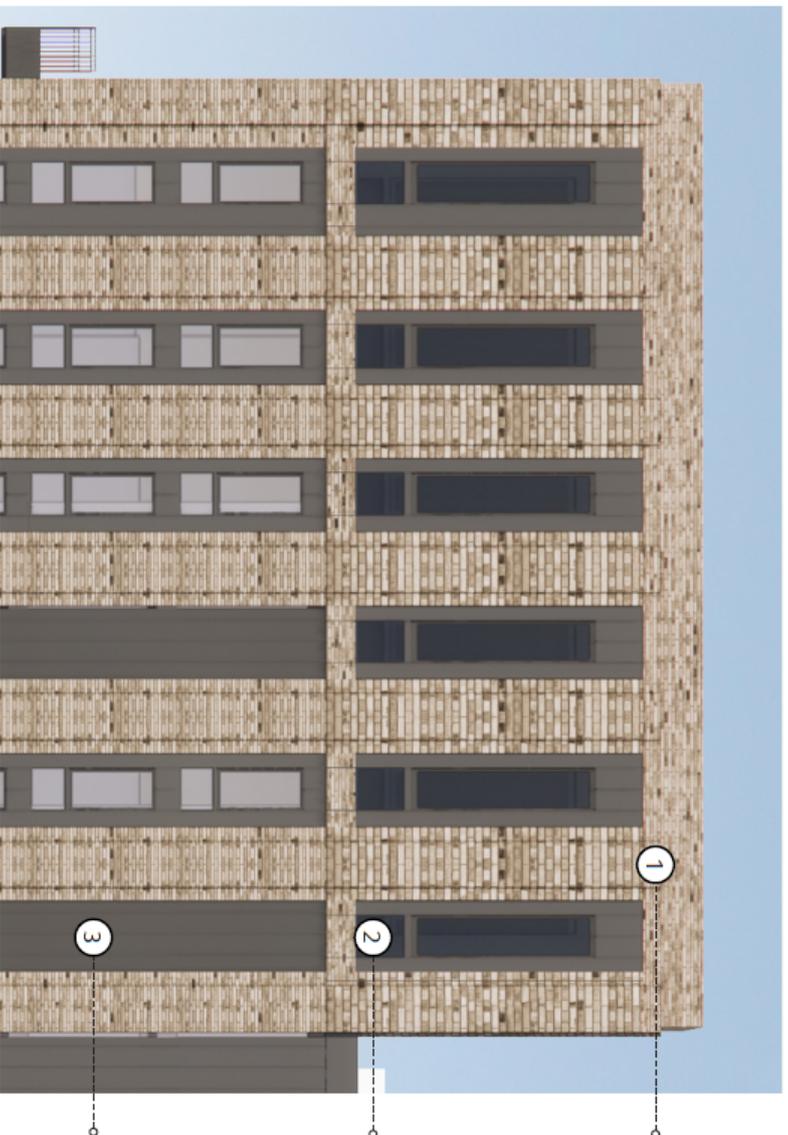
Graphite-coloured metal cladding is utilised to visually integrate the building's disparate elements and create a cohesive architectural composition.



Material Palette

Bay Study of the Tower Block's Crown

Yield Hall Place 1



1. Brick

Beige brick is incorporated into the design to introduce a contemporary element that complements and visually relates to the adjacent shopping centre's colour palette.



2. Window Frame

Powder-coated window frames in a matching graphite colour enhance the building's contemporary character and contribute to a cohesive overall appearance.

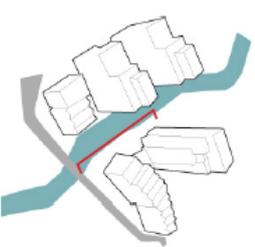


3. Cladding

Graphite-coloured metal cladding is utilised to visually integrate the building's disparate elements and create a cohesive architectural composition.

Material Palette Podium

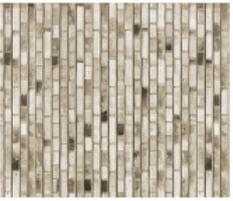
The material palette at podium level is informed by the surrounding shopfronts and street scene, drawing directly from the established context. The design responds to and reflects the distinctive character of the existing mall and riverside promenade.



1. Cladding



2. Beige Brick



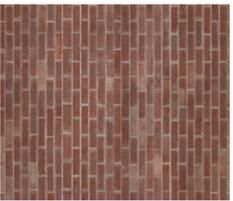
3. Window Frame



4. Dark Powder Coating



5. Red Brick

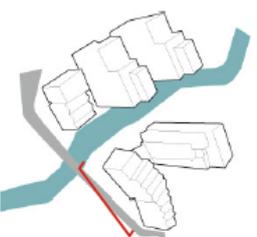


Proposed Materials Details

Material Palette

Yield Hall Place 1

The buildings at Yield Hall Place utilise a material palette of red brick and graphite-coloured metal cladding, establishing a clear dialogue between Reading's historic character and the contemporary architectural language of the proposed development.



1. Dark Powder Coating



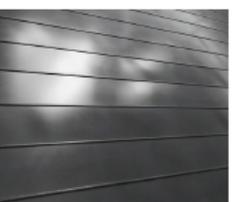
2. Window Frame



3. Red Brick



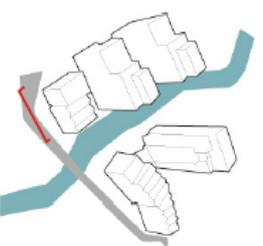
4. Cladding



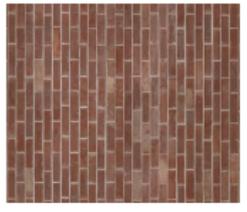
Proposed Materials Details

Material Palette

Yield Hall Place 2



1. Red Brick



2. Cladding



3. Dark Powder Coating



4. Window Frame



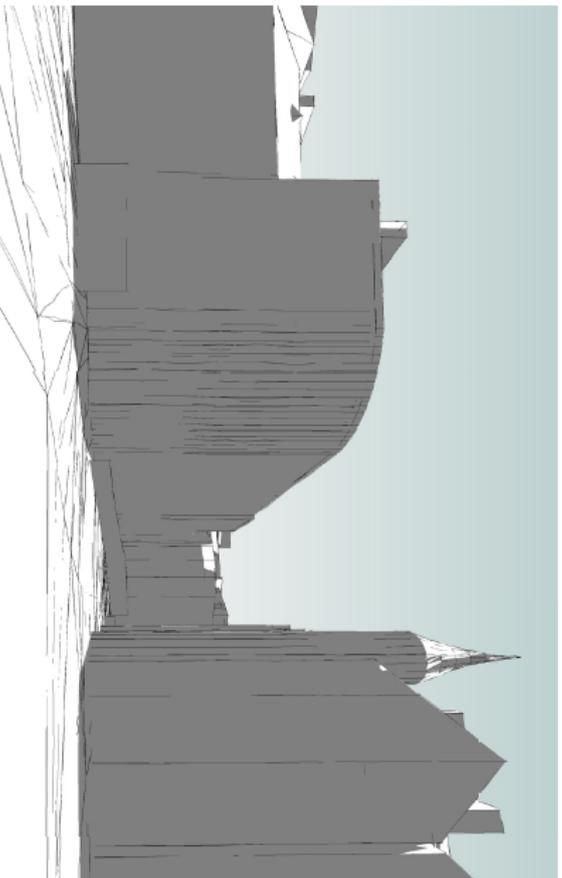
Proposed Materials Details

3D Views Broad Street

View Comparison - Existing and Proposed

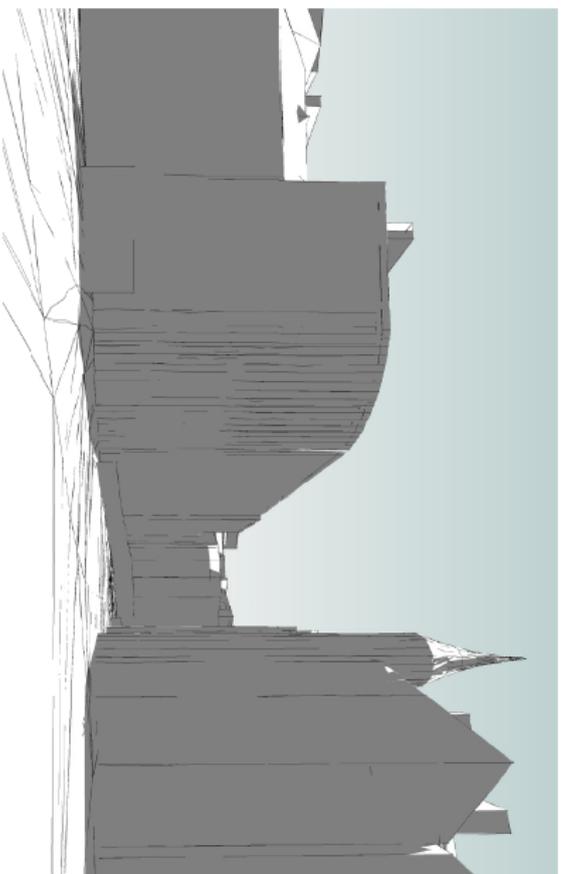


View 01



Proposed

The proposal is NOT visible from this location



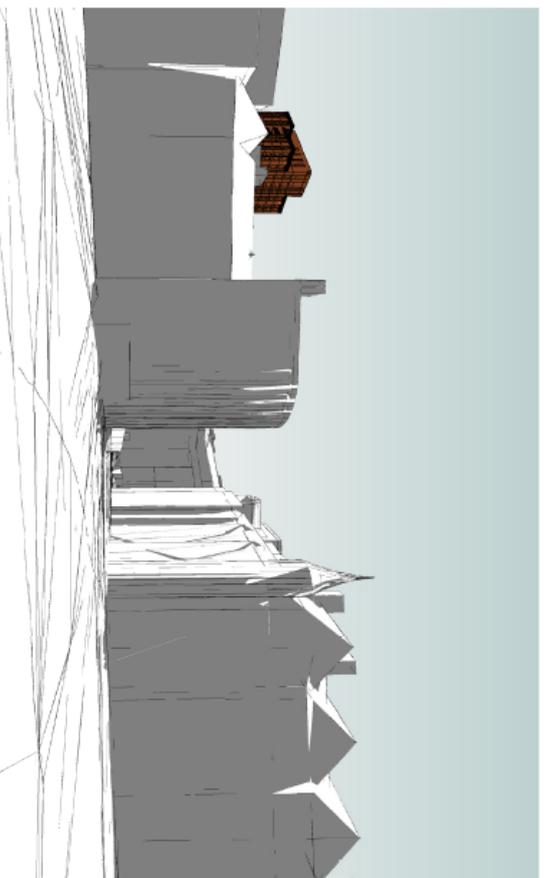
Existing

3D Views Broad Street

View Comparison - Existing and Proposed

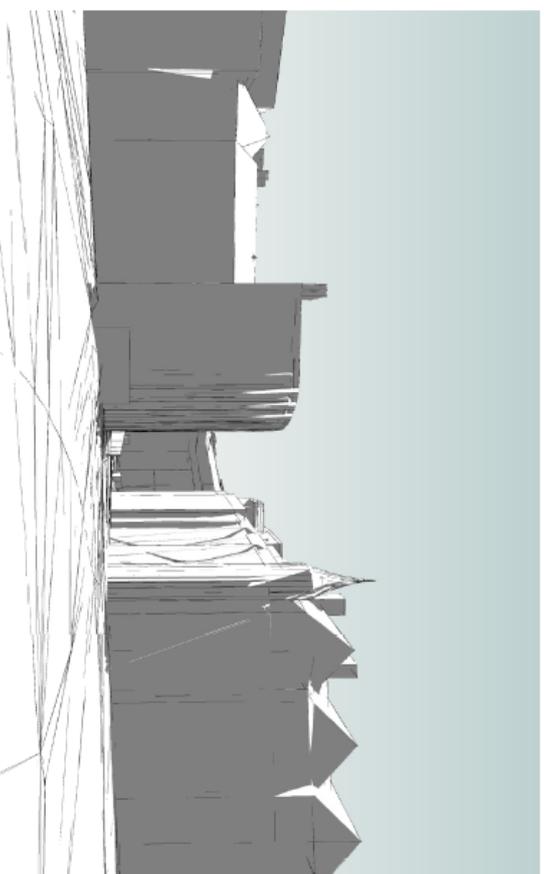


View 02



Proposed

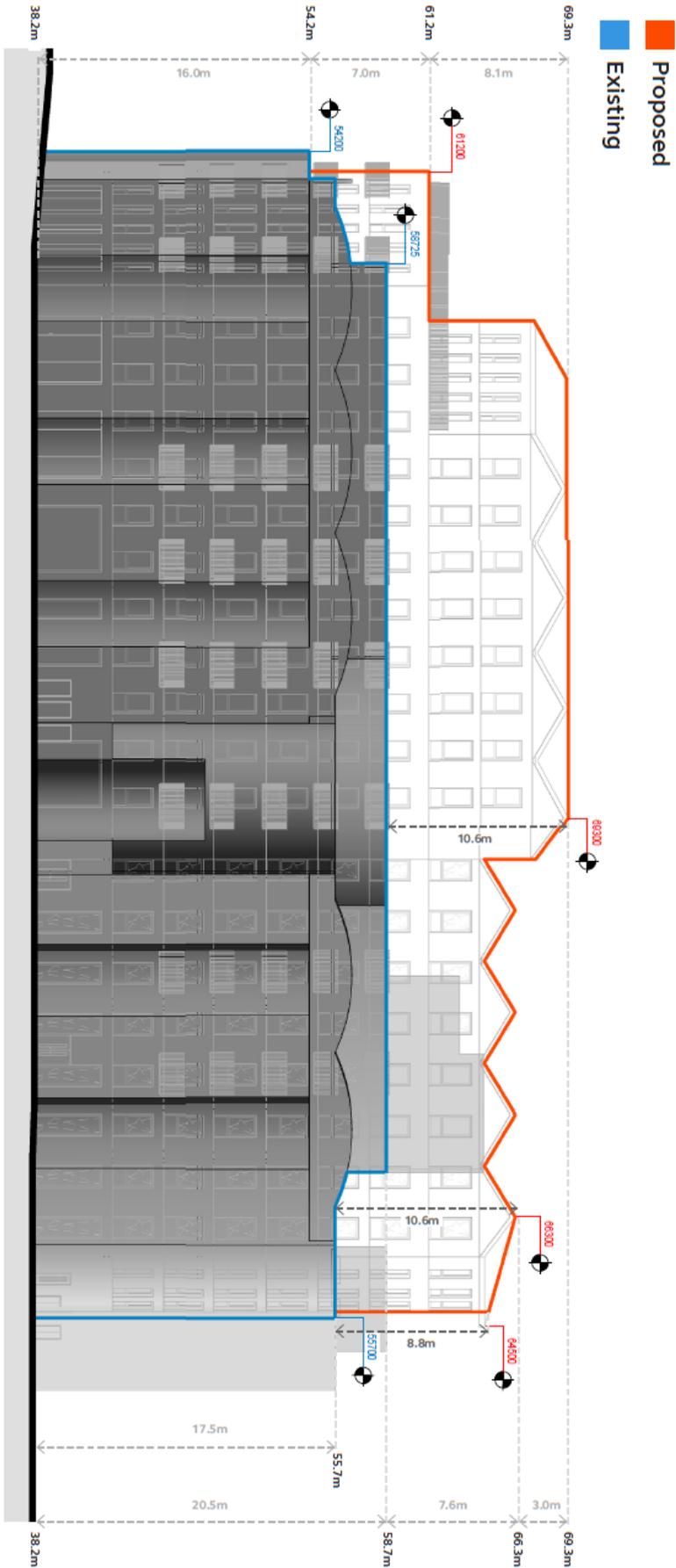
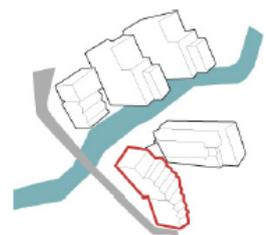
The tallest elements of the YHP1 proposal are partially visible from this location



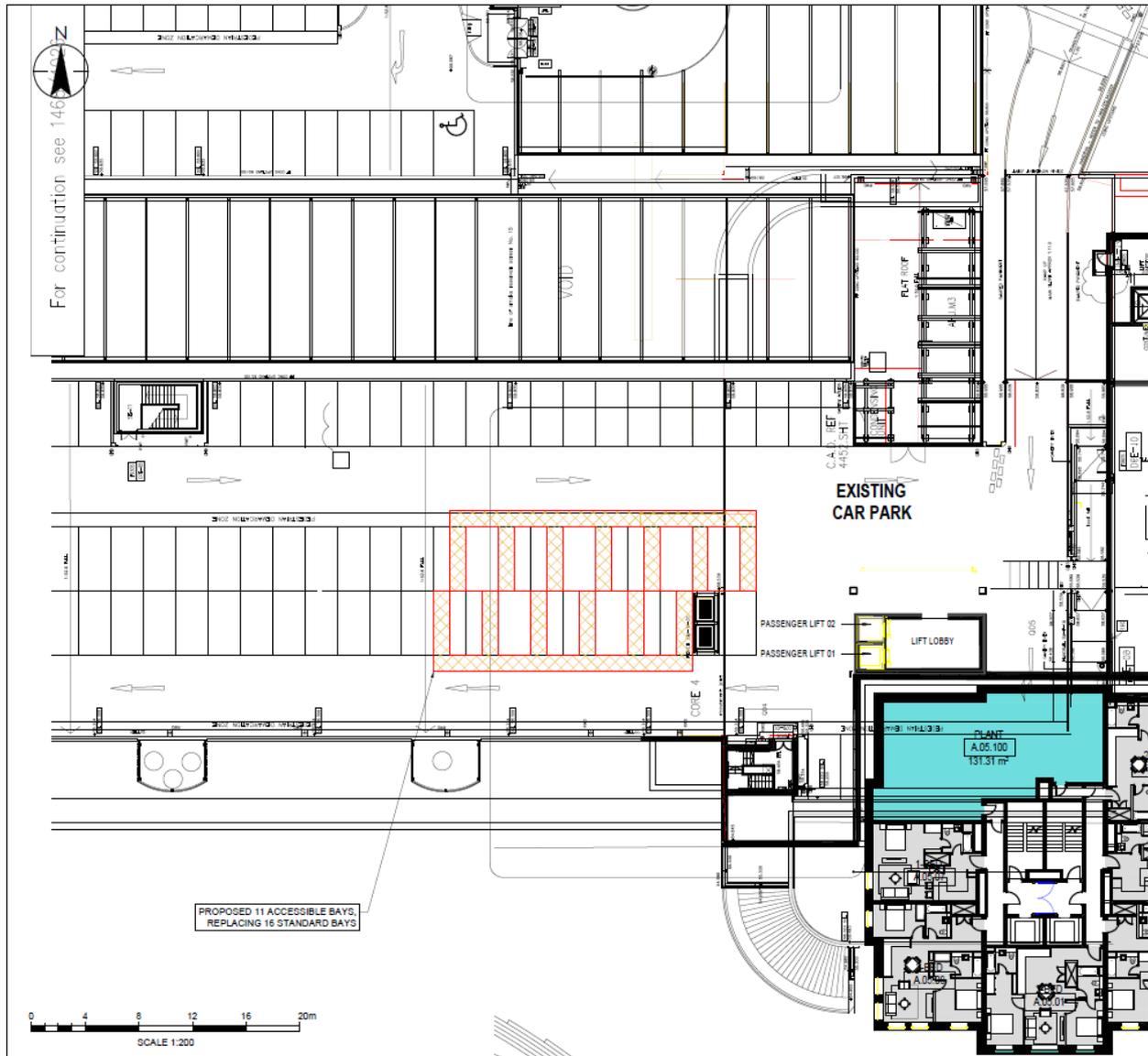
Existing

Elevations Yield Hall Place

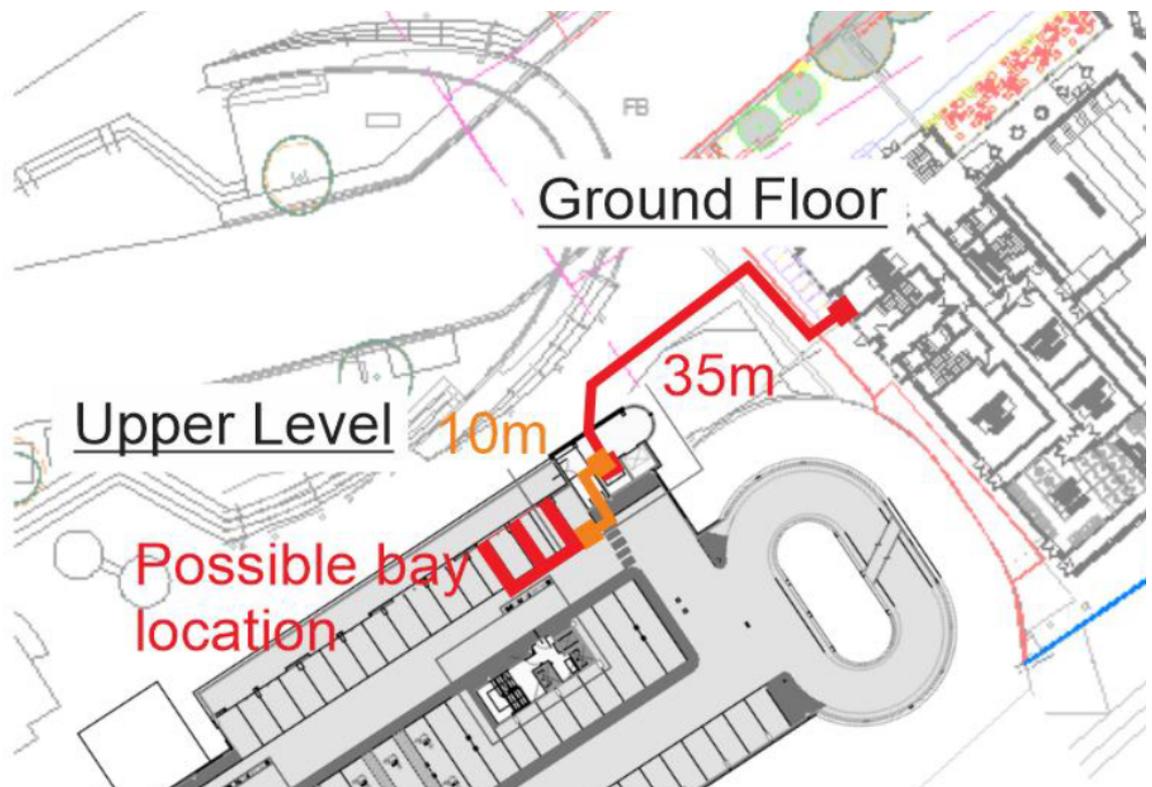
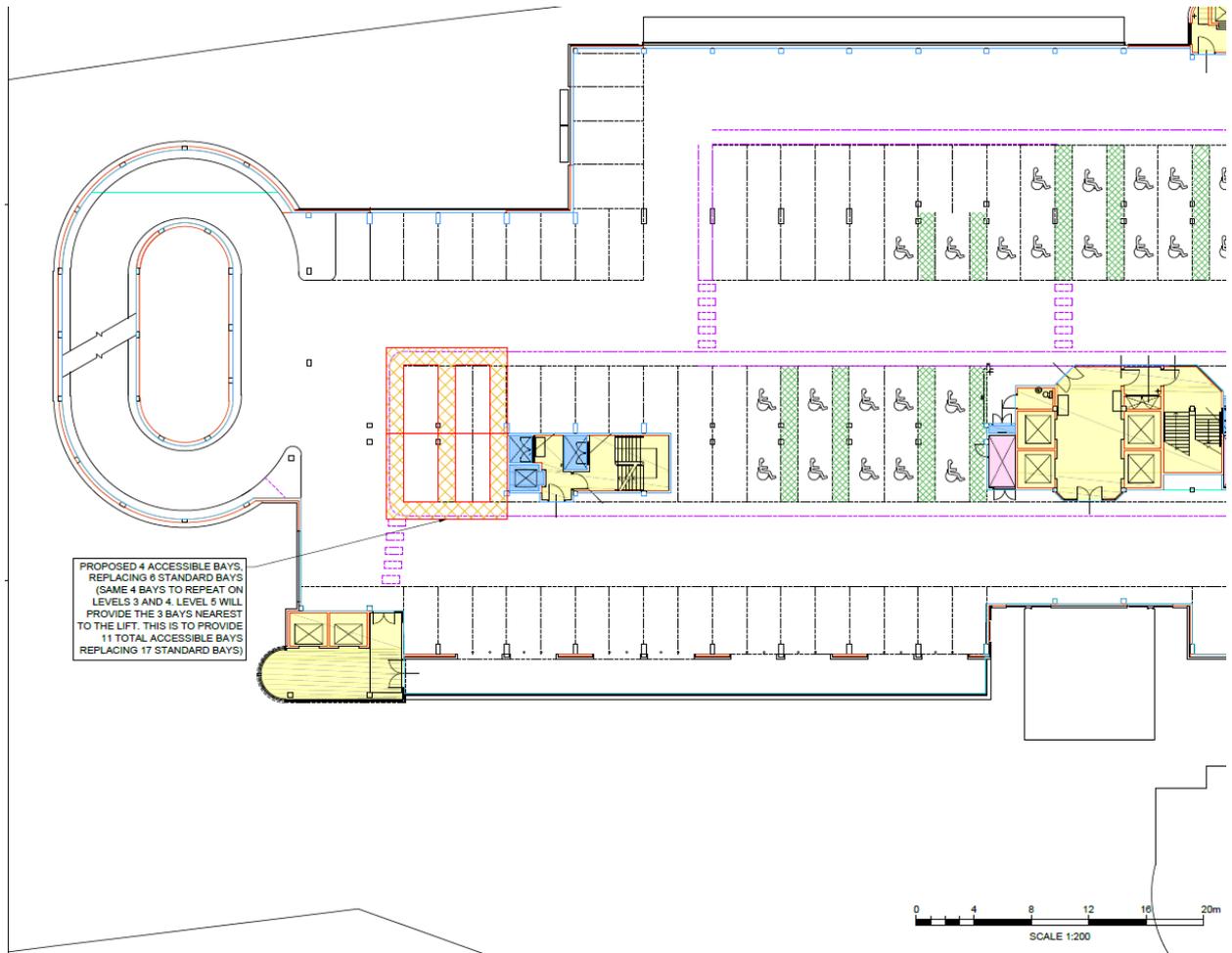
Height Comparisons - Existing and Proposed



YHP1 – Existing Proposed Yield Hall Place Section



Proposed YHP1 Accessible Car Parking



Proposed YHP2 Accessible Car Parking