

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 17th July 2019

Ward: Abbey

Application No.: 181930/FUL

Address: 29-35 Station Road, Reading, RG1 1LG

Proposal: Demolition of the existing vacant 6-storey retail and office building and erection of a replacement basement and part 4, part 22 (with rooftop plant above) storey building to provide flexible retail (Class A1, A2 or A3) use at part ground floor level, a 135-bedroom hotel (Class C1) at 1st to 16th floors and offices (Class B1a) at 17th to 21st floors, associated servicing from Garrard Street and other associated works (amended description).

Applicant: Station Road Dev Co Ltd

Date Valid: 06/12/18

Application target decision date: Originally 07/03/19, but extensions of time have been agreed with the applicant until 14/08/19

26 week date: 06/06/19

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed by 14/08/19 (unless officers on behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The legal agreement to secure the following:

- An Employment Skills and Training Plan (construction phase and end user phase)
- The hotel use:
 - Hotel (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 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 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 room for a continuous period for more than 3 months to the same Customer or Customers
 - not to require Customers of any 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 rooms or any of them
- Air quality financial contribution of £103,000 for the off-site provision of two electric taxi vehicle charging points

And the following 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 (including demolition) demolition and construction method statement, specifically including noise and dust measures;
5. Pre-occupation vehicle access provided in accordance with approved plans
6. Pre-occupation bicycle parking spaces provided in accordance with approved plans
7. Pre-occupation details of bin storage facilities, including measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing the bin stores, to be submitted and approved
8. Pre-occupation details of management of delivery and servicing vehicles to be submitted and approved
9. Travel Plan details to be submitted within six months of first occupation of the hotel and subsequent reviews
10. Compliance condition for glazing and ventilation to be installed in accordance with the specifications recommended within the acoustic assessment submitted and approved
11. No externally located mechanical plant to be installed until a noise assessment has been submitted and approved
12. Pre-occupation (of relevant unit(s)) submission and approval of an odour assessment / odour management plan
13. Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land site characterisation assessment
14. Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land remediation scheme
15. Pre-construction contaminated land validation report
16. Reporting of unexpected contamination at any time
17. Compliance condition relating to hours of demolition/construction works
18. Compliance condition relating to no burning of materials or green waste on site
19. No development (barring demolition) shall take place until full details of proposed green walls and brown roofs have been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include: (a) Construction specifications (b) Proposed planting (species, numbers/densities) (c) Establishment and maintenance details covering a minimum of 10 years. The green walls and brown roofs of the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents prior to first occupation of the hotel or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
20. Pre-occupation details of bird boxes and peregrine nesting box and future implementation/maintenance
21. Compliance condition for development to be carried out in accordance with the precautionary measures and recommendations within the ecology survey report
22. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) submission of SuDS implementation, maintenance and management plan. Completion of SuDS scheme prior to first occupation and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan/details.
23. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) BREEAM Interim Certificate demonstrating a BREEAM score of at least 62.5%
24. Pre-occupation BREEAM Final Certificate demonstrating that the development has attained as a minimum the standard set out in the Interim BREEAM Certificate condition
25. Compliance condition for the development to be carried out in accordance with the

- energy measures stated within the Energy Statement
26. Pre-occupation details of an external lighting strategy to be submitted and approved
 27. Compliance condition for the development to be carried out in accordance with measures within the approved Draft - Crime Prevention Report by Broadway Malyan Ref 33080-07-CPR - Rev2, dated 19/03/19, as received 20/03/19
 28. Compliance condition relating to the first floor bar/lounge and second floor restaurant being strictly ancillary to the hotel use, for hotel guests only and not being open to members of the public.
 29. Compliance condition stipulating a maximum of 135 bedrooms, including no fewer than 4 accessible bedrooms, within the proposed Class C1 hotel
 30. Hours of use compliance condition - The Class A1 or A3 premises shall not be used by members of the public outside the hours of 06:00 to 23:00 on Mondays to Saturdays and 08:00 to 22:00 on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
 31. Compliance condition for the ground floor Class A1/A2/A3 unit retaining 'active window displays'
 32. Pre-occupation privacy screens at 4th to 6th floor level of the western elevation provided in accordance with approved plans

Informatives:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Works affecting highways
3. Sound insulation
4. Section 106 Legal Agreement
5. Flexible use of Class A1/A2/A3 unit (s) for 10 years
6. Possible need for future separate advertisement consent
7. Clarification over pre-commencement conditions
8. CIL
9. Party Wall Act
10. Building Control
11. Terms and Conditions
12. Network Rail

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a basement and 6-storey building located on the west side of Station Road, at the junction with Garrard Street (to the north). The extent of the rectangular red line of the site (stated to be 0.06ha in area) also includes the service access road to the west, the Garrard Street pavement (which includes cycle stands) and highway and the Station Road pavement (the applicant has served notice on RBC Highways and NCP Ltd regarding the application). The 1950's brick building has been vacant since 2013, having previously incorporated a retail use at ground floor level and offices above, with a plant room at roof level.
- 1.2 The application site is located within the Reading Central Area Action Plan area. The site is also wholly within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area (Policy RC1) and forms part of the Friar Street & Station Road sub-area (Policy RC1a). The site has a number of other designations, including being located within:
 - an Area of Archaeological Importance
 - an Air Quality Management Area
 - the Central Core
 - an existing Active Frontage (which extends along both sides of Station Road and also includes the eastern elevation of Thames Tower)

- the Office Core
- the Primary Shopping Area
- the Tall Buildings Cluster (Station Road and Blagrove Street mark the south-eastern corner of this cluster)
- Abbey ward

1.3 Station Road is a main pedestrian route between Reading Station and Broad Street within the town centre. It is also a designated cycle route and has restricted access for cars, with buses and taxis permitted (with bus stops and taxi ranks nearby). Garrard Street links the future Station Hill redevelopment and Thames Tower / Reading Station, with there being a significant change in topography when approaching the application site from the west. The service access road, to the west of the existing building, provides access/servicing capabilities to the existing building, Garrard House, Brunel House, Icon House, the Novotel and Ibis Hotels and pedestrian access through to Merchants Place.

1.4 The surrounding area comprises a mix of uses and building heights/styles/time periods, all within a dense urban setting. To the north of the application site is the 15 storey Thames Tower, which comprises retail and related uses at ground floor and offices above. A permission granted in 2014 included adding four storeys to its height (see relevant history section below). Beyond this (to the north and north-east of the application site) is the recently renovated Southern Station Square and Reading Station, for which the main building is Grade II listed. This was built 1865-67 by architect Mr Lane (Chief Engineer of the GWR Co) as an enlargement and remodelling of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's original station of circa 1840. The building is described as:

Italianate details. Two storey symmetrical main building of buff brick from Coalbrookdale with Bath stone dressings, rusticated quoins. 10 bays wide, slight break to centre 4. Frieze, moulded cornice and blocking course, the projecting centre having console brackets to the cornice and the blocking course raised as solid pediment. The ground floor of the centre break has guilloche frieze and panelled pilasters with wreath caps flanking the windows and doorways. Cornices on console brackets over 1st floor windows, with triangular and segmental pediments over those in centre break. Canopy across ground floor. Hipped slate roof, chimneys removed. Pleasant central cupola, which has round headed lights and bracket eaves to pyramidal roof with finial. Canopy extends over ground floor extensions on both sides, about 12 bays to left and 7 to right.

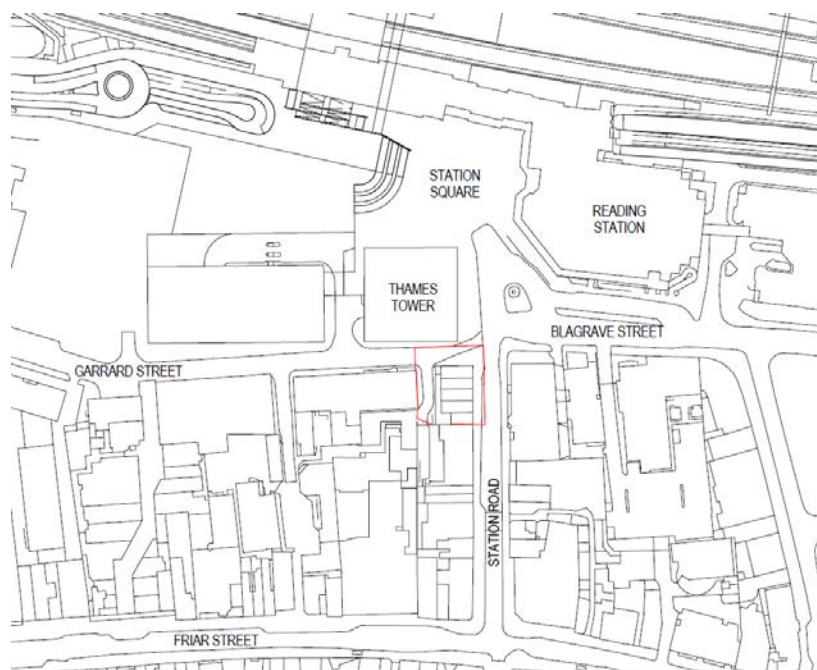
1.5 The Three Guineas Public House (former station ticket office) is also Grade II listed, sitting between the 1980s Reading Station concourse building to the east and the recent Reading Station entrance to the west. To the front of the station the statue of King Edward VII is also Grade II listed.

1.6 To the east of the application site, on the junction of Station Road and Blagrove Street, is the Grade II listed former Great Western Hotel, occupied partly by Starbucks at ground floor level and beyond this as a Malmaison Hotel (ground and three floors above, with the third floor being in mansard form). The listing describes the building as:

One of the 1st Railway Hotels in Britain. 1844 Italianate. 3 storeys and basement. Stucco with rusticated quoins. Ground floor channelled. 5x3 bays divided by pilasters supporting an entablature and boldly projecting modillion cornice. Glazing bar sash windows with architraves. Balustraded

balcony, frieze and cornice to 1st floor windows, centre with pediment. 2nd floor windows with bracket cornice. Central projecting portico with full Doric order and paired columns. 2 bay canted extension to right in matching style. North front has central bowed 3 light bay with cornice over on ground floor. High panelled parapet over cornice. Later 4 storey extension to left with carriage entry. Moulded coping to parapet. 2+1 bays. Modern extension to south. Similarities with Royal Station Hotel at Slough suggest I K Brunel as architect or one of his assistants. Balustraded area to street with heavy balusters. Curved to station approach corner.

- 1.7 Further to the south along the east side of Station Road are unlisted 3/4 storey buildings leading towards Friar St. Further to the south-east it is notable that No's 13 and 15 Friar Street are Grade II listed. Immediately to the south of the site is Brunel House (17/27 Station Road), a 6-storey building occupied by Royal Bank of Scotland at ground floor level and offices above. To the south of this the Grade II listed 13 and 15 Station Road are 4-storeys in height. To the south-west of the site beyond the service access route is Icon House, which is in residential use (as flats) and rises to 10 and 11-storeys. Connected to Icon House are the further residential blocks known as Projection East and Projection West (which fronts onto Merchants Place). Beyond Icon House is the Novotel and Ibis Hotel buildings, which rise up to 13-storeys in total and front onto Friar Street. Immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the application site is Garrard House, which has recently been converted from office to residential and extended to basement and 7-storeys (see relevant history section below). Beyond Garrard House to the north and west are predominantly sites which form part of future Station Hill redevelopment proposals (see relevant history section below), with the NCP multi-storey car park on the north side of Garrard Street being the closest to the application site.
- 1.8 The application site is not located within a conservation area, although the nearest part of the site is approximately 100 metres from the edge of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area's northern extent on Blagrove Street.
- 1.9 The application is being considered at Planning Applications Committee as the proposal constitutes a 'major' development. The site in relation to the wider urban area is shown below, together with a site photograph and aerial views.



Site Location Plan (not to scale)



Site photograph from Station Road



Aerial view from Thames Tower



Aerial view from the east looking west at the Station Road elevation

2. PROPOSALS

2.1 Full planning permission is firstly sought for the demolition of the existing 6-storey retail and office building, which has been vacant since 2013. Beyond this, permission is sought for the erection of a replacement mixed-use basement and part 4, part 22 (with rooftop plant above) storey building (121m AOD) to provide flexible retail (Class A1, A2 or A3) use at part ground floor level, a 135-bedroom hotel (Class C1) at 1st to 16th floors and offices (Class B1a) at 17th to 21st floors. The part 4-storey element is immediately adjacent to Garrard House at 1st to 4th floor level, with vehicular access and servicing maintained below off Garrard Street between the application site building and Garrard House. Furthermore, a combined double height office / hotel entrance/reception with green wall on the Station Road / Garrard Street corner is proposed together other associated works, such as a services floor at third floor level and a green wall at 1st to 3rd floor level on the south elevation of the 4-storey element.

2.2 During the course of the application a number of originally proposed elements were omitted or altered following initial officer feedback. For example, it was originally proposed for the part ground floor unit to flexibly include Class A4 or A5 uses (as well as Class A1, A2 & A3) - the Class A4/A5 uses were omitted during the course of the application. Furthermore, it was also originally proposed for the 1st floor bar/lounge and 2nd floor restaurant, both of which are ancillary to the hotel use, to be open to the public for use too; again during the course of the application the aspiration for the hotels bar and restaurant to be open to the public was removed. The hotel bar and restaurant will therefore only be open to hotel guests. In addition, some amendments to the detailed design of the proposed design have also been made, including (but not limited to):

- The service floor 'waist band' between the base and middle sections of the building (3rd floor level) has been made more prominent.

- Above the 3rd floor level the originally proposed horizontal buff stone has been omitted and replaced with brickwork to match the vertical brick.
- Above the 3rd floor level the form of the horizontal grid has been altered from two floors to three floors.
- The layout and proportion of glass/cladding within the middle section of the building has been altered, with a more regular pattern and greater proportion of glass.
- Provision of green walls either side of the recessed entrance off Station Road and at 1st to 3rd floor level on the southern elevation of the 4 storey element adjacent to Garrard House.
- Alterations to the southern façade directly above Brunel House

2.3 None of the changes are considered to be of a nature or extent to warrant formal public re-consultation on the application. A full suite of supporting documents and reports have been submitted in support of the proposals, as detailed at the end of the main report.

2.4 In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the applicant duly completed a CIL liability form as part of the submission of this application. This details that the existing building was last occupied for its lawful use on 30th May 2013. Accordingly, the existing floorspace (stated to be 1,654sqm GIA) cannot be deducted from the CIL liability as it has not been occupied for its lawful use for 6 continuous months of the 36 previous months prior to any future permission. Therefore, the entirety of the proposed floorspace shall count towards the CIL liability. On the basis of the floorspace information provided by the applicant (hotel = 5910 sqm, office 1893 sqm, flexible retail 259sqm; total floorspace = 8,062sqm), when compared with the CIL charging schedule (hotel = £148.24 per sqm; office within the central core = £37.06 per sqm; A1 retail within Central Reading = £0 per sqm), this equates to an anticipated future CIL contribution of £946,222.94 (£876,070.59 hotel & £70,152.35 office).

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application site building

3.1 There is an extensive planning history for the application site. The applications detailed below are considered the most relevant to the assessment of the current proposal:

3.2 991987 / 99-00498-FUL - Demolition of existing building, erection of new office building with retail or A3 restaurant use at ground level. Granted following completion of legal agreement 10/11/2000. Not implemented.

3.3 010622 / 01-00132/FUL - Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to provide new office building with retail or A3 restaurant use at ground floor level plus service area and car parking at basement/lower ground floor level. Granted following completion of legal agreement 17/01/2002. Not implemented.

3.4 040516 / 04-01395/FUL - Demolition of existing building and the erection of a 22 storey building comprising 103 residential units, two ground floor Class A1 retail and/or Class A3 restaurant units, with a basement level providing car/cycle parking spaces and refuse storage. Granted following completion of legal agreement 19/08/2005. Not implemented.

- 3.5 060941 / 06/00366-VARIAT - Variation of Condition 1 (The development must be started not later than the expiration of five years) of Planning Permission 01/00132/FUL which relates to the 'Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to provide new office building with retail or A3 restaurant use at ground floor level plus service area and car parking at basement/lower ground floor level' for a further three years. Varied after completion of legal agreement 27/06/2006.
- 3.6 080637 / 08-00150-FUL - Redevelopment to provide a 29 storey hotel with ancillary facilities, including a restaurant, bar, meeting rooms and conferencing facilities. Withdrawn 21/07/2008.
- 3.7 091763 / 09-01044-FUL - In-fill existing open redundant space to create new retail unit for A1. Granted 14/08/2009.
- 3.8 101247 / 10-00902/EXT - Application for an extension of the time limit for implementation of permission 04/01395/FUL for the demolition of existing building and the erection of a 22 storey building comprising 103 residential units, two ground floor Class A1 retail and/or Class A3 restaurant units, with a basement level providing car/cycle parking spaces and refuse storage. Granted following completion of legal agreement 05/01/2011. Not implemented.
- 3.9 141275/OPA - Prior approval for the change of use to C3 residential from B1(a) office use at 29-35 Station Road, Reading. Prior Approval Notification - Approval 03/10/2014. Not implemented prior to 30/05/2016 (as per informative 2).
- 3.10 151962 - Demolition of existing building and erection of mixed use residential-led building providing retail on ground and first floor with 110 residential apartments above in a 23 storey building. Withdrawn 24/02/2016.
- 3.11 161819 - Demolition of existing building and erection of mixed use residential-led building providing retail on ground and first floor with 107 residential apartments above in a 23 storey building. Withdrawn 23/03/2017.
- 3.12 170772/OPA - Change of use of 1st to 5th floors from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 33 x 1-bed flats. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended). Prior Approval Notification - Approval 10/07/17. Not implemented at the time of writing; would need to be completed by 10/07/2020 to comply with condition 1.
- 3.13 181753/SCR - A request a Screening Opinion pursuant to Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 in relation to the proposed mixed use development at 29-35 Station Road, Reading. RBC confirmed that a screening opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 was not required 14/11/18.

Relevant history relating to nearby buildings

Thames Tower, 37-45 Station Road

- 3.14 141043/FUL - Refurbishment and recladding of the existing building, construction of four additional storeys of offices (use class B1), change of use of the ground floor to

flexible office and retail uses (classes A1, A2, A3 and B1), rooftop plant and associated works. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 13/10/14.

Garrard House, Garrard Street

- 3.15 141277/OPA - Prior Approval Notification for the change of use from B1(a) Office to C3 Residential for the existing office floorspace at Garrard House, Garrard Street, Reading. Prior Approval Granted 3/10/14. (83 residential units)
- 3.16 150711/FUL - Replacement of existing windows, insertion of new windows in north, east and south elevations, and new front entrance. Granted 16/07/15.
- 3.17 160328/FUL - Extension to include part new fourth floor and new fifth and sixth floors to provide 18 residential units. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 21/06/16.

Garrard Street Car Park

- 3.18 182168/DPA - Application for prior notification of proposed demolition of the existing car park. Prior Approval Given 11/02/19

Station Hill

- 3.19 090622 - (09/01079/OUT) - Outline application for demolition of existing buildings and construction of a mixed use development comprising residential development (C3) , office development (B1A), retail uses (A1), financial and professional services (A2), restaurants and cafes (A3), bars (A4), community space (D1), cultural/leisure space (D1/D2), bowling alley (D2), health and fitness (D2), car and cycle parking, structural landscaping and formation of public spaces, associated infrastructure and public realm works (access, layout and scale only). ['Station Hill 2'] Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 03/10/11 (remains extant until 2020).
- 3.20 130436 - Outline application for mixed use redevelopment of the site through the demolition and alteration of existing buildings and erection of new buildings & structures to provide Offices (Use Class B1), a range of town centre uses including retail and related uses (Use Class A1- A5) leisure (Use Class D2) and residential units, associated infrastructure, public realm works and ancillary development (all matters reserved). ['Station Hill 3' permission] Granted following completion of legal agreement 09/01/15. (All reserved matters applications to be submitted within 7 years - i.e. by 09/01/2022).
- 3.21 130440 - Demolition of Station Hill Retail Parade (including 26 to 58 Station Hill) to create a multipurpose area to be used for holding temporary events. Works of hard and soft landscaping and other incidental works. [Temporary 'Pocket Park' permission]. Granted 20/1/14.
- 3.22 151426 - Outline application with all matters reserved for mixed use redevelopment of Plot E of the Station Hill site and neighbouring Telecom House site (48 to 51 Friar Street & 4 to 20 Garrard Street) to comprise the demolition of existing buildings and erection of new buildings/ structures to provide residential units, a range of town centre uses including retail and related uses (Use Class A1 - A5), associated infrastructure, public realm works and ancillary development. Granted following completion of legal agreement 26/7/16.

- 3.23 151427 - Section 73 application to vary conditions 2,5,6,54 and 57 of outline permission 130436 to remove reference to Plot E. Granted 26/7/16.
- 3.24 190441 - Application under s.73 for amendments to Outline Planning Permission ref. 151427, including alterations to the wording of Conditions 3, 5, 7, 8, 17, 19, 54 and 57. [Plot F 'Station Hill']. Current application under consideration.
- 3.25 190442 - Application under s.73 for amendments to Outline Planning Permission ref. 151426, including alterations to the wording of Conditions 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 17, 21, 37 and 50. Current application under consideration.
- 3.26 190465 - Application for the approval of reserved matters (access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) for Plot E within the development site known as Station Hill submitted pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 190442, and submission of details for approval pursuant to Conditions attached to that permission. The proposals comprise the construction of a 12 storey building (plus basement storey) containing 370 Build to Rent residential units (Use Class C3), 1,151sqm (GEA) of flexible retail floorspace (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5), cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works (amended description). [Plot E - Friar St and Garrard Street]. Current application under consideration.
- 3.27 190466 - Application for approval of reserved matters (access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) for Plot F within the development site known as Station Hill submitted pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 190441, and submission of details for approval pursuant to Conditions attached to that permission. The proposals comprise construction of a 12 storey (plus basement storey) building containing 168 Build to Rent residential units (Use Class C3), 390sqm (GEA) of flexible retail floorspace (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D2), 656sqm (GEA) of leisure floorspace (Use Class D1 or D2), cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works (amended description). Current application under consideration.

4. CONSULTATIONS

i) RBC Transport

- 4.1 Initial observations from the Transport Development Control section advised that further information was required in relation to evidencing the suitability of the servicing of the site via Garrard Street. Furthermore, during the course of the application additional swept path analysis diagrams were submitted and clarity regarding the interaction with Garrard House was provided.
- 4.2 As a means of background, the site is located within Zone 1 (Central Core Area) of the Borough's Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This area lies at the very heart of the town centre, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments. This area is defined as having the best transport hubs, with both the main railway station and bus interchanges. This area also contains the largest proportion of public car parking spaces.
- 4.3 First, in terms of car parking provision, the proposed development has no on-site parking allocated to any of the land uses. The non-provision of car parking for this type of use within the central core area is acceptable, given that the development is located within the town centre and so close to alternative modes of transport. There is currently no parking along Station Road, which is enforced with double

yellow line restrictions on both sides preventing on street car parking taking place. Therefore, any parking demand generated by the proposed development will be accommodated within the town centre public car parks.

- 4.4 In terms of access, the proposed Hotel and Office entrances will be accessed from north-eastern corner of the site providing level access directly onto Station Road and Garrard Street. The retail unit has a level access fronting onto Station Road. Along the Station Road frontage of the site, there are a number of bus stops which are situated along the western side of the carriageway.
- 4.5 With the above in mind, deliveries to the proposed hotel, office use and retail units will therefore be from Garrard Street, via the existing private service road located at the rear of the site. The service road also provides off-street loading facilities for the adjacent properties and retail units as well as Novotel Hotel and Ibis Hotel which front onto Friar Street.
- 4.6 The proposed delivery and servicing strategy for the site will be required to utilise the existing service road to the rear of the site by reversing off Garrard Street, and then departing westbound along Garrard Street and then onto Greyfriars Road northbound. The existing service road is proposed to be improved and widened to 5.5m from its existing width of around 4.0m. The new building will be constructed over the service road and an acceptable 5.2 metre minimum height clearance of the building overhang is provided.
- 4.7 The technical note indicates that the type of vehicles that will serve the land uses in the main are large goods vehicles (LGV) and small/medium ordinary goods vehicles (OGV's). It is stated that the primary delivery vehicles that will require access to the rear service yard will be for Linen/Food/Beverage deliveries associated to the proposed hotel. In paragraph 2.8 of the technical note, an assessment has been carried out using TRICS to derive daily trips (for LGVs and OGVs) for the proposed hotel.
- 4.8 At the time of writing, there are no agreed timescales to remove the taxi horseshoe rank outside the 'old' front entrance of the station, facing the town centre. Therefore, current queueing/waiting of taxis will continue on Garrard Street until the temporary arrangements cease. The swept path diagrams as included in Appendix B of the Transport Statement illustrate the tracking movements of a 7.5t Box Van and 7.5t Panel Van accessing the rear service yard. The only conflict created by these vehicles reversing into the loading area is with the single taxi bay at the very eastern end of Garrard Street at the crossover to Station Road. However, this space directly feeds the main taxi rank outside the 'old' station front therefore the space is continually active and would not cause significant delay for delivery vehicles manoeuvring into the rear service area.
- 4.9 In respect of refuse collection, the proposals incorporate a bin store at lower ground level. It is proposed that bins would be wheeled from the bin stores in the basement via the access ramp by the management company on collection days. A refuse vehicle is expected to be the largest vehicle accessing the rear of the site for servicing operations. The proposals put forward to reverse off Garrard Street would be infrequent and reflects the existing operations currently being carried by adjacent occupiers including Novotel Hotel and Garrard House. Given that these movements would be infrequent in comparison to the general servicing of the site, it is accepted that some back and fore manoeuvring may be required. However, prior to occupation of the development, full details on the management of delivery and servicing of vehicles associated with the development should be submitted (via

a planning condition) to the Local Planning Authority once the occupier of the site is confirmed.

- 4.10 A site visit has identified that Garrard House has a canopy which overhangs the service road. It is evident that delivery/service vehicles have collided with the canopy in the past as damage can be seen on the corner. The applicant has confirmed that the service road to the rear is fully within the site's ownership boundary. To facilitate the widening of the rear service road the canopy at the Garrard House entrance would be removed. The applicant has confirmed (by email 06/06/19) that the red line is sufficient for this application and incorporates the area of the canopy.
- 4.11 The main pedestrian entrance into the adjacent Garrard House is directly from Garrard Street or to the rear via their associated parking courtyard. The access door along the eastern wall of Garrard House, which opens onto the service road, is an emergency exit only and will be retained. This emergency exit door has been illustrated on the revised Basement Plan and a pedestrian buffer strip will be retained between the widened service road and Garrard House so the door can still open without going into the road. The steps will be altered and a retaining wall will be constructed to aid the levelling differences between Garrard Street and the service road.
- 4.12 An assessment of vehicle trip generation has been undertaken for the proposed hotel. Given that no car parking is associated with the site, walking and rail travel are likely to be the predominant method of transport used to access the hotel. However, it is recognised that in some instances car trips will be made. All vehicles will have to use public car parks within the central Reading area.
- 4.13 A framework Travel Plan has been submitted to encourage safe, healthy and sustainable travel options and this is deemed acceptable. The Action Plan within Section 5.4.2 sets out the Measures & Initiatives of the Travel Plan. The Travel Plan Coordinator will be appointed prior to the first occupation of the site and will be responsible for leading the implementation, monitoring and review of the Framework Travel Plan. The full travel plan should be submitted within 6 months of occupation, as secured via planning condition.
- 4.14 In terms of cycle parking, the development proposals include a secure bike store located in the basement level of the proposed building, which can be accessed via the rear access road. In total 10 Sheffield stands or similar facility are proposed giving a total of 20 spaces for the whole building. This will be secured via condition. There are also currently 5no. Sheffield stands located along the northern boundary of the site. The proposals will retain these spaces and they will be located adjacent to the proposed retail entrance, which would continue to provide short stay visitor cycle parking spaces for the residential and retail use.
- 4.15 The applicant submitted a demolition and construction method statement during the course of the application. This provides some useful contextual information concerning the future construction of the building. In particular, it is noted that it is intended for there to be a modular off-site construction of the hotel rooms. This would be beneficial from a timing perspective and in respect of this being a constrained site. Although the submitted report has some specific points which are welcomed in principle, the majority of matters require further development and refinement. Accordingly, it is required for the standard demolition and construction method statement condition to be secured. The developer should be aware that

there would be significant transport implications constructing the proposed building in this prominent location.

4.16 On the basis of the above, the proposals are considered acceptable from a highways perspective subject to the following conditions:

- Pre-commencement (including demolition) demolition and construction method statement;
- Pre-occupation vehicle access provided in accordance with approved plans
- Pre-occupation bicycle parking spaces provided in accordance with approved plans
- Pre-occupation bin storage facilities provided in accordance with approved plans
- Pre-occupation details of management of delivery and servicing vehicles to be submitted and approved
- Travel Plan details to be submitted within six months of first occupation of the hotel and subsequent reviews

ii) RBC Environmental Protection (EP)

4.17 There are potential EP concerns in relation to a variety of topic matters: Noise impact on development; Noise arising from development; Noise - Delivery hours; Odour and noise - kitchen extraction; Bin stores - pests; Air Quality impact - increased exposure / new receptors; Air Quality impact - increased emissions; Contaminated Land; Construction and Demolition phase. Accordingly, each element is discussed below.

4.18 In terms of the noise impacts on development, the applicant has submitted a noise assessment as part of the proposals. This has been assessed and is considered acceptable in identifying suitable glazing and ventilation for the development to protect the occupants from the external noise environment. Accordingly, subject to a compliance condition detailing that glazing and ventilation shall be installed in accordance with the specifications recommended within the acoustic assessment submitted with the application, the proposals are acceptable in this regard.

4.19 Moving on to consider noise arising from the development itself, there is a specific internal floor of the building (3rd floor) dedicated to plant, together with an open air roof plant level too. For the uses proposed it is evident that mechanical plant will be required. Accordingly, prior to the installation of any future externally located mechanical plant a noise assessment (in line with the BS4141:2014 methodology) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This will be required to comply with the Council's noise standards, in order to protect nearby sensitive receptors from harmful noise disturbance. With this condition secured, the proposals are acceptable from an EP perspective.

4.20 Noise based concerns may also arise to nearby residential occupiers (e.g. Garrard House and Icon House) from deliveries, waste collection and general servicing of the proposed uses, particular given the location of the servicing area. As such, it is recommended from an EP perspective that the hours permitted for deliveries are limited to 08:00hrs to 20:00hrs Monday to Saturdays and 10:00hrs to 18:00hrs on Sundays and Bank Holidays. It is understood that this will be incorporated within the delivery and servicing management strategy referenced in the RBC Transport observations above.

- 4.21 Related to noise based matters, cooking odour is often a significant problem in commercial kitchens. Such kitchens could be incorporated within a proposed ground floor Class A1/A3 unit and the ancillary hotel restaurant. Therefore it is considered necessary to include a relevant pre-occupation condition relating to securing an odour assessment and management plan. This is to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring premises and the area generally.
- 4.22 There is also a significant problem with rodent activity in Reading town centre. Further information is required regarding how waste will be stored on site to ensure bin stores are adequately pest proof. Such details should be secured within any bin storage details condition.
- 4.23 Turning to air quality matters, there are two distinct elements to consider. One is in relation to the applicant needing to demonstrate sufficient mitigation measures are implemented, if applicable, to protect future occupants from the effects of poor air quality. The other strand is in respect of the development itself potentially increasing emissions, to the detriment of air quality within the air quality management area. Considering the impact on future occupiers first, the originally submitted air quality assessment did not consider this sufficiently and hence the original EP observations requested a pre-occupation condition. However, during the course of the application the updated air quality assessment satisfactory demonstrated that the air quality for hotel guests will be acceptable and no mitigation is necessary. Accordingly, no condition in this respect is now required.
- 4.24 In terms of the development itself potentially increasing emissions, to the detriment of air quality within an air quality management area, further information was requested following initial observations from EP. This was specifically in relation to providing an air quality assessment to determine whether the proposed development will result in a significant impact on air quality. This was duly submitted during the application.
- 4.25 Although this concluded that there is not a significant impact on air quality as a result of the development, it does however show that the development will demonstrably worsen air quality at a number of receptors in the town centre. EP officers consider this to be of particular concern at the receptors where the air quality objective is already being exceeded (e.g. 59 and 33 Caversham Road). Given the breadth of measures the Council as a whole is seeking to improve air quality at these locations, any factor which will worsen it therefore negates these improvements. Accordingly the applicant was then asked to identify the causes of the predicted worsening of air quality, to determine whether any mitigation measures could be put in place to reduce the impact.
- 4.26 After discussions with the applicant, the suggested mitigation measure is for the applicant to fund electric vehicle charging points in the vicinity of the site. This is sought as it is assumed that a number of future hotel guests will either drive into Reading and use public car parks or travel by taxi. With no on-site car parking being provided, it is therefore only possible for the applicant to make a financial contribution to mitigate the worsening of air quality identified. In discussion with both Transport and EP officers, this shall take the form of the developer funding the provision of two electric taxi vehicle charging points.
- 4.27 This would include the cost of the installation of a rapid charger (>50kW), distribution network operators (DNO) work costs and future maintenance, which altogether for two points is estimated to total £103,000. The precise location(s) of the points have not been agreed to date, owing to the uncertainty regarding the

emerging nearby wider proposals at Station Hill. As such, this will be secured on a suitably flexible basis, whilst also noting in line with Policy DM19 and the S106 Obligations SPD that it is appropriate for this to be secured via s106 legal agreement rather than as part of the separate CIL payment (see section 2 above for CIL payment discussion). With the mitigation measure secured through s106 the proposal is accordingly considered acceptable from an EP perspective.

- 4.28 Turning to consider contaminated land matters, as the site lies adjacent to an historic garage it has the potential to have caused contaminated land. 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.
- 4.29 Finally, in terms of potential concerns during the demolition and construction phases, these relate to potential noise, dust and bonfires possibly adversely impacting on nearby residents and businesses. Fires during construction and demolition can impact on air quality and cause harm to residential amenity. Burning of waste on site could be considered to be harmful to the aims of environmental sustainability. Accordingly, conditions regarding hours of working, noise and dust (to be secured as part of the Transport based construction management plan) and the prevention of bonfires are recommended.
- 4.30 Therefore, from an EP perspective, the proposals are considered acceptable subject to the s106 legal agreement for a £103,000 financial contribution towards two electric taxi vehicle charging points and the following conditions:
- Glazing and ventilation to be installed in accordance with the specifications recommended within the acoustic assessment submitted and approved
 - No externally located mechanical plant to be installed until a noise assessment has been submitted and approved
 - Pre-occupation (of relevant unit(s)) submission and approval of an odour assessment / odour management plan
 - Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land site characterisation assessment
 - Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land remediation scheme
 - Pre-construction contaminated land validation report
 - Reporting of unexpected contamination at any time
 - Hours of demolition/construction works
 - No burning of materials or green waste on site
 - Delivery hours secured within the delivery and servicing management strategy condition
 - Noise and dust measures during demolition/construction within the construction method statement condition
 - Measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing the bin store within the bin storage details condition

iii) RBC Historic Buildings Consultant

- 4.31 As noted above at section 1 of this report, the site is located in a sensitive location, with the settings of a number of Grade II listed buildings / structures being directly affected by the proposed development (Great Western House - Malmaison Hotel; 13 and 15 Station Road; The statue of King Edward VII; Main building of Reading Station; 11 and 13 Friar Street, 39 Friar Street; 12, 14 and 15 Friar Street) and the

Grade II* listed Town Council Chamber and Offices and Clock Tower, which is within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area.

- 4.32 As means of context, recent legal cases relating to issues of the setting of listed buildings have established that under section 70(3) the general power to grant planning permission under section 70(1) is expressly subject to sections 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66(1), in the determination of applications affecting the setting of a Listed Building, states that:

'in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

- 4.33 There are a number of case law examples [such as R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks District Council [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin), or R (Lady Hart of Chiltern) v Babergh District Council [2014] EWHC 3261 (Admin), or North Norfolk District Council v SSCLG [2014] EWHC 279 (Admin)] that where a development harms a listed building or its setting, that harm alone gives rise to a strong presumption against the grant of planning permission, requiring particularly strong countervailing factors to be identified before it can be treated as overridden; this is the meaning of giving the harm to the statutorily protected heritage assets 'considerable importance and weight'. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF (referenced by the applicant - the presumption in favour of sustainable development) is part of National Planning Policy; the protection to the setting of a Listed Building is provided under a separate planning act and is an overarching statutory duty imposed by section 66 of the Act which must be considered and which has been the basis of many clarifications in their relevant importance in Case Law.
- 4.34 In addition, as stated in the case of the Forest of Dean and Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Gladman Developments Ltd [2016] EWHC 421 (Admin), paragraph 14 of the 2012 NPPF (now paragraph 11 in the 2019 NPPF) relating to the presumption in favour of sustainable development only applies 'unless specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted' but is subject to a Footnote 9. In this case Footnote 9 of the NPPF refers to 'any designated heritage assets'.
- 4.35 The Forest of Dean case stated that paragraph 134 of the 2012 NPPF (now paragraph 196 of the 2019 NPPF), which refers to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, can be considered to be a 'policy', for the purposes of Footnote 9, that would restrict development unless not outweighed by the public benefits of the proposals including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 4.36 It is also pertinent to note that paragraph 193 of the NPPF details that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be), irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 4.37 As well as the statutory legislative framework and national policy framework outlined above, the local policy context must also be addressed in decision making. As well as the overarching design/heritage policies CS7, CS33 and RC5, in this specific instance the site allocation Policy RC1a identifies that the setting of listed buildings in the area will be preserved. This is developed further in the Reading

Station Area Framework SPD (RSAF 2010), with it also referenced that the benchmark heights details are not guarantees and may be modified downwards where it becomes clear that proposed buildings will harm residential amenity or affect the setting of listed buildings, important views or open spaces (paragraph 6.24). The impact on nearby conservation areas and the settings of listed buildings is also reiterated (in the context of adopted local policies and the 2008 Tall Buildings Strategy technical background report) at paragraph 6.33 of the RSAF 'New buildings, whether or not they lie within the boundaries of a Conservation Area, will be expected to make a positive contribution to the area and they should conserve and where appropriate enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and conserve the setting of listed buildings'.

- 4.38 Finally from a contextual perspective, Historic England has also provided good practice guidance in relation to tall buildings (2015), warning that *"if the building is not in the right place and well designed a tall building, by virtue of its size and widespread visibility, can also seriously harm the qualities that people value about a place"*. Moreover, Historic England's guidance 'Managing significance in decision-taking' states in respect of cumulative change that *"The cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change"*. In addition, Historic England's guidance in 'The Setting of Heritage assets' (2015) on appreciating the setting states: *"Because setting does not depend on public rights or ability to access it, significance is not dependent on numbers of people visiting it; this would downplay such qualitative issues as the importance of quiet and tranquillity as an attribute of setting, constraints on access such as remoteness or challenging terrain, and the importance of the setting to a local community who may be few in number. The potential for appreciation of the asset's significance may increase once it is interpreted or mediated in some way, or if access to currently inaccessible land becomes possible"*.
- 4.39 With the above context in mind, it is firstly recognised in principle that there is no objection to the demolition of the existing building. However, it is also considered that the existing 6-storey commercial premises are of a scale that is appropriate to the streetscene and in particular the adjacent Listed Buildings of Great Western House, 13 and 15 Station Road and Statue of King Edward VII.
- 4.40 In the case of the proposal, initial concerns were raised in relation to the proposed development not making a positive contribution to the settings of the Listed Buildings or views experienced in relation to the nearby Conservation Area. Initial questions were also raised in terms of the quality of the overall design. Owing to the height of the proposed building, it would be visible in views across Reading, harming the aesthetic significance of a number of Listed Buildings and also views out of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. More specifically, the streetviews provided in the D&A Statement show that the existing Thames Tower is clearly visible from the Grade II* Town Council Chamber and Offices and Clock Tower which is within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. Being situated directly opposite Great Western House (the Malmaison Hotel) the proposed building would severely dominate the setting of this Listed Building, harming its significance (e.g. overshadowing), as well as those at 13 and 15 Station Road. The height of the proposed building would be viewed in the context of these buildings. Great Western House directly opposite the site is 3.5 storeys and in the case of 13 and 15 Station Road is 4 storeys in height. As noted in the Reading Station Area Framework (RBC, 2010), *"benchmark heights are not guarantees and may be modified downwards where... it becomes clear that proposed buildings... affect the setting of listed buildings, important views or open spaces"*.

- 4.41 There is also an argument that in townscape terms, it would be expected that storey heights should step down from the central Station Area outwards to provide a logical hierarchy which is readable within the streetscene and would better fit with the settings of the adjacent Listed Buildings. Therefore, from plot C (not yet built) at 128 metres AOD to Thames Tower at 101 metres AOD, the proposed plot as the next plot would be expected to be lower in order to transition harmoniously towards the surrounding Listed Buildings and the centre of Reading town. As Station Road is an important access route towards the Station, also Grade II Listed, the proposed storey heights would be considerably detrimental to the overall character and streetscene of Reading.
- 4.42 As such, the initial observation conclusions were that the height of the proposed development was out-of-scale with the surrounding Listed Buildings. Furthermore, the location of the proposal directly opposite the Grade II Listed Great Western Hotel as well as its prominence in the streetscene and potential visibility from the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area, would harm the significance of these designated heritage assets.
- 4.43 Set against the backdrop of these initial concerns, the applicant submitted further information and a number of detailed design changes have been incorporated, without altering the overall scale and massing of the building. Following assessment of the further information submitted, it is reiterated that as shown in the applicant's own supporting visualisations, the proposed scheme would be highly visible in views from Market Place / London Street Conservation Area with its associated Listed Buildings. There will also be overshadowing of the Malmaison Grade II Listed Building from the proposed scheme. In overall terms however, in relation to the potential level of harm from the development on the significance of the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings, the proposal is considered to constitute less than substantial harm to the significance of nearby designated heritage assets. Nevertheless, this harm must be given considerable importance and weight, as stated in paragraph 193 of the NPPF. Accordingly, whilst the RBC Historic Buildings Consultant still objects to the proposals, consideration should also be given, to paragraph 196 of the NPPF whereby the less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

iv) RBC Planning Natural Environment

- 4.44 Initial observations from the Natural Environment officer acknowledged opportunities for planting at ground floor level were very limited and therefore the use of alternative planting at this prominent location was important. This was particularly the case within the context of policy RC14, section 10 of the RCAF and the site being located within a 10% or less canopy cover area. As such, initial queries were raised in relation to the exact location and extent of soft landscaping proposed (given some ambiguity in the original submission as to whether planters or green walls / trees were proposed) and the need for additional detail being provided at application stage. The need for details at application stage was to demonstrate that this will be incorporated and to highlight its feasibility. Suggestions as to possible types of landscaping and locations were provided.
- 4.45 Following the submission of additional information, introducing green walls (either side of the recessed entrance off Station Road and at 1st to 3rd floor level on the southern elevation of the 4 storey element) and confirming a brown roof was also proposed on the Garrard Street building, these were confirmed as positive steps. In

particular, the green walls were welcomed in principle, and the inclusion of information and examples of similar proposals elsewhere were beneficial in demonstrating the feasibility of green walls in recessed and other constrained locations.

- 4.46 Accordingly, the proposals are considered to be appropriate from a Natural Environment perspective, subject to a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition securing details of the construction specifications, actual planting species/numbers/densities and establishment/maintenance details for a minimum of 10 years for the green wall.

v) RBC Ecology Consultant (GS Ecology)

- 4.47 The Ecological Impact Assessment (ECOSA Ecological Survey and Assessment, Ref: 4164.F0, 30th October 2018) has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and states that the site has “negligible” potential to support roosting bats. The report states that the building is used by nesting birds, and as such, building demolition should be undertaken outside the bird-nesting season (March - August inclusive) to ensure that no birds are harmed or killed during the development. Additionally, as per the recommendations given in the report, and in accordance with paragraph 175 of the NPPF, which states that “opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged” a condition should be set to ensure that enhancements for wildlife are provided within the new development.

- 4.48 As such there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds, subject to a recommended compliance condition for the development to be carried out in accordance with the precautionary measures and recommendations given in sections 5.4 and 5.5 of the submitted ecology survey report (including provision of a brown roof and a peregrine nest box). Moreover, the actual details of the bird boxes and peregrine nest box will be separately secured within a separate condition, as although the location of the boxes have been shown on the proposed plans, no actual details have been specified. This condition will also secure the actual implementation of the boxes and their future maintenance.

vi) RBC Lead Local Flood Authority (Via RBC Transport, in conjunction with RBC Streetcare Services Manager - Highways)

- 4.49 The sustainable urban drainage strategy (SuDS) proposal is confirmed to be acceptable in principle, albeit a detailed design drawing has not been provided and the exact discharge route has not been confirmed. In this instance it is however appropriate for these details to be secured via condition. More specifically, a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition shall secure details of an implementation, maintenance and management plan of the sustainable drainage scheme for the development. Thereafter the overall SuDS system shall be implemented prior to first occupation and thereafter be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

vii) RBC Licensing

- 4.50 The site sits within the Council’s Cumulative Impact Area. The Council, as part of its licensing policy, has published a Cumulative Impact Assessment for Reading town centre which states that the Authority is of the opinion that there are too many licensed premises within the town and adding further licensed premises would likely undermine the promotion of the licensing objectives.

- 4.51 It is disappointing that no hours of operation have been provided as part of the planning application; any hours past 2300hrs are most likely to be an issue as crime figures indicate that 2300hrs is when crime starts to rise within the night time economy. Therefore, whilst the hotel would inevitably be open for people who are staying at the hotel 24 hours a day, a restriction should be placed on the use of the bars/restaurant until 2300hrs.
- 4.52 Concerns are raised about the 'flexible use' applied for within the planning application, in particular the Class A4 and A5 elements, within the context of the Council's Cumulative Impact Assessment. There is no objection to a Class A3 use provided they are genuine restaurants with seating and where alcohol is ancillary to food. However, Licensing would be unlikely to grant a licence for a restaurant past 0000hrs within the Cumulative Impact Area.
- 4.53 One other concern is the proximity of the proposed hotel to Station Road. Station Road is a busy road with taxi ranks, bus stops and other licensed premises including a hotel across the road. Suitable measures will need to be put in place to ensure that residents of any hotel are not disturbed by the operation of this site. This could potentially be the case if there are on site restaurants and bars open to the public. This would undermine the licensing objective of preventing public nuisance.
- 4.54 In summary, whilst RBC Licensing does not necessarily object to a hotel, significant concerns about the public access to the site are raised. On-site facilities could be conditioned, but concerns about the Class A4 and A5 elements of the planning application result in these elements being asked to be removed.
- 4.55 Officer note: the Class A4 & A5 elements were omitted subsequent to RBC Licensing comments.

viii) Reading Design Review Panel (DRP)

- 4.56 Reading DRP was asked to primarily review the detailed design of the proposed scheme in April 2019 as means of a 'quality check' of the submitted planning application. This was rather than the DRP considering the principle of the scale/massing of development, which officers advised would be considered appropriate should all the other various technical matters associated with the development be satisfied. It is also noted that the applicant sought and received advice from CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) prior to the submission of the application. A summary of the written DRP feedback comprised:
1. Having too many steps in the entrance area glazing plan does not benefit the public space significantly and perhaps one step would work better in this area.
 2. DRP also questions the number of uses on the two lower floors. The entrance sequence seems quite muddled, currently all hotel guests and office users use the same access with the hotel lobby on first floor.
 3. Building. Proportions. Differentiation sits between the sections and the proportions of the primary grid work well within the street scene. To develop the design, more simplicity could be introduced through reducing the number of materials used, increasing more regularity in the central section of the facade and making the transitions between different elements more subtle.
 4. Ground Floors: the "waist belt" covering the plantroom floor could work as a ventilated or back-lit element. Visually it would read better to have this as an extension to the glazing on the lower floors (as a curtain over the glazing) and

back-lit, (so the glazing slides behind it) rather than as part of the dark grey panel sections.

5. Middle Floors: Proportionally, the grid looks convincing from different distances and the white brick approach is interesting. The middle section was agreed by the DRP as being the weakest section as concerns were raised over the low proportion of window to panel. Visually this section was described as being the “second class part of scheme” and needs to be improved. Aesthetically this section may look better if the glazing was more generous on this part of the facade.
6. The randomisation across this section does create movement, but the DRP did not feel this was necessary and making this movement more subtle may simplify this area. If the concept is to increase the lightness and glazing as you move up the tower facade, this could be played out more convincingly by introducing much more glazing lower down in the building rather than just at the top two bands of the middle section.
7. Upper Floors: Large areas of glazing work well in this area but frame depth and reveals will be key to this scheme in terms of ensuring quality in the design (see more on this below). The DRP questioned whether fins are necessary at these top levels and how much shading they would actually provide into the spaces (could the laser panels be used as a shading curtain in areas?). Proportionally the uppermost bay could be taller to really emphasise the laser cut panels and top lid to the scheme. Thought should be given to this pattern and whether larger signage could be introduced at this level.
8. Detailing: Simplifying the Palette: Emphasising the Grid + Depth: The DRP discussed the importance in the design team submitting bay studies and sections at 1:10 and models to review how the materials on the facade relate and describe further how the different planes of the grid and inset areas relate (currently the depth of planes and the offsets of the different materials are not clear). These studies will also indicate how any ventilation grilles are integrated into the bays.
9. The grid is created from: Buff/ White brickwork vertical panels in a projected plane on the vertical elements and a stone edging to form the horizontal elements of the grid (set back from the plane vertical plane). The DRP commented that this would take the emphasis away from the grid and create the appearance of tall vertical slots cut into the building. Removing the stone edging and creating the grid from one continuous material (which is in the same vertical and horizontal plane) will make the openings much more legible and emphasise the grid.
10. The precedents shown in the D+A Statement highlight the merit in creating depth within the grid using a simple palette of materials and high-quality detailing. A similar approach should be taken for this proposal and more thought over how these facade depths have been considered to articulate the grid and create depth should be provided.
11. The DRP think that the design would benefit from simplifying the palette of materials, currently there is a combination of: opaque panels/spandrel panels/fins/ stone edging/laser cut panels/brick slips used across the design alongside the randomised panel movement in the central section of the scheme.
12. Design Approach - Dark Infill Cladding: Proportions. The DRP would like the central section of the scheme to be developed particularly where opaque panels are noted. Spandrel panels are introduced on the upper and lower sections of the scheme with some being taken down into the central section of the elevations in places, these will appear as more reflective and lightweight.
13. The quality these opaque panels will be important to the proposal especially as these appear quite dark and heavy on the elevations. This may be improved by increasing the ratio of glazing in each of the bays (as on the corner windows) and introducing more spandrel panels.

14. More details and justification of this approach alongside the specific materials for these panels should be provided to convince the panel of the quality and aesthetic of the panels.
 15. Laser Metal Panels - The details and pattern on these should be developed more and could relate to Reading as a place. The DRP commented it would be nice to see these integrated up through the design but more as an interesting feature.
 16. Overall, more development in this area is needed to convince the DRP that the use of materials, resolution of junctions and proportions have been carefully considered to ensure the building is both iconic as a tall building in Reading and high quality.
 17. The junctions between existing buildings abutting the proposal need more finessing and thought. Particularly, the gable edge roof junction to Brunel House along the south elevation needs to be revisited. Dressing up to this edge of the gable may help the overall effect.
 18. Maintaining the strength of the grid and corner is key and breaking the corner of this frame with narrow windows (such as on areas of the north elevation next to Garrard House) doesn't add any benefit and weakens the design so should be revisited.
 19. Other points: Some more thought should be given to the retail area at ground floor and how this works with the hotel entrance which may feel like a secondary entrance. What will this retail unit be used for and how will this work with the hotel entrance?
 20. More detail should be provided on the access via Garrard St and how this creates wayfinding towards the building entrances through the underpass. Details of materials, wayfinding and lighting to be provided.
- 4.57 The applicant formally responded to Reading DRP comments with the submission of revised plans and a supporting statement received on 24/06/19.
- ix) Independent review of daylight/sunlight matters by Delva Patman Redler (on behalf of the local planning authority)**
- 4.58 Delva Patman Redler undertook an independent review of the Point 2 Daylight and Sunlight report submitted by the applicant on behalf of the local planning authority. A detailed summary of the main findings of the review are:
1. The methodology used for the daylight and sunlight report is agreed.
 2. Satisfied that the only residential blocks close enough to the site that are likely to be adversely affected are the two properties reported in the study which are Icon House and Garrard House; these two properties are the only ones that require detailed assessment in accordance with local planning policy.
 3. Daylight - Icon House -As a result of the development 74 of the 160 windows tested do not meet the BRE guidelines for Vertical Sky Component (VSC) and 27 of the 87 rooms tested do not meet the BRE guidelines for No Sky Line/Contour (NSL). The VSC results reported appear slightly worse than they are in reality as the living/kitchen/dining (LKD) rooms tested have either two or four windows and therefore, in many cases, where non-compliance of three windows reported, this only affects one room. It is, however, relevant that 27 LKD rooms do not meet the VSC standard although only five LKD rooms fail the NSL standard.
 4. The reason for the large reductions in VSC is because the windows have low levels of VSC at present due to the location of Icon House at the rear of other buildings and sufficiently close to them that there is little natural daylight or outlook to the lower levels of that building. Any reduction therefore will show as a large percentage of the existing level. The actual predicted reductions in VSC are relatively small and in the worst affected rooms the actual VSC reductions are generally below 6% actual VSC. This means that the actual change in sky visibility

will be relatively small but poorly-lit rooms will be left with materially poorer levels of daylight.

5. Daylight - Garrard House - 30 of the 105 windows tested do not meet the BRE standard for VSC and 10 of the 55 rooms tested do not meet the BRE standard for NSL. However, the LKD rooms and most of the bedrooms have multiple windows. In the bedrooms, where one window experiences a significant reduction in VSC, the other windows experience only minor change and these particular rooms only experience a minor adverse impact overall.
 6. There are six LKD rooms that experience what I consider to be a major adverse impact with reductions in VSC of more than 40% from existing and reductions in NSL of more than 60% from existing. In potential mitigation, these rooms have very low levels of VSC at present and the actual quantum of loss is very small, below 6% actual VSC in most cases. Conversely, the existing levels of NSL are very good and are substantially reduced. This is because these windows are on the south projecting wing of the building and have a very narrow field of view toward the development site between the bulk of the main building of Garrard House and the wing of Icon House. Any increase in mass directly in front of these windows will have a disproportionate effect on that narrow field of sky visibility.
 7. Daylight - Radiance Analysis - The daylight and sunlight report includes an analysis using the 'radiance calculation method' for the rooms in Icon House that they assess as being main habitable rooms. As explained in the report, this is a more detailed analysis which seeks to predict the actual illuminance within a room taking account of a greater number of factors for instance reflected light from external and internal surfaces.
 8. There is no official guidance that recommends specific levels of radiance values or reductions in radiance although it is reasonable to assume that a reduction in internal illuminance as measured by radiance, of more than 20% from existing, will be as materially noticeable to an occupant as a 20% reduction in VSC or NSL.
 9. The report identifies that 71 of the 87 rooms in Icon House will not experience any discernible change in lux levels or retain light levels that exceed 100 lux during March. This is logical as the dense built environment around Icon House means that direct sky visibility provides only a small part of the internal illuminance to that building, as evidenced by the low existing VSC values, and that light received indirectly from the sky through reflectance off other buildings will remain unchanged. If the analysis has accurately modelled light coloured elevations proposed for the application building, then the reflected light from that new building will partly mitigate the loss of direct sky visibility.
 10. Sunlight - A sunlight assessment is only required in respect of those main habitable rooms that face within 90° of due south and also face the development site. Of those windows that fit this criteria, the BRE recommended standard for sunlight is met for all of them. There is therefore a negligible impact on the sunlight.
 11. Shadow Analysis - The daylight and sunlight report assesses the shadow to the area of the station forecourt as the only public amenity space requiring adequate levels of direct sunlight. Having visited the site, I agree that this is the only public amenity area that will need to be assessed.
 12. The analysis shows that there will be very little change in the area of the station forecourt that can receive two hours of sun on 21 March. The BRE standard is therefore met and the impact is negligible.
- 4.59 Based on these main findings, Delva Patman Redler made the following conclusions:
13. I am satisfied that the daylight and sunlight report submitted for this planning application adequately assesses the correct neighbouring buildings and the correct public amenity area.

14. For daylight, the scheme proposal will not meet the recommended BRE standards for Icon House and Garrard House and some rooms in both of those buildings will experience a major adverse impact.
15. In Icon House, the existing sky visibility is already very low and any material increase in mass on the development site will cause a reduction in sky visibility that is likely to not meet the BRE recommended standards. However, insisting on strict compliance with the BRE standards would conflict with the planning policy encouraging tall buildings in this location. The radiance analysis does show that the internal illuminance to the rooms will not be as badly affected as the primary daylight results show and it is the case that ensuring a suitable light coloured rear elevation for the development site, clad in a suitably self-cleaning material, will allow a level of reflectance that will partially offset the direct reduction in sky visibility.
16. At Garrard House, there will be a major adverse impact on six LKD rooms. The impact is primarily due to these rooms having a very narrow field of view between Garrard House and Icon House and directly over the development site so, again, any material increase in the height of the application building will be likely to cause a reduction in sky visibility that exceeds the BRE recommended levels.
17. On balance, the results do not meet the requirements of planning policy set out earlier in this report, as there will be some significant negative impacts.
18. However, it is my opinion that if there is a requirement to ensure that the daylight to Icon House and Garrard House remains within BRE recommended impacts, then this will limit a development of the site to no more than around two-storeys higher than the existing building, and that will conflict with the other requirements of the tall buildings policy. Therefore, the impacts on daylight, and that these will only occur to parts of Icon House and Garrard House and not the whole, need to be assessed in the context of other planning policies for this site.
19. The results for sunlight to windows and sunlight to the external amenity area meet the BRE criteria.

x) Independent review of wind/microclimate matters by BMT (on behalf of the local planning authority)

4.60 BMT undertook an independent review on behalf of the local planning authority of the BRE Microclimate report submitted by the applicant. A summary of the main findings from the initial review by BMT were:

1. From a technical perspective, the methodology is appropriate and in line with industry practice. The wind tunnel model appears to be of a suitable scale and extent, with sufficient detail to represent the wind conditions at the site. The three configurations presented are appropriate for quantifying the impact of the proposed development.
2. The transposition of the wind climate data from London Heathrow Metrological station is largely suitable. Ideally, we would expect to see a comparison of the simulated atmospheric boundary layer in the wind tunnel with the output from the software used to derive the wind climate model of the proposed development site, and suggest this be provided.
3. The positioning of probes is largely appropriate to capture key pedestrian wind conditions around the proposed development. However, BMT would typically expect the coverage to extend further into the surrounding area, particularly noting the number of sensitive pedestrian usages within the immediate vicinity.
4. The criteria used for the assessment appears to be the Bristol variant of the Lawson criteria based on the Beaufort scale, which whilst not the established standard amongst leading wind engineering consultancies is an appropriate criteria for wind microclimate assessments within the UK. However, the classification of the criteria

within the report is not fully consistent with what we would typically see from other consultants using this variant. BMT prefer the widely adopted LDDC variant of the Lawson criteria. BMT would recommend that the results for the proposed development be reassessed against the LDDC variant and demonstrated to remain compliant.

5. BMT would recommend that pedestrian uses are classified with a greater (and more common) resolution, i.e. walking, strolling, general recreation, entrances, waiting areas, long-term sitting.
 6. Notwithstanding the above, whilst key locations relating to the proposed development have been captured, namely the shop front / entrances along Station Road, a number of auxiliary areas within the immediate surroundings do not appear to have been assessed, e.g. the bus stops along Station Road and the taxi rank outside Reading station among others, being areas where pedestrians might be expected to wait for extended durations and thus be more sensitive to the incumbent wind.
 7. The assumption that winter represents the windiest season has the potential to understate the worst seasonal results... BMT would recommend that all seasons are considered in order to ensure the capture of a worst-case scenario.
 8. In closing, whilst the wind microclimate assessment is broadly appropriate, BMT would request a number of clarifications on the methodologies adopted, which could potentially have significant impacts on the wind conditions reported.
- 4.61 Following this, the applicant submitted a revised and updated microclimate report. Following some further correspondence between BMT (on behalf of the local planning authority) and BRE (on behalf of the applicant), BMT was subsequently in a position to provide a final report to the local planning authority. A summary of the main findings from the final review report by BMT were:
1. As noted in BMT's original review, from a technical perspective, the methodology is appropriate and in line with industry practice, including the wind tunnel model, configurations assessed and positioning of probes.
 2. In response to BMT's comments on the simulation of the atmospheric boundary layer in the wind tunnel, BRE have provided plots of the mean velocity (normalised at reference height) and turbulence intensity derived from the BREVe3 computer software and the corresponding measured profile from the wind tunnel study. It is noted that this match is acceptable for the majority of wind angles, including the prevailing sector.
 3. The submitted report has been updated to more clearly indicate the assumed uses for each location and the suitability of wind conditions in each season... and BRE have confirmed that the assessment considered conditions in all seasons.
 4. BRE have confirmed the suitability of wind conditions in the surrounding area. However, where BMT would normally target calmer short term sitting/standing conditions at bus stops, BRE are targeting more windy strolling conditions... Consequently, for the same apparent level of suitability for planned uses, BRE's wind conditions are likely to be windier than might be expected in a report from many other consultants.
 5. In closing, notwithstanding the above, BMT can confirm that it is our professional opinion that the conclusions presented by BRE are reasonable and robust within the boundaries of best practice for wind microclimate assessments within the UK and relevant components of the corresponding policies of the adopted Reading Borough Council "Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012" and "Central Area Action Plan 2009" and the emerging "Local Plan March 2018".

- 4.62 Reading UK CIC, which acts as the Economic Development Company for Reading, broadly welcomes any improvement to the current, long-standing, derelict site which stands at a major gateway to the town centre within the Business Improvement District Area.
- 4.63 Reading UK CIC note the intended provision of retail space at ground level, which will help energise the landscape on this key pedestrian route, linking the station with the main shopping and leisure zones within the centre.
- 4.64 The development will, of course, attract an Employment and Skills Plan and a construction ESP as required under Reading Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Document (April 2013). This exists to promote local employment and training opportunities. Reading UK CIC would welcome the opportunity to work directly with the developer to deliver both a construction phase Employment and Skills Plan and an End Use Plan in respect of the retail and hotel elements of the development. This would aim to maximise the opportunity for local labour to gain vital skills opportunities.

xii) CCTV / Community Safety

- 4.65 No comments / objections.

xiii) Berkshire Archaeology

- 4.66 In accordance with Paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the applicant has submitted with their application an 'Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment' prepared by CgMs Heritage and dated October 2018. This assessment presents the archaeological background to the application area, assesses its archaeological potential and considers the likely impacts of the development proposal on buried archaeological remains. The principal conclusions of the assessment are as follows:

- 1) The application area lies within an 'area of archaeological potential' as defined on the adopted version of Reading Borough Council's Proposals Map
- 2) The site's archaeological potential stems from its location on the fringe of the regionally important medieval town of Reading
- 3) Cartographic evidence indicates that the application area lay at the rear of burgage plots running from the north frontage of Friar Street. While this suggests that medieval structures may not be present, the occurrence of cess and rubbish pits and other 'backland' activities is possible.
- 4) Previous archaeological investigations north of Friar Street have revealed the presence of medieval deposits
- 5) In the 19th-century Station Road was created to connect the town with the new station on the Great Western Railway Line. Ground levels were raised by up to 3m to create a level route from Friar Street to the embanked Reading Station
- 6) The application site is currently occupied by a six-storey office building, probably constructed in the 1960s. This building replaced previous buildings on the site. The current office building is partially basemented
- 7) The assessment considers that the site has undergone considerable past impacts from previous development on the site
- 8) The assessment concludes that the site has limited archaeological potential and therefore considers that no further archaeological mitigation measures are required if the scheme is permitted.

- 4.67 However, Berkshire Archaeology does not agree with the conclusions of CgMs' assessment report (consistent with Berkshire Archaeology's advice for similar, previous applications for this site - 151962 and 161819).
- 4.68 Berkshire Archaeology considers it to be clear that the site has an archaeological potential for Medieval and early Post-Medieval deposits associated with the regionally important settlement of Reading. While the application area will have been subject to some impacts from past development, the total disturbance of below ground deposits has not been proven. The artificial raising of the ground level by around 3m in the early 19th-Century, the existence of only a partial basement within the existing building and the potential for the survival of deep features, such as cess and rubbish pits, provides grounds to suggest that buried remains may survive on this site which will be impacted by the proposed development.
- 4.69 On this basis, Berkshire Archaeology recommends that a programme of archaeological work is secured by a suitably worded pre-commencement condition, should the application be permitted. This is in accordance with Paragraph 199 of the NPPF which states that local planning authorities should 'require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible'.

xiv) Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) at Thames Valley Police

- 4.70 Initial response - object to the proposals on the basis of some aspects of the design and layout being problematic in crime prevention design terms. Therefore the development does not meet the relevant requirements of NPPF, HMCLG's Planning Practice Guidance on 'Design' and CABE's 'Design & Access Statements- How to write, read and use them'.
- 4.71 In particular, concerns were raised in relation to the public access into the rear courtyard (lacking in ground floor active surveillance and its convoluted layout creating a secluded environment), with the suggestion for access to be gated and secured. Further concerns were raised in relation to: functionality of the two receptions and how they safeguard the building and those using it; excessive permeability and uncontrolled access between different uses (public accessible Bar/Restaurant; private hotel bedrooms and private office space) within the building; queries regarding the accessibility of the first and third floor accessible bedrooms; unrestricted access to all floors via the emergency stairwell; suggestion to include the use of laminated glazing; lack of consideration of RBC Licensing's Cumulative Impact Policy; clarification as to whether smoking areas are proposed; need for a CCTV operational requirement to be carried out by an SBD approved company.
- 4.72 Further response (following a meeting and the submission of further information by the applicant): The submitted Draft Crime prevention Report Dated 10th March 2019 addresses original concerns, and provides details relating to access control specification into and through the building, Lighting, CCTV and minimum physical security requirements of doors and windows. It is noted that due to site constraints the rear goods delivery yard falls under the ownership of a number of parties; therefore secure gated access would not be reasonable or appropriate. However, the proposed improvements to surveillance, lighting, green wall and extra servicing details do improve this secluded environment. Of note the report also states that

the applicant has taken the decision to remove the aspiration for the hotels bar and restaurant to be open to the public. The hotel bar and restaurant will therefore only be open to hotel guests

- 4.73 To ensure that all details are brought forward and included in the final approved plans, it is sought for all the crime prevention details contained within the Draft Crime Prevention Report to be secured via the attachment of a compliance condition in any permission at the site.

xv) Historic England (HE)

- 4.74 Historic England responded stating they did not wish to offer any comments and instead advised that the views of RBC's specialist conservation and archaeological advisors are sought.

xvi) Network Rail

- 4.75 Network Rail has no objection in principle to the proposal. Owing to the proposal being near Network Rail land / infrastructure and to ensure that no part of the development adversely impacts the safety, operation and integrity of the operational railway asset protection comments are made in relation to drainage and safety (Officers consider that these should be included as informatives on the decision notice).

- 4.76 Furthermore, Network Rail also advised that they need to establish from the applicant if Garrard Street will remain open/re-open after these development works have been completed as this is the main access road to the station front for taxis.

xvii) Civil Aviation Authority

- 4.77 The Civil Aviation Authority confirmed that no issues are raised with any nearby airports/aerodromes.

xviii) Thames Water

- 4.78 Thames Water commented on the application, summarised as follows:

- The applicant should seek advice from Thames Water;
- Sewer records do not indicate any shared drainage within the site, but there may be newly transferred sewers that we haven't yet mapped and aren't aware of.
- If shared drainage is found, the sewers may need to be diverted, as new builds over public sewers are not permitted.

xix) Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service, Reading Civic Society & Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee

- 4.79 The groups referenced above were all formally consulted on the application, but no responses have been received to date. Should responses be received in advance of the committee meeting, these will be detailed within an update report.

xx) Public consultation

- 4.80 Notification letters were sent to nearby occupiers (including Icon House and Garrard House addresses) on 07/12/18, with the statutory 21-day consultation

period expiring on 28/12/18. Site notices were erected around the site and immediate surrounding area on 17/12/18, expiring on 07/01/19. A press notice was published on 20/12/18, expiring on 10/01/19. 4 responses have been received in total.

- 4.81 Two responses in support of the proposals have been received. One, from a Station Road resident, details that *"the area that is being renovated is in dire need of change, as is much of this area, and this would be a welcomed start to Station Road becoming a much nicer place to live in. The design of the building is also decent, and it is thematically similar to Thames Tower which is nice"*. The other response in support, from an address in Pine Drive in Wokingham, states *"The building will blend in with the others planned for this area and will give valuable hotel accommodation. Great plan, go for it!"*
- 4.82 Two other responses have been received. One was specified as an objection, received on behalf of the owners of adjoining property Brunel House. The response, received in December 2018, did not constitute an objection and instead sought additional time to make representations in January 2019. A separate response was received in April 2019 on behalf of the landlord of the same building, raising concerns with the current status and general look of the vacant building and this having an impact on occupying a vacant floor at the neighbouring building. This response also suggested that there should be plans to improve the look of the façade prior to works starting, as the existing façade is described as *"a bit of an eyesore"*.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 16(2) 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'.
- 5.4 The application has been assessed against the following policies:
- 5.5 **National**
National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)
- 5.6 **Reading Borough Local Development Framework - Adopted Core Strategy (2008) (Altered 2015)**
- CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
CS2 Waste Minimisation
CS3 Social Inclusion and Diversity

- CS4 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CS5 Inclusive Access
- CS7 Design and the Public Realm
- CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities
- CS10 Location of Employment Development
- CS13 Impact of Employment Development
- CS20 Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy
- CS22 Transport Assessments
- CS23 Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans
- CS24 Car / Cycle Parking
- CS25 Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development
- CS26 Network and Hierarchy of Centres
- CS27 Maintaining the Retail Character of Centres
- CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- CS34 Pollution and Water Resources
- CS36 Biodiversity and Geology
- CS37 Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- CS38 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

5.7 Reading Central Area Action Plan - RCAAP - (2009)

- RC1 Development in the Station / River Major Opportunity Area
- RC5 Design in the Centre
- RC6 Definition of the Centre
- RC7 Leisure, Culture and Tourism in the Centre
- RC10 Active Frontages
- RC13 Tall Buildings
- RC14 Public Realm

5.8 Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (Altered 2015)

- SD1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DM1 Adaptation to Climate Change
- DM2 Decentralised Energy
- DM3 Infrastructure Planning
- DM4 Safeguarding Amenity
- DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters
- DM18 Tree Planting
- DM19 Air Quality
- DM23 Shopfronts and Cash Machines

5.9 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

- Employment, Skills and Training SPD (2013)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
- Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011)
- Reading Station Area Framework - RSAF - (2010)
- Station Hill South Planning and Urban Design Brief (2007)

5.10 Other relevant documentation

- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015b)

Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 4: Tall Buildings (Historic England, 2015c).

Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (2008) and update note (2018)

Reading Tree Strategy (2010)

BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A guide to good practice, 2nd edition (2011)

Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Principle of development and land use considerations
- ii) Demolition, scale / height, appearance / detailed design and effect on heritage assets
- iii) Quality of accommodation for future occupiers
- iv) Amenity for nearby occupiers
- v) Transport
- vi) Landscaping and ecology
- vii) Sustainability, energy & SuDS
- viii) Other matters - Archaeology, S106, pre-commencement conditions & Equality
- ix) Conclusion, including the overall planning balance

i) Principle of development and land use considerations

6.2 As already identified within the Introduction section of this report, the application site is within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area (Policy RC1) and forms part of the Friar Street & Station Road sub-area (Policy RC1a), all within the Reading Central Area Action Plan area.

6.3 The overall vision for the station/river major opportunity area is for a flagship scheme, extending the centre and providing a mixed use destination in itself and centred on a redeveloped station and new public transport interchange that will integrate transport links. Policy RC1 seeks for development, amongst other things, to contribute towards: providing a high-density mix of uses to create a destination in itself - areas within the primary shopping area and central core (such as the application site) will have a particular emphasis on delivering much of the identified retail and leisure need; protect, and where appropriate, enhance the setting of listed buildings; be laid out in a way that allows the area to come forward in parcels. It is considered that the proposed development meets all of the applicable overarching objectives, as will be explained in more detail throughout this appraisal.

6.4 The application site only forms a small part of this wider site allocation. Within the Friar Street and Station Road sub-area (again the application site only forms a relatively small part of this area) development will:

- Comprise active retail and leisure uses on the ground floor along Friar Street and Station Road, with a mix of uses on the upper floors
- Development should enhance linkages in a north-south direction to link to the Station Hill area
- The setting of listed buildings in the area will be preserved

- Opportunities to improve Merchants Place will be sought
- 6.5 Again, as this appraisal shall demonstrate, the proposed development is considered to comply with the applicable elements of the specific sub-area designation.
- 6.6 With the above adopted local policy in mind, it is considered that in pure land use terms the provision of a mixed use development of the nature sought (flexible Class A1/A2/A3 at part ground floor, a 135-bedroom hotel and five floors of office accommodation) is welcomed and supported. More specifically, the ground floor level Class A1, A2 or A3 use would reintroduce (in the context of the long-term vacancy) an active use along the Station Road frontage, which is a designated active frontage. On the proviso that an active window display is maintained (as secured via a recommended condition) it is considered that the unit would contribute to the vibrancy of the town centre and assist in enhancing north-south linkages (aligning with policies RC6 and RC10, as well as RC1).
- 6.7 In terms of the proposed office use, it is first recognised that the lawful use of the upper floors of the existing building is an office use. As such, this proposal would effectively re-provide this use, with the 1861sqm office use proposed representing an increase in office floorspace at the site of 495sqm (existing offices comprise 1366sqm). Policy CS10 details that major office development will take place in the centre of Reading, with Policy RC6 clarifying this to be within the office core. Accordingly, the principle of increased office accommodation at the site is welcomed and supported. Given the limited net increase in office accommodation at the site, there is no basis for seeking any contribution towards affordable housing in this instance. Linked to this, it is acknowledged that a 2011 permission at the site (see relevant history above) granted 103 residential units. However, this has lapsed, meaning that any 'loss' of residential units is not a material consideration to the assessment of the current uses proposed.
- 6.8 With regard to the principle of the proposed hotel use, this aligns with the objectives of Policy RC7, given its Central Area and Central Core location. Furthermore, the Policy RC1 designation references the Central Core having a particular emphasis on delivering much of the identified leisure need. Accordingly, the principle of this proposed use is supported by policy.
- 6.9 Relating to the proposed hotel use, it is considered necessary to secure, via section 106 legal agreement, that the use shall be Class C1 hotel accommodation only. Furthermore, various standard elements associated with the use regarding occupancy durations shall also be secured in this regard. This has been required on other recent Central Area Action Plan hotel permissions in the recent past and seeks to ensure that the proposed hotel rooms are not converted to serviced apartments (Class C1), self-contained residential units (Class C3) or small/large houses in multiple occupation (Class C4 or Sui Generis). Such uses have not been assessed as part of this application and would be subject to separate planning requirements / obligations (e.g. amenity / parking / quality of accommodation / affordable housing). By securing the proposed hotel use by legal agreement this is considered to robustly guard against the permission being occupied for other uses without first applying for planning permission. Furthermore, additional stipulations relating to the terms of the hotel use will also be secured within the legal agreement:
- not to let or licence for occupation or permit or suffer occupation of any of the 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 room for a continuous period for more than 3 months to the same Customer or Customers
- not to require Customers of any 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 rooms or any of them

6.10 It is also relevant to note at this juncture that the applicant has specified that a number of planning benefits will arise from the proposed development. A summary of what the applicant identifies as planning benefits of the scheme (as detailed within the supporting Planning Statement submitted) include:

1. *An opportunity to contribute towards achieving the Council's long-standing vision of regenerating this area - an essential building block in elevating the status of Reading and creating a 'sense of arrival' from the Station itself.*
2. *The proposal will deliver the regeneration of a key town-centre site through a 22 storey building that is appropriately placed to be a 'way-finder' from the Station towards Broad Street and create a local landmark tall building that respects the Council's 'dome' effect of tall buildings envisaged within Station Hill and re-establishes the principles for the site established by the 2005/2011 permission when 22 storeys were previously consented on-site.*
3. *The proposal will deliver a high density mixed use development providing a range of key town centre uses including hotel and offices, alongside a ground floor retail use, which will re-establish strong active frontages to Station Road and Garrard Street through creating an attractive and active frontage to a currently derelict building and blank facade, and in doing so creating a gateway between the Station and Broad Street, enhancing legibility within the town centre.*
4. *Regeneration of a key gateway site directly opposite Reading Station and in the very heart of the town centre, helping make the station area an enjoyable place to live, work and visit;*
5. *Redevelopment of a site currently plagued by crime with limited surveillance which is having a negative impact on the social and environmental conditions surrounding the site, and creates a very poor impression of the town centre upon arrival;*
6. *Delivering a tall building within an area identified as suitable for tall buildings aligning with the Council's aspirations for the site. A landmark tall building will assist in 'stitching' together the various development sites within the Area, both visually and physically.*
7. *Enhancing the area to the rear of the site which is currently plagued with antisocial behaviour by enhancing the outlook to existing residents through delivering a green wall and ensuring enhanced surveillance to the area;*
8. *Delivering a scheme that will complement the existing proposals at Station Hill and reinforce the 'crown' and 'blister' design principles; and*
9. *The annual operational benefits associated with the development will be 124 net direct jobs, 273 operational net jobs (direct, indirect and induced) with a total net operational related gross value added net present value (direct, indirect and induced). Elsewhere, the applicant states the development represents significant investment in Reading, in a gateway location. It will contribute to the character and identity of the town centre, helping to instil a strong sense of place and underpinning investment in the town.*
10. *In line with paragraph 38 of the Framework, the proposed development will dramatically improve economic, social and environmental conditions on and surrounding the site, with commitment from the applicant to bring forward a*

high quality development which will be of very significant benefit to Reading town centre.

11. *The provision of c.2,000 sqm of office floor space will deliver employment opportunities and assist in securing economic growth. Elsewhere the application refers to this as Grade A office floorspace.*
12. *The provision of a mid-range hotel will satisfy an unmet need within Reading town centre and contribute to supporting the growing leisure and visitor offer.*
13. *The opportunity to deliver ground retail (150sqm) will re-introduce a strong active frontage and contribute to the delivery of a 24 hour economy.*
14. *The scheme by award winning Reading based Architects Broadway Malyan is of the highest quality design, both in terms of its general appearance and selection of proposed materials. The proposal also incorporates significant improvements to the public realm around all sides of the building. The building is also designed to meet the BREEAM 'Very Good' standard (a BREEAM score of 62.5).*
15. *Enhance public realm along Station Road, creating a high quality transition with the station plaza and assisting with the integration of the station area with the town centre core.*

ii) Demolition, scale / height, appearance / detailed design and effect on heritage assets

Demolition

- 6.11 Assessing the demolition of the existing building first, this is not considered to be of any particular special architectural merit to warrant its retention in its own right. In-fact, the removal of the existing building could be seen as a positive outcome from the proposed development. Accordingly, its demolition is considered to be appropriate subject to the proposed replacement building being suitable in design and related terms. In this case it is not 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. This is sometimes included where an empty plot would be harmful in design terms or from a land use perspective (where there are remaining occupiers at the time of the application). Given the long-term vacancy of the building, together with the inevitable challenges securing such a building entails (e.g. crime and anti-social behaviour), there is considered to be no need for such a condition in this instance.

Scale / Height

- 6.12 Any proposal seeking a basement and part 4 (over the service road off Garrard Street), part 22 (with rooftop plant above) storey building represents a significant tall building within Reading town centre. Accordingly, the proposed scale has been subject to a thorough supporting analysis by the applicant and this has duly been carefully considered by officers.
- 6.13 As means of a main local policy context for the proposal, the Tall Buildings Strategy (2008) (not altered in the 2018 update note) identified a cluster of development around the Station where the tallest buildings are intended to command the dominant position in the cluster and the Reading skyline as a whole. This formed a background paper for the 2009 RCAAP, whereby in the supporting text (paragraph 8.51) it is stated that '*the station area will be signified by the highest buildings and the densest cluster*' (acknowledging the eastern and western clusters too). It continues by stating that '*it will make a significant impact on the*

townscape around the station and on the town's skyline'. The RCAAP provides specific policies/criteria in respect of the Major Opportunity Area (as outlined in section 6i above) and tall buildings (see more detailed commentary below).

- 6.14 The RSAF (2010) outlines broad development principles in a supplementary planning document to guide the planned redevelopment of the area and individual sites amongst other matters. The RSAF sits as a bridge between the provisions of the Core Strategy and RCAAP. Chapter 6 of the RSAF details aspirations for heights. The application site is earmarked for "Medium-Very High Density" (Figure 6.7) ("Very High" is the uppermost classification given to sites closest to the Station) and suitable for a "Local Landmark" building (Figure 6.8) (Tall or prominent buildings above ten storeys which are nevertheless clearly subordinate and therefore lower than district landmarks, such as the nearby Station Hill sites) with a benchmark height of at least 10 storeys (the highest classification). Paragraphs 6.11-6.14 outline that tall buildings should rise up around the Station 'nexus' and the 'dome' of development is identified with the 'crown', the area of greatest permissible height, immediately adjoining and to the south of the Station entrance.
- 6.15 Therefore the RSAF provides useful and specific advice on the required function of the landmark at this location. Figure 6.10 of the RSAF provides the suggested relative heights in the Central Area (entitled "tall building location guidance") and indicates that a higher (rather than lower, but notably not the highest) overall height would be appropriate for this site, while the areas beyond the eastern, southern and western boundaries of the site are not classified as either higher or lower (the area to the east is an area with particular sensitivity to the effects of tall buildings).
- 6.16 The RSAF therefore indicates that in height and density terms, this site is to be developed at the higher end of the scale, but is not envisaged as the tallest building, which would be sited immediately adjacent to the station. Put another way, the site is identified as being within the 'dome' of the cluster of tall buildings, but is not necessarily the centrepiece 'crown' immediately adjoining the Station. An extract of the RSAF is provided at the end of this report.
- 6.17 It is also relevant that the planning history at the site (see section 3 above) includes a permission from 2005 for a 22 storey building, which was granted an extension of time for implementation in 2011. A visualisation of the permitted scheme is included in the list of images at the end of this report. This scheme was however not implemented. The height of other recent tall buildings, either as existing or as permitted is also worthy of note for contextual purposes:

Site	Height (max.)	Comment/status
Plot C, 'Station Hill 3'	109-128m AOD	Outline Planning Permission 130436, although this permission has technically been implemented, no works to buildings have commenced. (the height is a range due to the parameters set by the outline planning permission)
Thames Quarter	111.7 AOD	Permission granted under 162166. Under construction.
80 Caversham Road	123.18m AOD	Current pending application

'Royal Mail site'		182252.
Thames Tower	103.3m AOD	Permission 141043, completed (with roof extension)
Chatham Place	102.5m AOD	Permission, completed
Kings Point/Verto	94.1m AOD	Permission, completed

6.18 With the above in mind, it is considered necessary to respond to each of the relevant Policy RC13 criteria, to demonstrate the suitability of the proposed tall building proposed. The policy first states that tall buildings in the Station Area Cluster should (policy stated - commentary provided in ***italics*** after each point):

- A new cluster of tall buildings with the station at its heart will signify the status of the station area as a major mixed-use destination and the main gateway to, and most accessible part of, Reading. ***When considered within the context of the extant Station Hill permissions, the proposal will positively contribute to the cluster***
- Be located at the centre of the cluster, close to the station, and step down in height from that point towards the lower buildings at the fringes; ***Although it is acknowledged that the proposal steps up from Thames Tower, which is closer to the station, the proposal does step down from the extant taller Station Hill Plot C, with Plot B and the proposed building acting as parts of the 'dome' effect referenced in the RSAF.***
- Contribute to the creation of a coherent, attractive and sustainable cluster of buildings with a high quality of public realm; ***The proposal would align with these aims, significantly improving the public realm in comparison with the existing situation, with the colonnade entrance continuing the approach taken by Thames Tower.***
- Ensure that adequate space is provided between the buildings to avoid the creation of an overly dense townscape and to allow buildings to be viewed as individual forms; ***The streetscene and verified views (some included at the end of this report) submitted demonstrate compliance in this regard. The contrast in visual appearance with Thames Tower will also assist in the building being viewed as an individual form. Separation distances from extant Station Hill blocks will also assist in this regard.***
- Be designed to fit within a wider planning framework or master plan for the area, which allows separate parcels of land to come forward at different times in a co-ordinated manner. ***It is considered that the proposals would not significantly impinge on the future development of other sites within the cluster.***

6.19 In addition, Policy RC13 then goes onto detail that all tall building proposals should:

- be of excellent design and architectural quality ***As detailed in the following appearance / detailed design section below, the proposal is considered to comply in this regard, following officer and Reading DRP comments during the course of the application which have facilitated revisions to the scheme.***
- Enhance Reading's skyline, through a distinctive profile and careful design of the upper and middle sections of the building; ***The proposed building has a clearly defined base, middle and upper sections, with the mid-level grid the basis for demonstrating a vertical character and rhythm which links back to Station Road. Increased levels of glazing mark the upper section of***

the building, providing an increase lightweight form at the tallest part. Accordingly, the proposal would both complement and enhance the skyline at this point.

- Contribute to a human scale street environment, through paying careful attention to the lower section or base of the building, providing rich architectural detailing and reflecting their surroundings through the definition of any upper storey setback and reinforcing the articulation of the streetscape; *The base aligns with the predominant 3/4 storey Station Road context, with the plant floor providing a clear break between the base and middle sections of the building. The form and nature of the lowest floors align with the character of other contemporary buildings within Reading town centre, most closely Thames Tower.*
- Contribute to high-quality views from distance, views from middle-distance and local views; *The verified views and supporting visualisations (a number are included in the pages after this main report) sufficiently demonstrate compliance in this regard.*
- Take account of the context within which they sit, including the existing urban grain, streetscape and built form and local architectural style; *the proposal complies in this regard, as outlined above and in the following appearance / detailed design section*
- Avoid bulky, over-dominant massing; *Set within the context of extant consents at Station Hill and the existing Thames Tower and the prevailing policy and guidance, the massing is not considered over-dominant nor bulky, with the detailed design (as detailed in the section below) also assisting in making this a calm and elegant tall building*
- Preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the setting of conservation areas and listed buildings; *This is considered in section 4iii) above and the 'effect on heritage assets' section below. In short, whilst it is acknowledged that less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets is caused by the development, when this is weighed against public benefits this tips the planning balance in favour of the proposals*
- Use high quality materials and finishes; *the proposals comply in this regard, as detailed in the appearance / detailed design section below*
- Create safe, pleasant and attractive spaces around them, and avoid detrimental impacts on the existing public realm; *The CPDA at Thames Valley Police and RBC Natural Environment officer is satisfied with the proposals (see sections 4iv & 4xiv above) and in comparison with the existing situation would represent a welcome tangible benefit of the proposal.*
- Locate any car parking or vehicular servicing within or below the development; *No car parking is proposed and the servicing area is being upgraded in comparison with existing.*
- Maximise the levels of energy efficiency in order to offset the generally energy intensive nature of such buildings; *The proposals comply in this regard, as referenced at section 6vii) of the appraisal below*
- Mitigate any wind speed or turbulence or overshadowing effects through design and siting; *An independent review by BMT on behalf of the local planning authority has confirmed the proposals are acceptable in this regard (see sections 4x and 6iv for more details)*
- Ensure adequate levels of daylighting and sunlighting are able to reach buildings and spaces within the development; *An independent review by Delva Patman Redler on behalf of the local planning authority has identified some daylight deficiencies for some occupiers of Icon House and Garrard House (see Section 4ix above). However, as explained at section 6iv) below officers consider on balance that the identified daylighting deficiencies are not sufficient to warrant the refusal of this application,*

when applying an overall critical planning balance. Adequate levels of sunlight would remain.

- Avoid significant negative impacts on existing residential properties and the public realm in terms of outlook, privacy, daylight, sunlight, noise, light glare and night-time lighting; *As outlined at section 6iv) below, although there are some identified outlook and daylight negative impacts, in overall terms when all material considerations are taken into account, the proposal is on balance not considered to cause significant detrimental impacts of a level/nature to resist the proposals on.*

6.20 It is therefore clear that whilst not every criterion is met in full, the vast majority are and there is a suitable policy basis for a tall building in this location. In particular, it is pertinent that whilst taller than Thames Tower, the proposed height would assimilate satisfactorily as part of the 'dome' envisaged within the RSAF, secondary to the taller 'crown' element of Station Hill Plot C (as per the extant outline permission). On the basis of the above, it is therefore considered, on balance, that sufficient justification has been submitted for officers to support the principle of the scale of the proposed basement and 22 (with rooftop plant above) storey building. It is however considered important to categorically state that the proposed scale is considered the maximum permissible and appropriate at this site, in particular owing to the context of the prevailing character of the area.

Appearance / detailed design

6.21 With specific reference to the appearance and detailed design of the scheme, this has been carefully developed with reference to the surrounding context and policy requirements. As required by policy, the overall appearance is underpinned by a strong brick grid pattern and is well defined in providing a clearly legible 'base', 'middle' and 'top'. The base is of a contemporary nature, with largely glazed shopfronts and an increased floor to ceiling height to relate better to the street. The colonnade element continues the theme successfully implemented at neighbouring Thames Tower, while the provision of green walls either side of the entrance are another welcome addition to the streetscene. The transition between the base and middle sections is distinct in the form of a plant floor, but the choice of this being framed by laser-cut metal panels provides a degree of visual interest not initially expected when approaching the site.

6.22 The middle section is regular in rhythm and form, with alternating window/cladding patterns every three floors of the grid. In the short and medium range visualisations provided such an approach appears satisfactory, with it important to emphasise that a consistent approach has been taken on all four elevations, rather than focusing disproportionately on the Station Road or Garrard Street elevations. This will be a prominent building on all four elevations and therefore the consistent treatment proposed is both welcomed and required. During the application the materials palette has been simplified and the increase in amount of glazing in the middle section assists in giving the overall impression of a slender and elegant tall building. Such an approach is considered to align with the policy aspirations and be a welcomed addition to the Reading skyline both in the short and long term.

6.23 The top section of the building includes an increased proportion of glazing, thereby reducing its prominence on the skyline. This is considered to be a suitable design response. Again the use of laser cut metal panels at what is essentially roof level has the potential to add additional value to the overall design quality.

- 6.24 Considering the materials in more detail, it is again reiterated that a relatively simple and restrained palette is proposed. The main grid of the building will comprise a light buff brick. The use of brickwork is strongly supported in line with the majority of the prevailing area, being robust in form and nature. The lighter shade contrasts satisfactorily with neighbouring buildings, thereby providing a degree of prominence required for a building of this nature. This is supplemented with large expanses of glazing, complemented with elements of panelling in the middle section (the extent of which has been reduced during the application). This all continues the strong vertical emphasis sought to be created, while the deep window recesses provide depth and quality to add to an overall appearance which is simple and elegant in its composition. The inclusion of laser-cut metal panels at third floor and roof level add a further welcomed richness to the overall design quality, with the exact finished appearance of the panels to be secured via condition. To ensure the design quality in this instance it is considered 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 to guarantee the design quality in this sensitive location.
- 6.25 It is also noted that the proposals have been subject to input by the Reading Design Review Panel (DRP) during the course of the application, specifically focusing on a 'quality check' in terms of the detailed design of the proposal. A summary of the main DRP comments are provided at section 4viii above. The applicant has actively embraced the various comments received, making welcomed and necessary revisions to the scheme as already detailed at paragraph 2.2 of this report. Most notably the increase in glazing to cladding panel proportions and 'calming' the pattern, simplifying the palette of materials and resolving the junction with Brunel House have all been successfully incorporated. There are also areas where the applicant has not followed the DRP advice. For example, no alterations to the footprint/layout of the entrance or ground floor uses have been made, and the transition between the base and middle sections is now more distinct than originally sought, in contrast to DRP seeking the transitions to be more subtle. In these instances it is considered that the applicant has provided sufficient justification to demonstrate the appropriateness and overall quality of the design iterations at these points. As such, officers are content that these changes have had an overall positive effect on the quality of the architecture being proposed.

Effect on heritage assets

- 6.26 In respect of the effect of the proposals on heritage assets, it is acknowledged from the summary of the RBC Historic Buildings Consultant's comments at section 4iii) above that this is a sensitive location and concerns are raised in respect of the harmful impact of the proposals on the setting of nearby designated heritage assets. This is with particular respect of the impact on the setting of the immediate opposite Grade II Listed Great Western House (Malmaison Hotel) and views from within nearby Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. With regard to the level of harm, officers agree that this is considered to constitute less than substantial harm to the significance of nearby designated heritage assets. Such harm must be given considerable importance and weight; although as advised at paragraph 196 of the NPPF, this is required to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals. In this regard the applicant has outlined a number of benefits within the submission, as summarised at paragraph 6.10, and when these are considered together with the benefits outlined by officers elsewhere in this Appraisal, these factors are considered to be significant in terms of the overall planning balance..

Summary: scale and design

6.27 In conclusion with respect to design-based matters, it is considered that the overall scale of the proposed development has been sufficiently justified; put another way, it has been demonstrated that there is a suitable policy basis for a tall building of the scale proposed in this location. The appearance and detailed design is of a quality which accords with the specific major opportunity area requirements. Although harm would be caused to nearby designated heritage assets, the level of harm is less than substantial, and when this is weighed against public benefits of the scheme as a whole this tips the planning balance in favour of the proposals from this perspective.

iii) Quality of accommodation for future occupiers

6.28 The ground floor Class A1/A2/A3 unit is 161sqm (NIA) in size and fronts onto Station Road. The layout internally is flexible so as to potentially attract a range of potential occupiers, including a raised mezzanine area towards the rear. The two intended entrances will be suitably prominent and the largely glazed shopfronts / increased floor to ceiling height (in comparison with the other floors) is also welcomed. It is also considered necessary for a condition to retain active window displays in the future, to ensure that the A1/A2/A3 unit assists the vitality and viability of the area. It is also recommended for informatives to be added to any permission denoting that if implemented, the permission would give flexibility for use within the unit for 10 years from the date of the permission. After 10 years the lawful use would revert to whichever of the permitted uses is taking place at the time within the unit.

6.29 In terms of opening hours, it is considered necessary to include an hours of use condition for any Class A1 or A3 use within the ground floor unit. This is proposed to limit such uses to 06:00 to 23:00 Monday to Saturdays and 08:00 to 22:00 on Sundays, Bank Holidays and other Statutory Holidays. The hours are as flexible as possible, bearing in mind the active frontage location, whilst also maintaining existing and future nearby residential amenity and aligning with observations received from RBC Licensing.

6.30 The servicing of the retail unit will be secured via a pre-occupation servicing management plan (as per Transport comments at section 4i above). Should the future occupier seek to include any external plant or odour outlets, assessments would be required prior to occupation (as per EP comments at section 4ii above). With all of the above in mind it is considered that the unit would be of a suitable quality for a variety of Class A1 or A3 operators. It is also noted that no advertisement consent for signage has been sought at this time, as the future occupier has not been specified. Therefore an informative will remind the applicant of the possible need for separate advertisement consent in the future.

6.31 Moving on to consider the hotel accommodation, the 135-bed offer includes 4 accessible rooms, which are welcomed, as well as the standard double room format with en-suite facilities. All rooms are regular in size and shape and the vast majority have good levels of outlook for guests from full-height windows (the amount of glazing serving a significant number of rooms has favourably increased during the course of the application). It is acknowledged that 6 rooms would have reduced levels of outlook, with laser cut metal privacy screens included at 4th to 6th floor level on part of the western elevation (closest to the south-east corner of neighbouring Garrard House) to prevent significant overlooking of neighbouring

occupiers. Although outlook from the rooms will therefore be lower, given the hotel use (as secured via legal agreement to include maximum occupancy times) this is not considered so detrimental to warrant the refusal of the application. It is considered reasonable and necessary to include a condition restricting the total number of bedrooms within the hotel to 135, as shown on the plans, to manage any future increase / subdivision, which may compromise the quality of accommodation and result in further supporting facilities being required. As part of the same condition it is also proposed to stipulate that there shall be no fewer than 4 accessible rooms, to ensure these are implemented/retained as shown.

- 6.32 The hotel as proposed is shown to include a range of ancillary hotel facilities, most notably a first floor bar/lounge and second floor restaurant. These spaces had originally been proposed as being open to the public too, but during the course of the application this has been omitted, following concerns from a number of consultees, including RBC Licensing. It is accordingly considered necessary and reasonable to stipulate a compliance condition regarding these uses being strictly ancillary to the hotel use, for hotel guests only and, for the avoidance of doubt, not being open to members of the public. In addition, the hotel also includes a number of housekeeping rooms, a staff office and welfare space, a meeting room and dedicated luggage space, as well as space for cycles, bins and a servicing zone as referenced in the transport and EP consultation responses (sections 4i and 4ii of the report).
- 6.33 Similar to the ground floor A1/A2/A3 unit, no advertisement consent for hotel signage has been sought at this time. Some indicative signage for the building as a whole (rather than the hotel specifically) is shown within the green wall area next to the entrance, but this is not formally sought or can be approved via this planning application. Again, a recommended informative will remind the applicant of the possible need for separate advertisement consent in the future.
- 6.34 Finally, in terms of the office accommodation, the layout of the five floors is open plan in nature, with stair cores and lifts in the corner of the floorplates to minimise compromising the primary office space. Outlook is provided in all directions, with the floor to ceiling height increased in the office floors (in comparison with the hotel floors), with a suitable floor to floor height of 3.3m (a factor which many office occupiers take into account in comparison with older office stock). The amount of glazing also increased on the three upper most floors, although solar shading vertical fins are also proposed to assist future occupiers. As such, the office accommodation would evidently be suitable for a range of future occupiers, with its location on the highest floors potentially being a further selling point.
- 6.35 Equally applicable for all uses, the proposals are considered satisfactory from a crime prevention and design perspective, following the submission of additional information during the course of the application. This has been confirmed by the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police and a positive element in surveillance terms is the interaction of the different uses within the same building. Furthermore, in terms of utilities, information provided by the applicant demonstrates that satisfactory utility services can be provided.
- 6.36 The applicant has also submitted a fire review statement during the course of the application. Most pertinently, there are two separate stair-cores in the south-west and north-west corners of the building, despite the relatively small footprint (in the context of hotel buildings) serving 9/10 rooms per floor. The provision of two staircases rather than one is a welcomed addition. In addition, the applicant has

confirmed that as the office accommodation is more than 30m above ground, life safety sprinklers will be provided throughout the building. The applicant has also stated that technical design stages will inform future material selection, including combustibility and fire spread determined by building regulations requirements. Accordingly, while fire safety is not a material planning consideration, it is evident that the applicant is pursuing a robust approach to fire safety.

6.37 As such, in overall terms, the quality of accommodation for all possible future occupiers is considered to be of a good standard and is therefore welcomed, subject to a range of conditions.

iv) Amenity for nearby occupiers

6.38 For any proposal of the nature sought, the impact on the amenity of existing nearby occupiers is an important consideration. This is particularly the case in this instance where there are a wide range of neighbouring and nearby uses (as detailed in the introduction section above) and this already being a dense urban setting. The proposals have therefore been carefully considered in these regards, with a range of supporting information submitted seeking to justify the proposals. The applicant has sought to take a number of steps in seeking to ensure that the development does not result in significantly detrimental amenity impacts.

6.39 Considering first daylight and sunlight matters, the applicant has undertaken a study which has been independently reviewed on behalf of the local planning authority by Delva Patman Redler. A detailed summary of the main findings is provided at section 4ix) of this report. This review has identified that whilst there are no concerns in relation to sunlight to windows within nearby Icon House and Garrard House (the two nearby residential buildings required to be tested), or to sunlight levels for the pedestrianised space to the south of Reading Station, it is acknowledged that there will be major adverse impacts on daylight for some occupiers of Icon House and Garrard House.

6.40 More specifically in terms of Icon House, 27 living/kitchen/dining rooms (LKD) do not meet the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) standard and 5 LKD rooms fail the No Sky Line (NSL) standard. This is explained as being owing to existing sky visibility already being very low; therefore *any* material increase in mass at the application site results in a reduction in sky visibility that means rooms are unlikely to meet the BRE recommended standards. It is also recognised that the applicant has undertaken a further radiance analysis, which Delva Patman Redler agrees will show that the internal illuminance to the rooms will not be as badly affected as the primary VSC and NSL tests. Hence a light coloured elevation (buff brickwork and glazing/cladding is proposed) clad in a suitably self-cleaning material, will allow a level of reflectance that will partially offset the direct reduction in sky visibility.

6.41 The major adverse impact on Garrard House will be less widespread, with 6 LKD rooms most affected. Delva Patman Redler explain this is owing to these rooms having a very narrow field of view between Garrard House, Icon House and the proposed building, again meaning any material increase in the height of the application building will be likely to cause a reduction in sky visibility that exceeds the BRE recommended levels. Hence, whilst Delva Patman Redler conclude on balance that the results do not meet the requirements of planning policy in some instances; they also conclude that if there is a requirement to ensure that the daylight to Icon House and Garrard House remains within BRE recommended impacts, then this will limit a development of the site to no more than around

two-storeys higher than the existing building, and that will inevitably conflict with the other requirements of the tall buildings policy. Therefore, the impacts on daylight, and that these will only occur to parts of Icon House and Garrard House and not the whole buildings, need to be assessed in the context of other planning policies for this site.

- 6.42 Officers have carefully considered the advice from Delva Patman Redler. Whilst acknowledging there are some significant shortfalls, these are set within the context of a tight existing urban grain which militates against the standard daylight tests. Bearing in mind these shortfalls, together with the tangible planning benefits of the scheme as identified elsewhere in this assessment, officers consider on balance, that the identified daylighting deficiencies are not sufficient to warrant the refusal of this application.
- 6.43 Another element of the proposals which have been subject to independent review on behalf of the local planning authority is the wind microclimate assessment. BMT undertook this review for the local planning authority and a detailed summary of the findings are provided at section 4x) of this report. In short, following the submission of various additional elements of evidence and information, BMT concluded in overall terms that, in their professional opinion, the conclusions within the submitted microclimate assessment are reasonable and robust. Furthermore, the proposals are also considered to comply with the relevant components of the corresponding local policies. On this basis, officers are content that the applicant has sufficiently justified that there will not be a significantly harmful wind/microclimate amenity impact on nearby occupiers and users of the surrounding public realm from the proposed development.
- 6.44 Turning to consider privacy and overlooking issues, the applicant has taken a number of steps in seeking to minimise overlooking opportunities. In particular, the inclusion of privacy screens at 4th to 6th floor level of the western elevation (closest to the south-east corner of neighbouring Garrard House) is specifically to prevent significant overlooking of neighbouring occupiers. These will be secured to be provided prior to first occupation and be maintained thereafter. In other regards, such as towards Icon House, either the distance or angle of orientation is such that no significant harmful impacts are envisaged. The position of the staircores in the south-west and north-west corners of the proposed building also minimise direct overlooking to Garrard House occupiers. To the north and east there is the distance of a highway between the nearest buildings, while the uses at Thames Tower and Malmaison are not residential too.
- 6.45 Furthermore, in terms of possible future proposals at Brunel House (it is not known whether there is or is not any intention in this regard by the neighbouring landowner), although five windows per floor are shown to be proposed on the upper floors of the south elevation (directly next to the boundary with Brunel House), the presence of these are not specifically considered to unduly compromise the future development potential of the neighbouring site. Two of the windows are shown to serve a staircore, while another serves a corridor. At 6th to 16th floor level two windows serve a hotel room on each floor. However, in each instance this room also includes windows facing east and hence dual-aspect hotel rooms are not considered essential. At 17th to 21st floor level office accommodation presently includes windows in all directions and hence the possible future reduction on this elevation in the future would not unacceptably compromise the overall quality of the space.

- 6.46 Moving onto potential visual dominance and overbearing effects of the development, it is fully recognised that a 22 storey building compared to the context of the existing 6 storey building, constitutes a significant change in the nature of the immediate area. As such, for residential occupiers of both Icon House and Garrard House with windows facing towards the application site, there will be reduced levels of outlook and a possible added sense of enclosure. However, it is equally recognised that this is already a tightly constrained urban location which is already highly constrained with buildings of significant height in close proximity to one another and often with limited relief/lay-off/separation space. None of the other immediately neighbouring buildings are in residential use and this consequently downplays these impacts. Therefore, whilst acknowledging the various negative effects associated with the increase in massing and height as a shortfall of the proposals, the additional detrimental impact caused to the living environment of nearby occupiers is not considered to be of a significant enough level to resist the proposals on this basis.
- 6.47 There are also a number of elements discussed in the quality of accommodation section above which are equally applicable for the protection of nearby occupiers amenity, such as the hours of use for any Class A1/A3 use, the servicing management plan (and other EP based conditions, such as those relating to plant noise) and crime prevention compliance condition.
- 6.48 One matter not mentioned to date is lighting impacts. The proposals have indicatively shown external lighting to serve the undercroft area leading to the service yard and Icon House beyond. The widening of the space, when coupled with the intended lighting and increased passive surveillance, is considered to represent an amenity improvement for pedestrians utilising the space. However, to date, no precise details regarding the exact lighting has been provided. This is proposed to be secured via condition, so as to strike an appropriate balance between being fit for purpose whilst not being of a nature / extent to lead to harmful artificial light disturbance. Furthermore, it may be the case that the laser cut metal panels may also include a form of backlighting and details of this would also be covered by the recommended condition.
- 6.49 Hence, in overall terms, whilst acknowledging the identified daylight and outlook shortfalls, when all material considerations are taken into account, the proposal is on balance not considered to cause significant detrimental impacts to an unacceptable degree.

v) Transport

- 6.50 As per section 4i) above, in overall terms from a transport perspective the proposals are considered to be acceptable, subject to a number of planning conditions. Of particular relevance it is noted that the development includes no on-site car parking for any of the proposed uses, which is supported in this location. Furthermore, the servicing of the site will be improved (both widened and upgraded) off Garrard Street.

vi) Landscaping and ecology

- 6.51 In line with sections 4iv) and 4v) above, the proposals are considered acceptable from landscaping and ecological perspectives. This is following the submission of revised/additional information during the course of the application, such as the provision of green walls either side of the hotel/office entrance and confirmation that bird boxes and a peregrine nest box will be provided. The exact details will be

secured via appropriate conditions as detailed in the recommendation at the outset of this report.

vii) Sustainability, energy & SuDS

- 6.52 Considering the sustainability credentials of the scheme first, the applicant has submitted a BREEAM pre-assessment with the proposals. A combined BREEAM New Construction pre-assessment has been undertaken, considering the office, hotel and retail components as one development scheme. The applicant has sufficiently demonstrated that it is not appropriate to apply the Sustainability SPD 50% BREEAM 'Excellent' / 50% BREEAM 'Good' rating standard, owing to the extra complexities this creates when applying this to the floor area splits (between the hotel, office and retail uses) proposed. As such, the pre-assessment instead seeks to target achieving a minimum BREEAM score of 62.5% across the building (equating to a 'Very Good' rating), which is a context the Sustainability SPD allows for. In overall terms the pre-assessment demonstrates that a 62.9% BREEAM score can be achieved at the site, which exceeds the minimum requirement. Accordingly, from a sustainability perspective, the information submitted at application stage is considered acceptable.
- 6.53 It is however considered necessary and reasonable to secure two sustainability-based conditions. This is to ensure that the ratings envisaged within the pre-assessment are actually achieved in practice. The first condition secures the submission of an Interim BREEAM Certificate demonstrating a BREEAM score of at least 62.5% is achieved (essentially a final design stage certificate from BREEAM) prior to commencement (barring demolition). Secondly, a pre-occupation condition secures the submission of a BREEAM Final Certificate to demonstrate that the development has attained as a minimum the standard secured in the Interim BREEAM Certificate condition. With both conditions secured the proposal will comply in full with the Council's adopted sustainability policies.
- 6.54 Turning to energy elements, a detailed Energy Assessment has accompanied the application. This proposes a number of measures which follow the established energy hierarchy. For example, a number of relatively standard energy efficient design measures are included, such as glazing with suitable U-values (which align with the Building Regulations' Part L baseline), g-values and daylight transmittance and a suitably insulated building fabric with low air permeability (the U-values and thermal capacity of the roofs and walls (including internal walls) all comply with Part L). Furthermore the full range of decentralised energy options has been considered, with a number discounted for justified reasons. However, it is proposed to include combined heat and power (CHP) with thermal storage system to serve the hot water demand for the proposed hotel use, which is a significant element of the overall energy strategy. In addition, heat pumps are also incorporated as part of the demand reduction measures at the site. In overall terms there is a 13.3% improvement over Part L, with the majority of this by virtue of the CHP proposed. In the context of this non-residential development it is considered that the energy measures outlined within the submitted report are reasonable and will be secured in practice via a compliance based condition.
- 6.55 In terms of SuDS, as per the observations detailed at section 4vi) above, the proposals are acceptable in principle, subject to the detailed design to be secured via a recommended condition.

viii) Other matters - Archaeology, S106, pre-commencement conditions & Equality

- 6.56 As per the Berkshire Archaeology response at section 4xiii above, a pre-commencement (including prior to demolition) condition is considered to be required and necessary so that potential impacts can be mitigated by a programme of archaeological work. With this condition secured the proposals are considered appropriate from an archaeological perspective.
- 6.57 Turning to the Section 106 Legal Agreement, in addition to the already referenced hotel use and air quality matters, given the nature of the proposal a construction phase and end use phase Employment Skills and Training Plan shall be secured. The applicant indicated a willingness to provide these training opportunities at the outset of the application and Reading UK CIC, as per section 4xi) above, welcome this for the retail and hotel elements of the proposal.
- 6.58 It is considered that the obligations referred to above 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.
- 6.59 Pre-commencement conditions - In line with section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) discussions are being undertaken with the applicant regarding pre-commencement conditions. The applicant agreed to the following conditions on 01/07/19: demolition and construction management statement; a programme of archaeological work; contaminated land site characterisation assessment; contaminated land remediation scheme.
- 6.60 Equality - In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics 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

- 7.1 The proposed development would facilitate the redevelopment of a long term vacant site in a prominent location of a designated major opportunity area. It should be noted that there have been redevelopment proposals for this site, many with planning permission, for over 20 years and none have been implemented. The proposals are considered to satisfactorily accord with the vision and relevant parameters of the wider Station / River Major Opportunity Area and the relevant requirements of the Friar Street and Station Road allocation. The proposed uses are welcomed in principle and, subject to various conditions, would not result in significant adverse impact on nearby occupiers. The proposed scale and height of development, although viewed as the maximum permissible for the site, is following a detailed assessment considered to be suitable and has been sufficiently justified in the application submission, aligning with the Tall Buildings Policy. The appearance and detailed design of the scheme is broadly supported as a welcome addition to the immediate and wider area of the town centre. It is fully acknowledged and recognised that there are some shortcomings associated with the proposals, such as the ('less than substantial') harm to the setting of designated heritage assets, the daylight implications for some existing occupiers of Icon House and Garrard House, and reduced levels of outlook for some occupiers from these dwellings too.

7.2 However, when applying an overall critical planning balance of all material considerations, the benefits of the proposals are considered to outweigh the dis-benefits. Accordingly the proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Thus, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of the S106 Legal Agreement.

Drawings and documents:

A-02-001 Site Location Plan, as received 06/11/18
A-02-002 Rev C Existing Site Block Plan, as received 06/11/18
A-02-003 Proposed Site Block Plan, as received 06/11/18

MS-4516 Topographical Survey, as received 06/12/18
PL-04 Existing Building Floor Plans (Ground - Third), as received 06/12/18
PL-05 Existing Building Floor Plans (Fourth - Roof), as received 06/12/18
PL-08 Rev A Existing Sections A-A, as received 06/12/18
PL-08 Rev A Existing Sections B-B, as received 06/12/18
MS-4516B (Sheet 5 of 6) Existing Elevations - East & North, as received 06/12/18
MS-4516B (Sheet 6 of 6) Existing Elevations - West & South, as received 06/12/18

A-03-000 Rev K - Proposed Basement Plan, as received 24/06/19
A-03-001 Rev M - Proposed Ground Floor (Hotel Entrance and Retail), as received 24/06/19
A-03-002 Rev L - Proposed 1st Floor (Hotel Reception), as received 24/06/19
A-03-003 Rev L - Proposed 2nd Floor (Hotel Restaurant), as received 24/06/19
A-03-004 Rev M - Proposed 3rd Floor (Service Floor), as received 04/07/19
A-03-005 Rev M - Proposed 4th Floor (Hotel Rooms + Link), as received 04/07/19
A-03-006 Rev G - Proposed 5th Floor (Hotel Rooms + Roof), as received 24/06/19
A-03-007 Rev B - Proposed 6th Floor (Hotel Rooms & Hotel Services), as received 24/06/19
A-03-008 Rev B - Proposed 7th Floor (Hotel Rooms), as received 24/06/19
A-03-009 Rev B - Proposed 8th Floor (Hotel Rooms), as received 24/06/19
A-03-010 Rev B - Proposed 9th Floor (Hotel Rooms), as received 24/06/19
A-03-011 Rev B - Proposed 10th Floor (Hotel Rooms & Hotel Services), as received 24/06/19
A-03-012 Rev J - Proposed 11th Floor (Hotel Rooms), as received 24/06/19
A-03-013 Rev B - Proposed 12th Floor (Hotel Rooms), as received 24/06/19
A-03-014 Rev B - Proposed 13th Floor (Hotel Rooms), as received 24/06/19
A-03-015 Rev B - Proposed 14th Floor (Hotel Rooms & Hotel Services), as received 24/06/19
A-03-016 Rev B - Proposed 15th Floor (Hotel Rooms), as received 24/06/19
A-03-017 Rev B - Proposed 16th Floor (Hotel Rooms), as received 24/06/19
A-03-018 Rev B - Proposed 17th Floor (Office), as received 24/06/19
A-03-019 Rev B - Proposed 18th Floor (Office), as received 24/06/19
A-03-020 Rev B - Proposed 19th Floor (Office), as received 24/06/19
A-03-021 Rev B - Proposed 20th Floor (Office), as received 24/06/19
A-03-022 Rev B - Proposed 21st Floor (Office), as received 24/06/19
A-03-023 Rev B - Proposed 22nd Floor (Plant Space), as received 24/06/19
A-03-024 Rev C - Proposed Roof Layout, as received 24/06/19

A-04-001 Rev E - Proposed Section AA, as received 24/06/19
A-04-002 Rev E - Proposed Section BB, as received 24/06/19
A-04-003 Rev B - Proposed Bay Study A -Hotel and Office Entrance, as received 24/06/19
A-04-004 Rev B - Proposed Bay Study B - Retail and Hotel Lower, as received 24/06/19
A-04-005 Rev B - Proposed Bay Study C - Office Floors Upper, as received 24/06/19

A-04-006 Rev B - Proposed Typical Bay Study - Link Elevation and Soffit, as received 24/06/19

A-05-001 Rev I - Proposed Street Scene - Station Road, as received 24/06/19
A-05-002 Rev I - Proposed Street Scene - Garrard Street, as received 24/06/19
A-05-003 Rev G - Proposed Site Context - West, as received 24/06/19
A-05-004 Rev G - Proposed Site Context - South, as received 24/06/19
A-05-005 Rev C - Proposed Elevation East, as received 24/06/19
A-05-006 Rev C - Proposed Elevation North, as received 24/06/19
A-05-007 Rev C - Proposed Elevation North, as received 24/06/19
A-05-008 Rev C - Proposed Elevation South, as received 24/06/19

33080 No. 1 Reading GIA / NIA Schedule by Floor, dated 25/10/18, as received 06/12/18
A-80-001 - Proposed GIA Layouts Sheet 1 of 2, as received 06/12/18
A-80-002 - Proposed GIA Layouts Sheet 2 of 2, as received 06/12/18

Planning Statement by Turley Ref K2CR3001 dated November 2018 v1, as received 06/12/18

Design and Access Statement by Broadway Malyan Ref 33080-07-DAS, dated 01/11/18, as received 07/11/18;

Economic Impact Statement by Kada Research, dated September 2018, as received 06/11/18

Air Quality Assessment by REC Ref AQ105820R2 Rev 1 dated 01/03/19, as received 14/03/19

Archaeological Desk Based Assessment by CGMS Ref JA/RvKM/24951 dated October 2018, as received 06/11/18

Phase One Environmental Assessment Report (Preliminary Risk Assessment) by Subadra Consulting Ltd Ref In18429 CL 001 dated September 2018, as received 07/11/18

Daylight and Sunlight Report by Point 2 Surveyors Ref P1294 Version V1, dated October 2018, as received 07/11/18

Energy Statement by Peter Brett Associates Ref 43102 Rev P3 dated 26/10/18, as received 06/11/18

BREEAM New Construction 2014 Pre-Assessment by Peter Brett Associates Ref V2 dated 25/10/18, as received 06/11/18

BREEAM Checklist by ECOSA Ecological Survey & Assessment Ltd dated October 2018, as received 06/11/18

Ecological Management Plan by ECOSA Ecological Survey & Assessment Ltd dated October 2018, as received 06/11/18

Ecological Impact Assessment by ECOSA Ecological Survey & Assessment Ltd dated October 2018, as received 06/11/18

Heritage Statement by Andmore Planning Ltd dated October 2018, as received 06/11/18

Noise and Vibration Assessment by KP Acoustics Ref 18082.NIA.01 Rev B, dated 26/10/18, as received 06/11/18

Transport Statement by Peter Brett Associates Ref V2 dated 22/10/18, as received 06/11/18

Framework Travel Plan by Peter Brett Associates Ref V1 Rev V2 dated 26/10/18, as received 06/11/18

Drainage and Utility Infrastructure Assessment by Peter Brett Associates Ref R001 Rev A dated 24/10/18, as received 06/11/18

Ventilation and Extraction report by Peter Brett Associates Ref 43102/001 Rev P04 dated 02/11/18, as received 06/11/18

Wind Microclimate Assessment by BRE P112007-1002 Issue: 4 dated 20/03/19, as received 25/03/19

Townscape/Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment by Nicholas Pearson Associates Ref K2D/NPA/11022 dated October 2018, as received 06/11/18

Surface Water Drainage Strategy by Peter Brett Associates Ref R001 Rev A dated 24/10/18, as received 06/11/18

Section 106 - Draft Heads of Terms by Turley, dated 05/12/19, as received 06/12/18

Demolition & Construction Management Plan by K2 Developments Rev 2, dated 17/10/18, as received 21/03/19

Statement of Community Engagement by Turley dated November 2018, as received 06/11/18

Letter from Turley dated 04/12/18, as received 06/12/18

Verified Views by NPA Visuals Ref NPA 11022, dated October 2018, as received 12/03/19 at 1445hrs.

Draft - Crime Prevention Report by Broadway Malyan Ref 33080-07-CPR - Rev2, dated 19/03/19, as received 20/03/19

Green wall courtyard visualisations x2, as received 20/03/19

Green wall entrance visualisations x3, as received 20/03/19

Heritage Statement Addendum by Andmore Planning Ltd dated March 2019, as received 20/03/19

Response to RBC Highways TN001 Rev A by Peter Brett Associates dated 18/03/19, as received 02/05/19

Letter from Turley, dated and received 20/03/19

Letter from BRE Re: Formal Response to Peer Review - No. 1 Reading Ref P112007-1001 dated 20/03/19, as received 25/03/19

No.1 Reading Green Wall Proposal Memo by Broadway Malyan, as received 27/03/19

Letter from Point 2 Surveyors RE: The Development at 29-35 Station Road, Reading, RG1 1LG Daylight & Sunlight Review, dated 27/03/19, as received 28/03/19.

Fire Engineering Review, as received 09/04/19

Heritage Statement Further Response by Andmore Planning, dated 10/05/19, as received 17/05/19

Email from Turley attaching '600119_StationRoad_PeerReview_CommentTracker_2019-05-04_GBz.xlsx', dated and received 28/05/19

Email from Turley 'Station Road - 181930', dated and received 06/06/19

Reading Design Review Panel - Design Response by Broadway Malyan Ref 33080-07-DRP Design Response, as received 24/06/19

Email from BRE 'RE: [External] RE: 600119 Station Road, Reading - Peer Review', dated and received 24/06/19

Case Officer: Jonathan Maxwell



Artist Impression from Blagrove Street/Reading Station



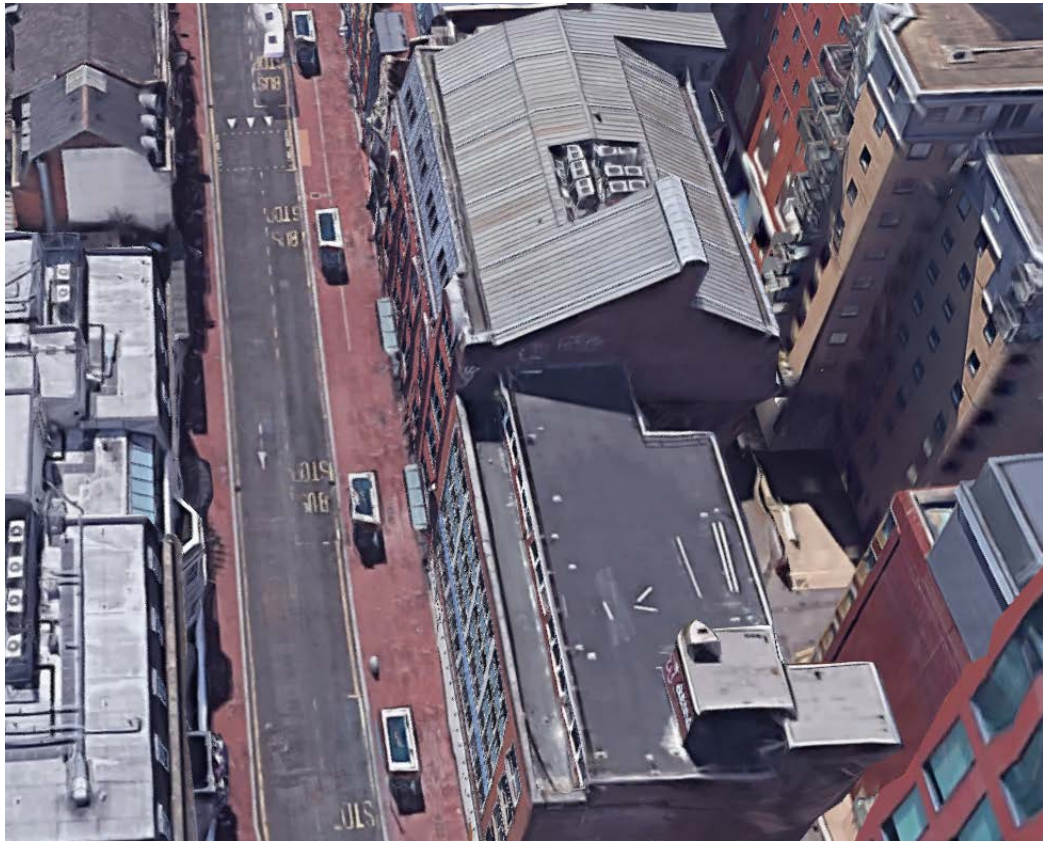
Artist Impression of Station Road Entrance with green wall



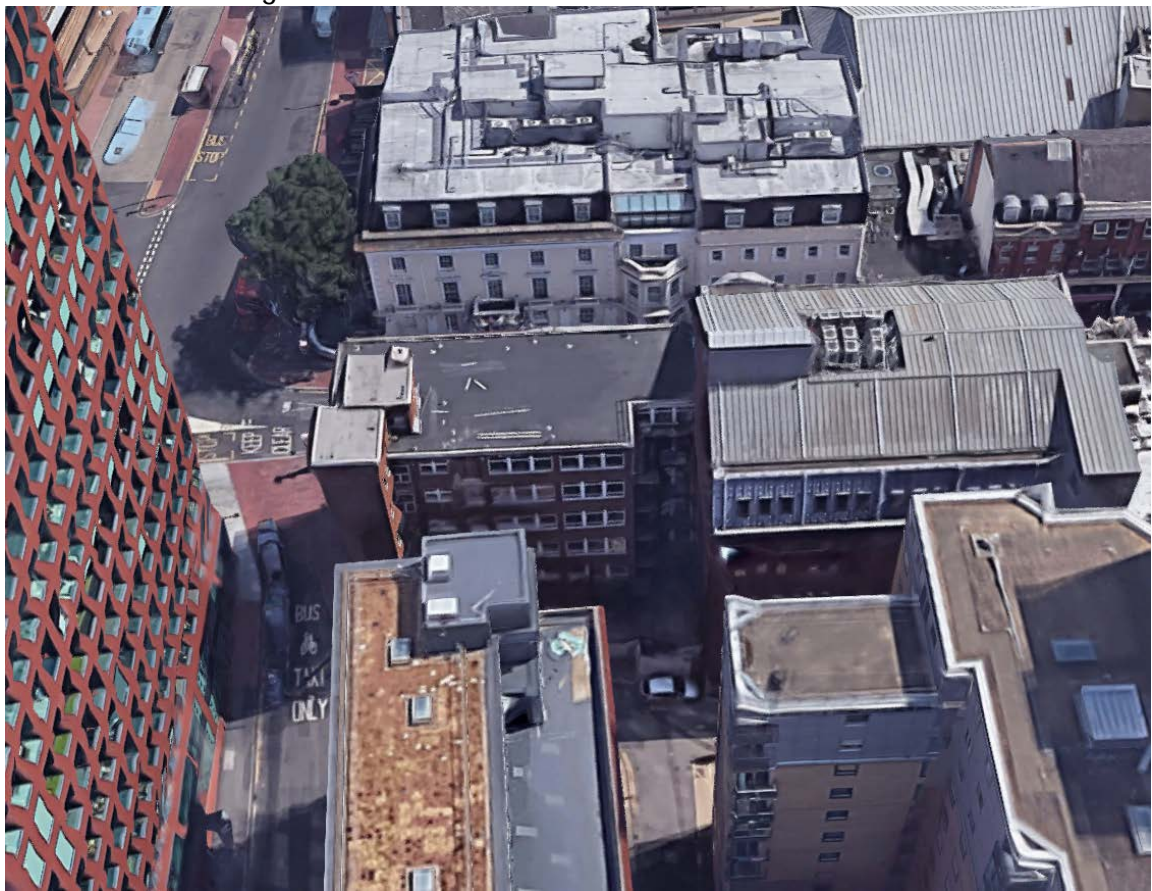
Artist impressions of top middle and base



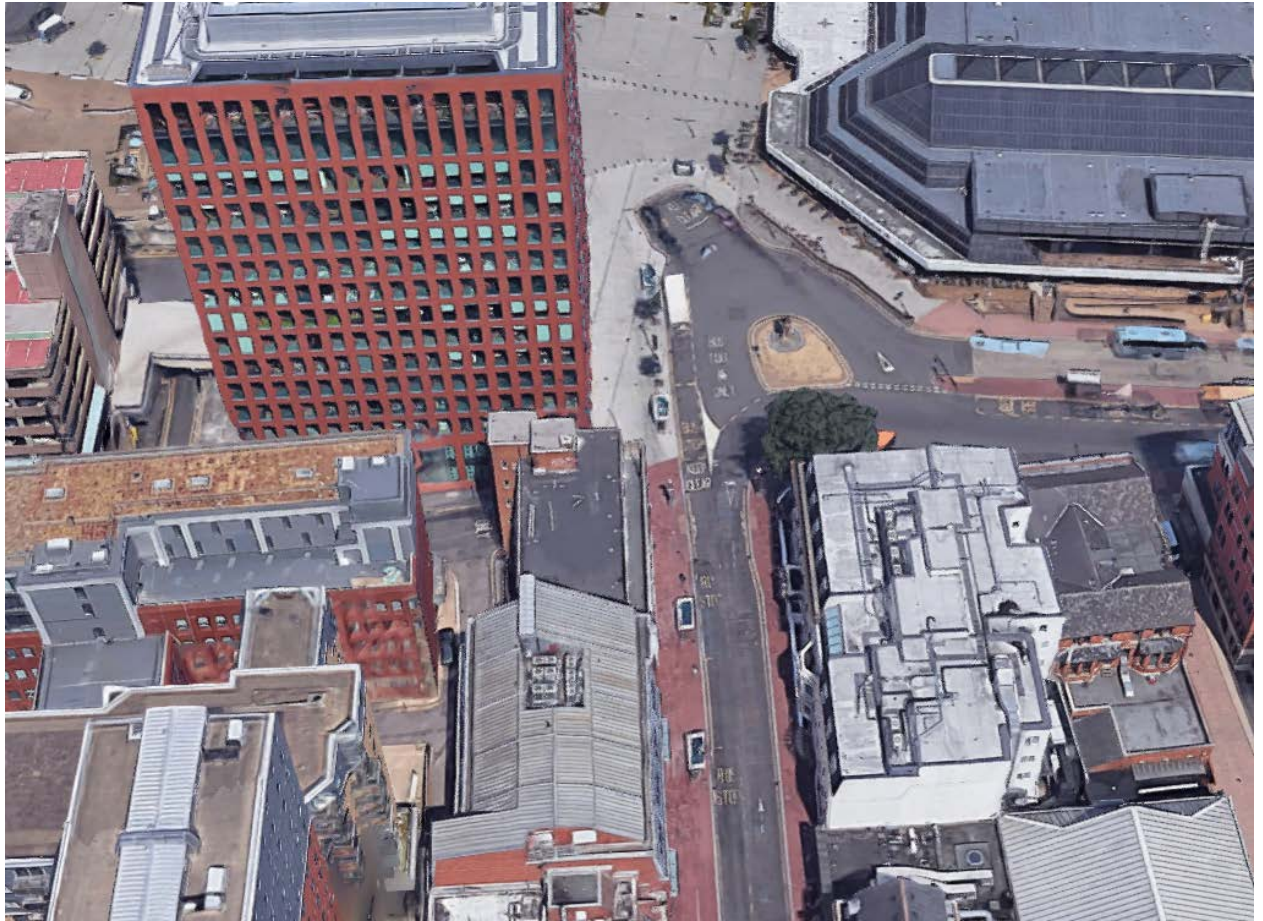
Artist Impression along Garrard Street illustrating revised building corner



Aerial view looking south



Aerial view looking east



Aerial view looking north



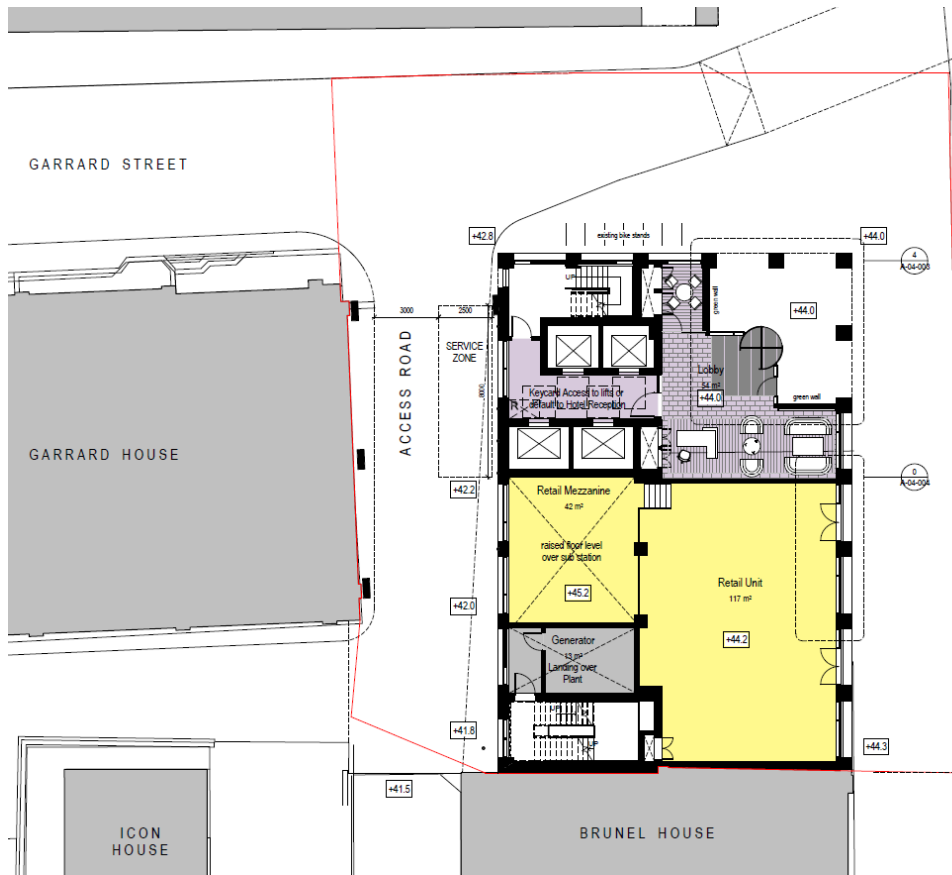
Photographs showing the existing building (west elevation) and access road



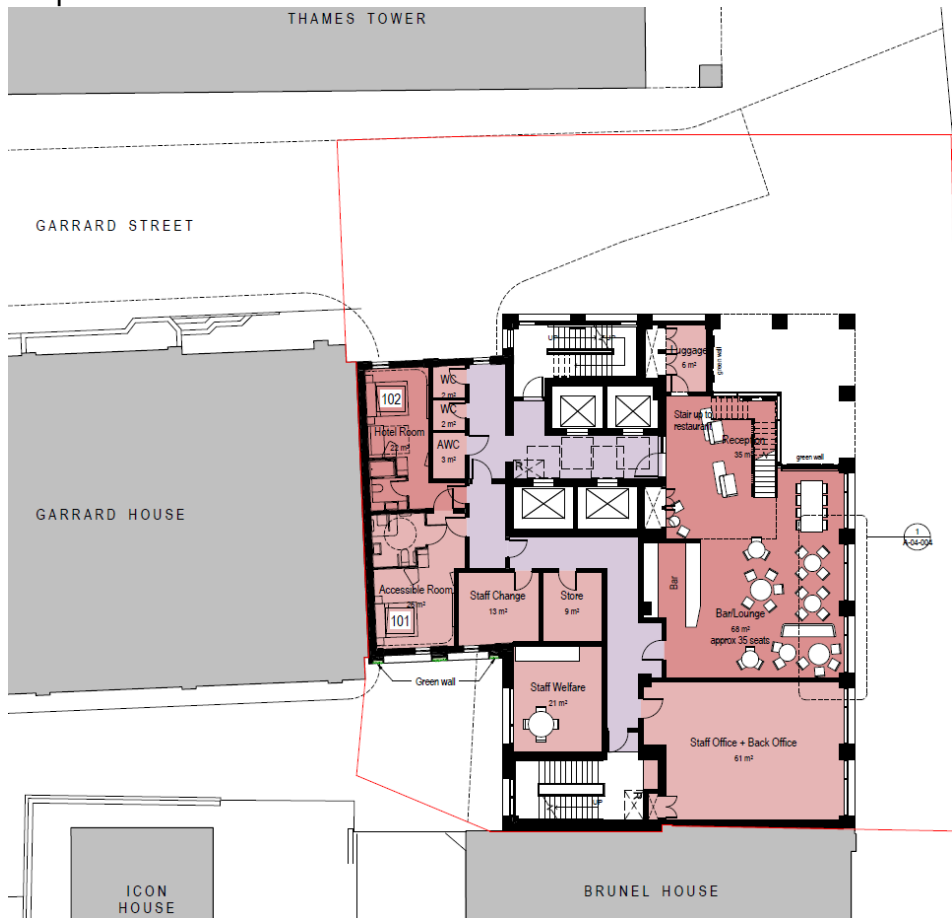
Further site photographs from Station Road and Garrard Street



Proposed Basement Floor Plan



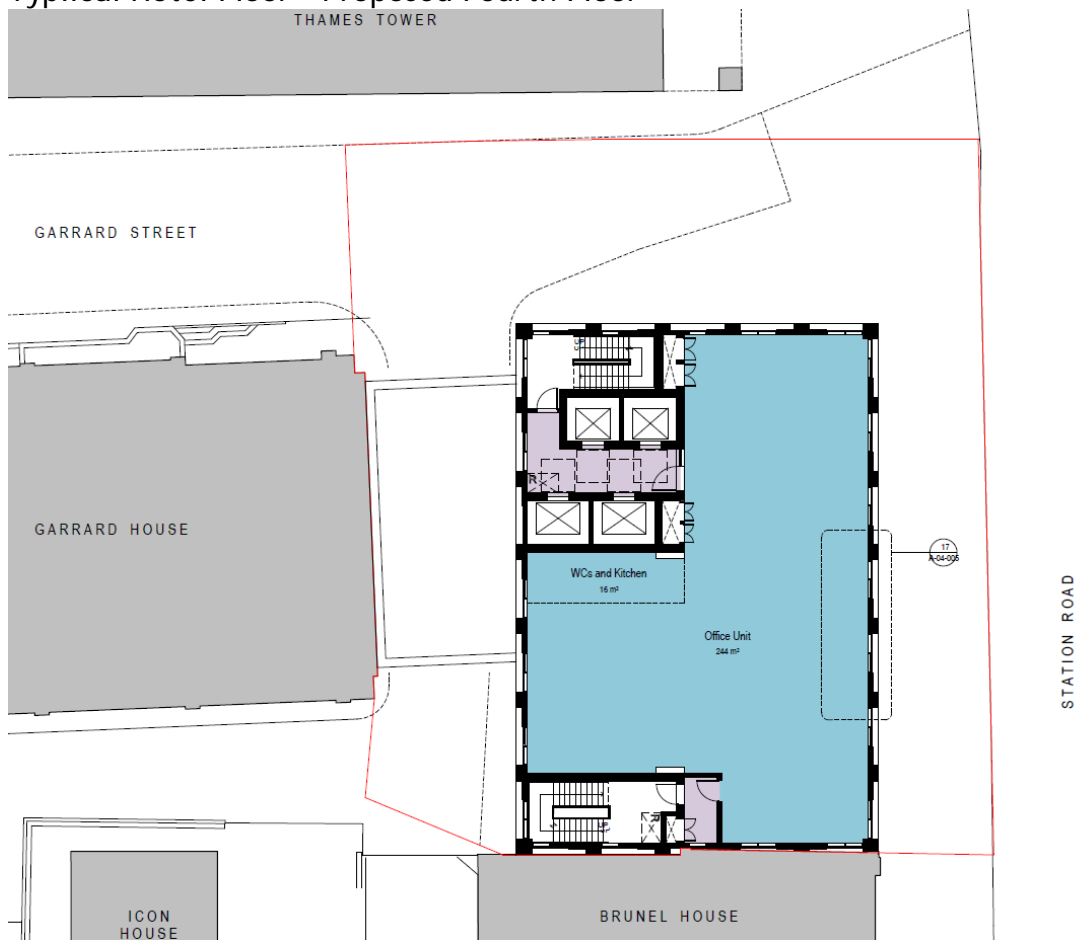
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



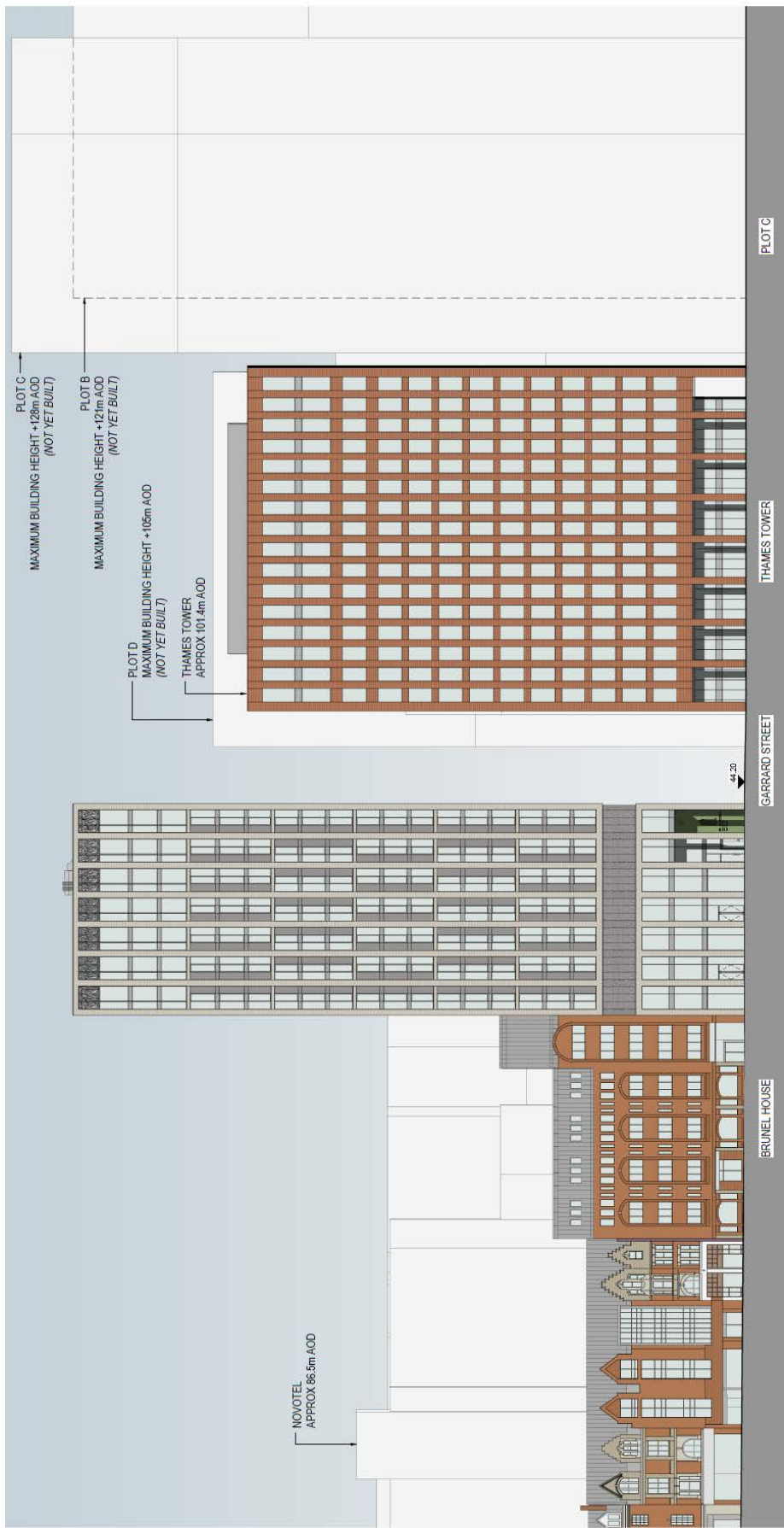
Proposed First Floor Plan



Typical Hotel Floor - Proposed Fourth Floor



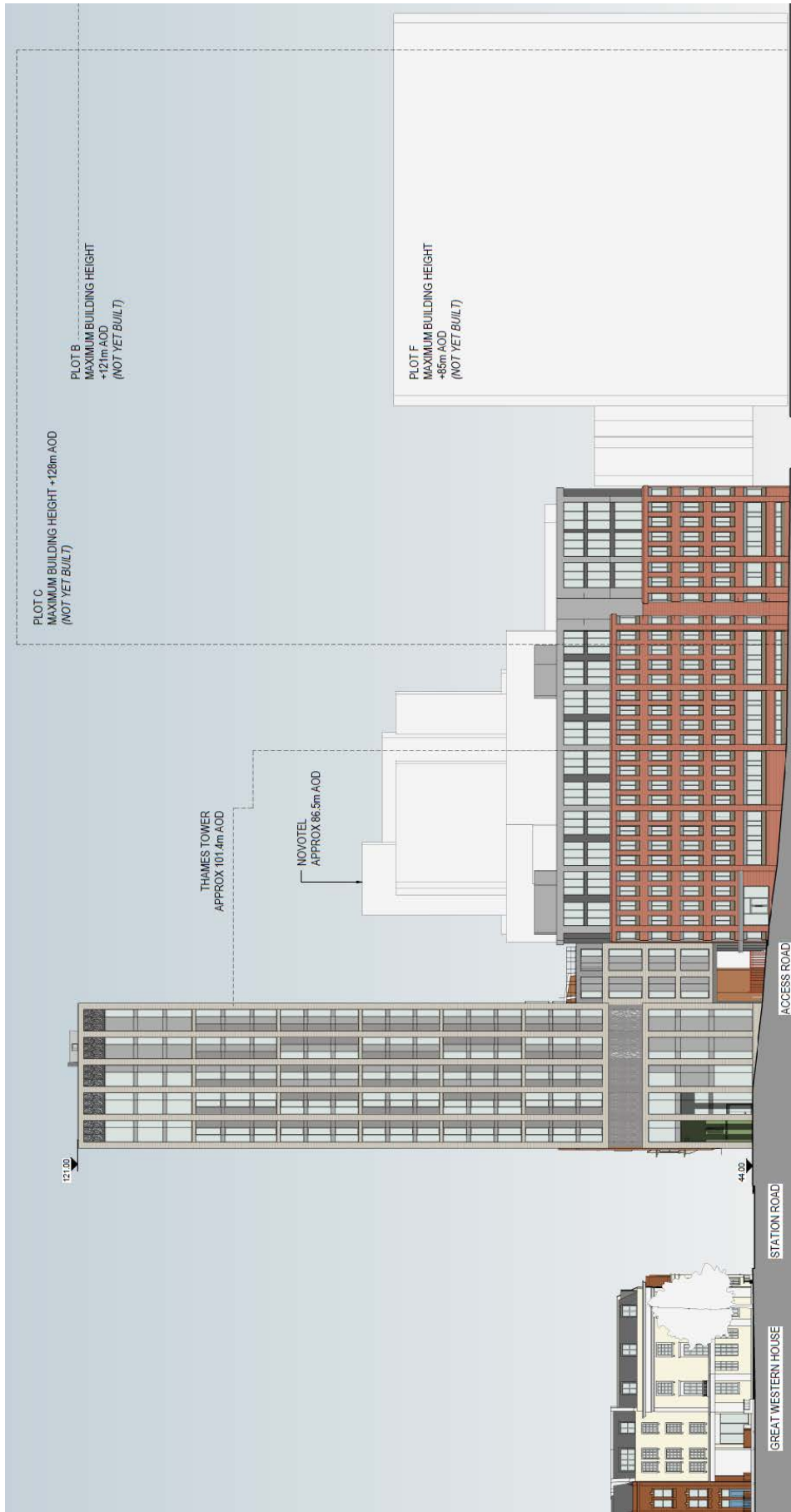
Typical Office Floor - Proposed Seventeenth Floor



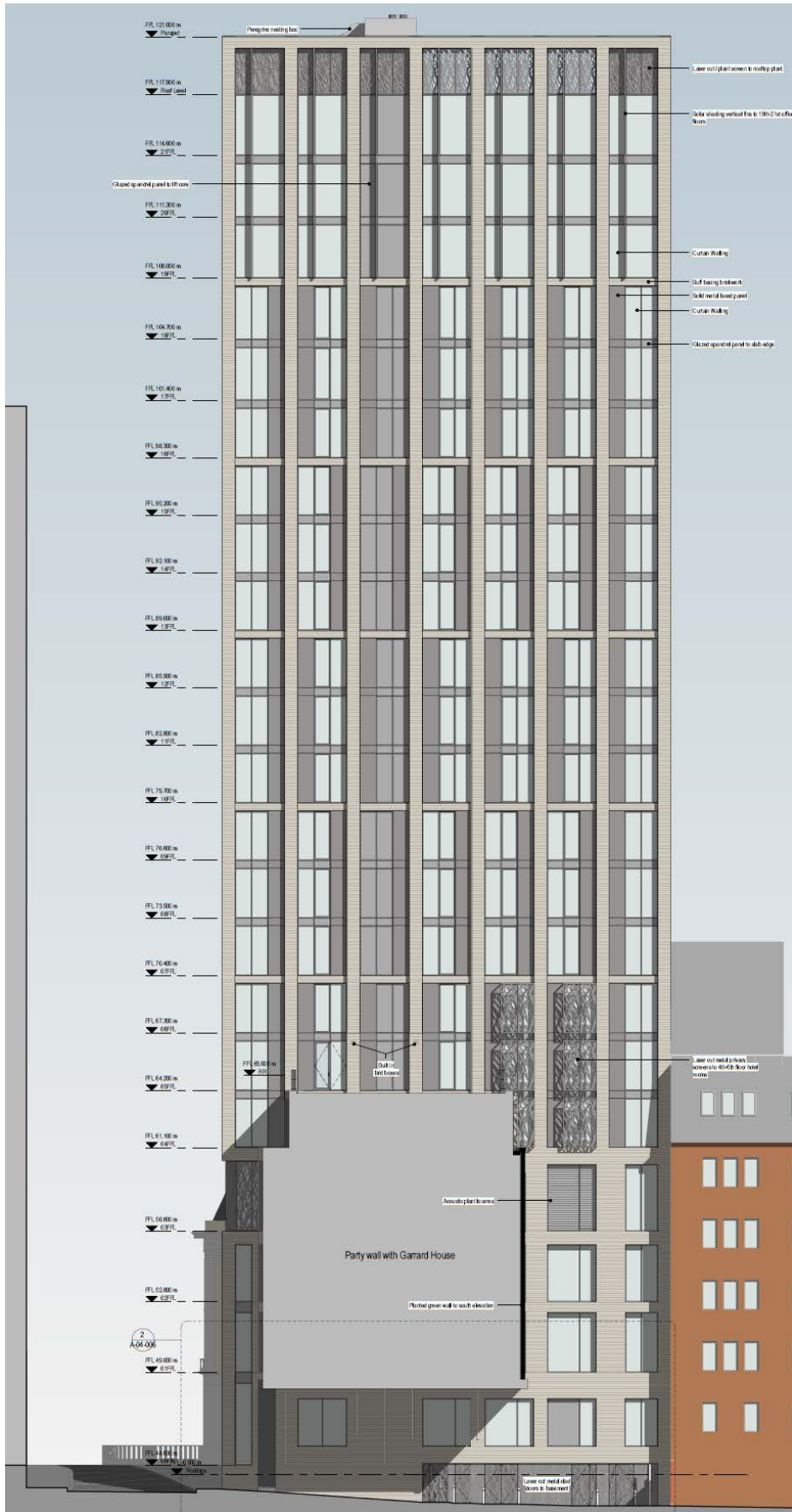
Proposed Station Road streetscene



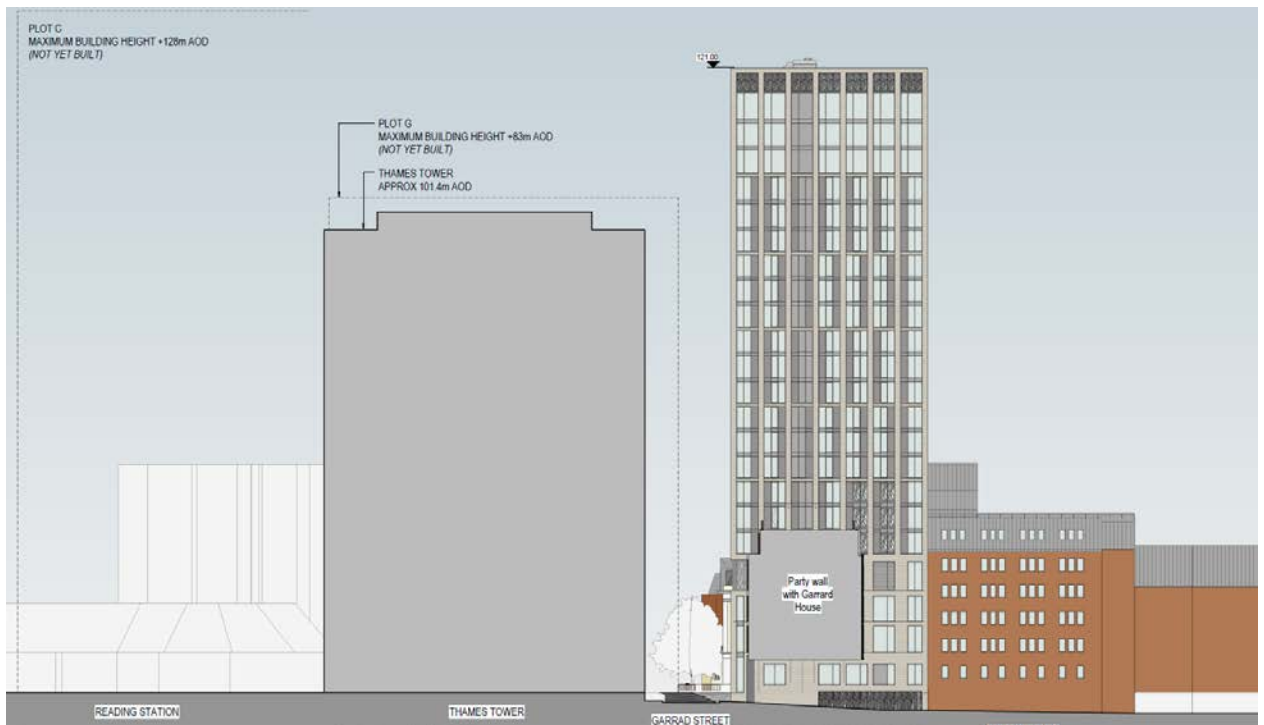
Proposed Garrard Street (north) elevation



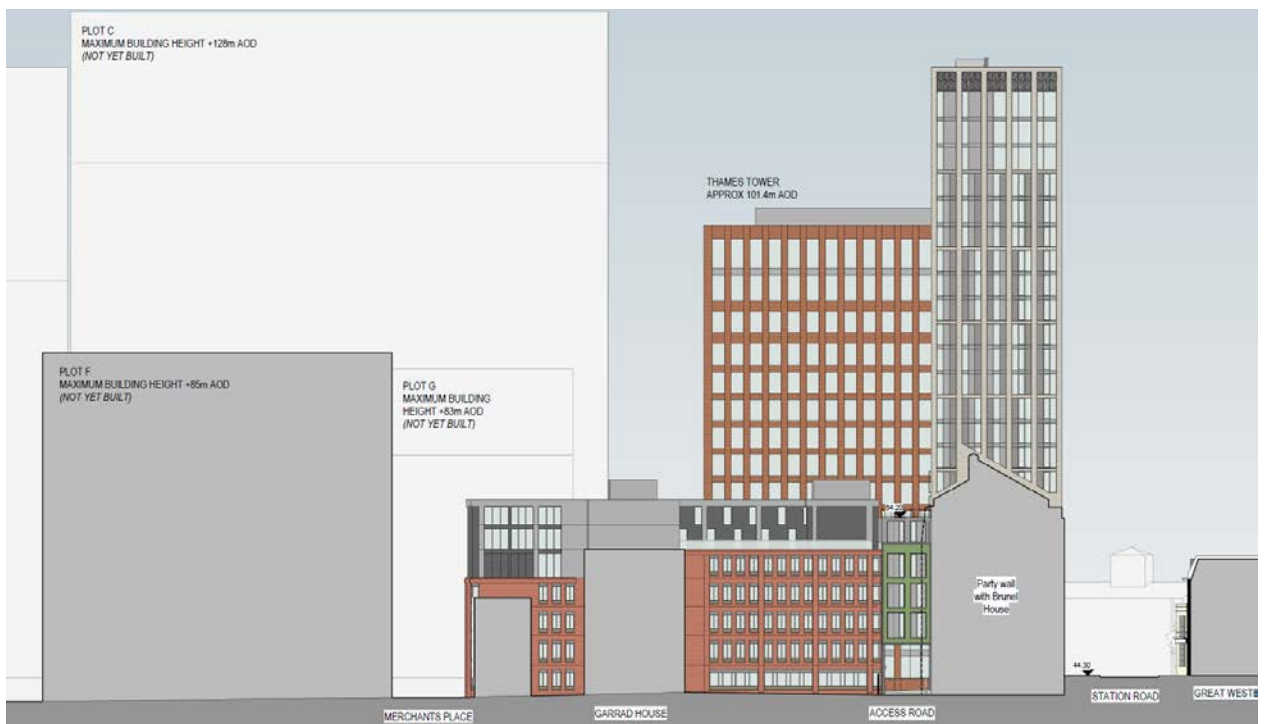
Proposed Garrard Street streetscene



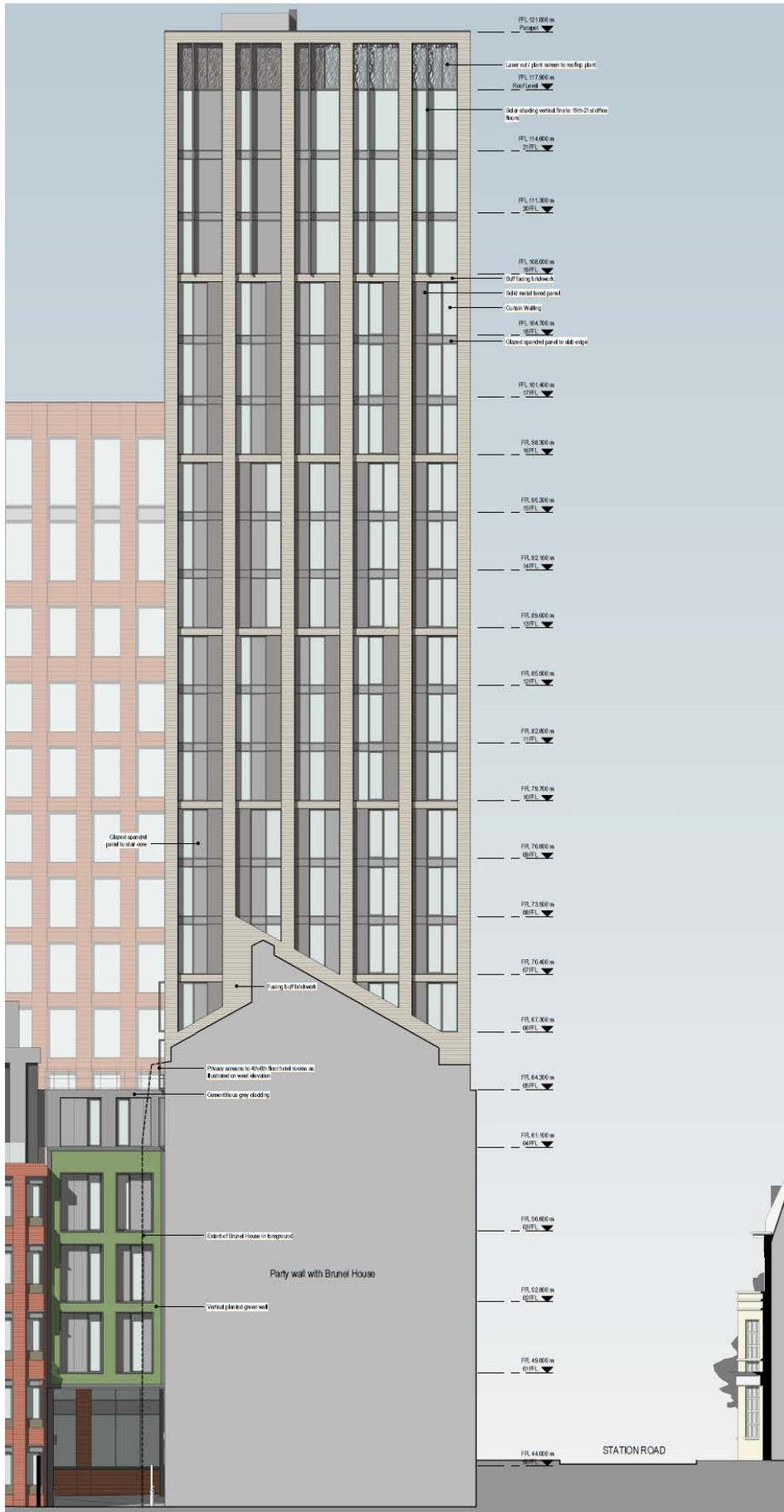
Proposed west elevation



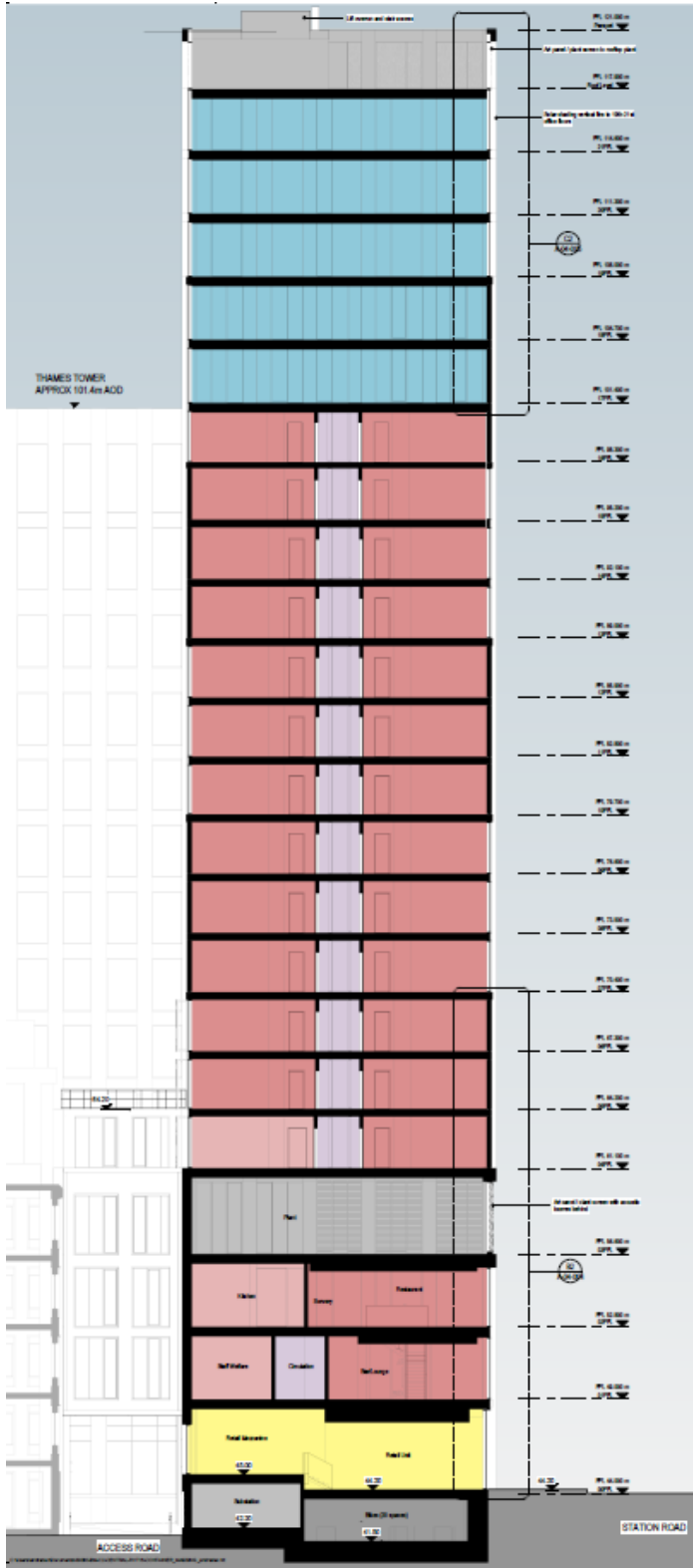
Proposed west elevation - site context



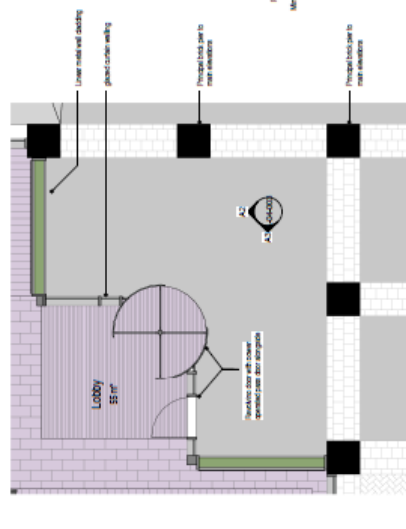
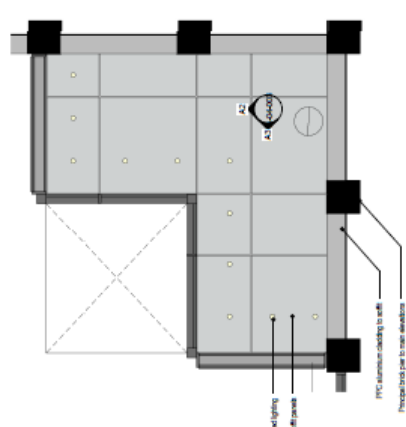
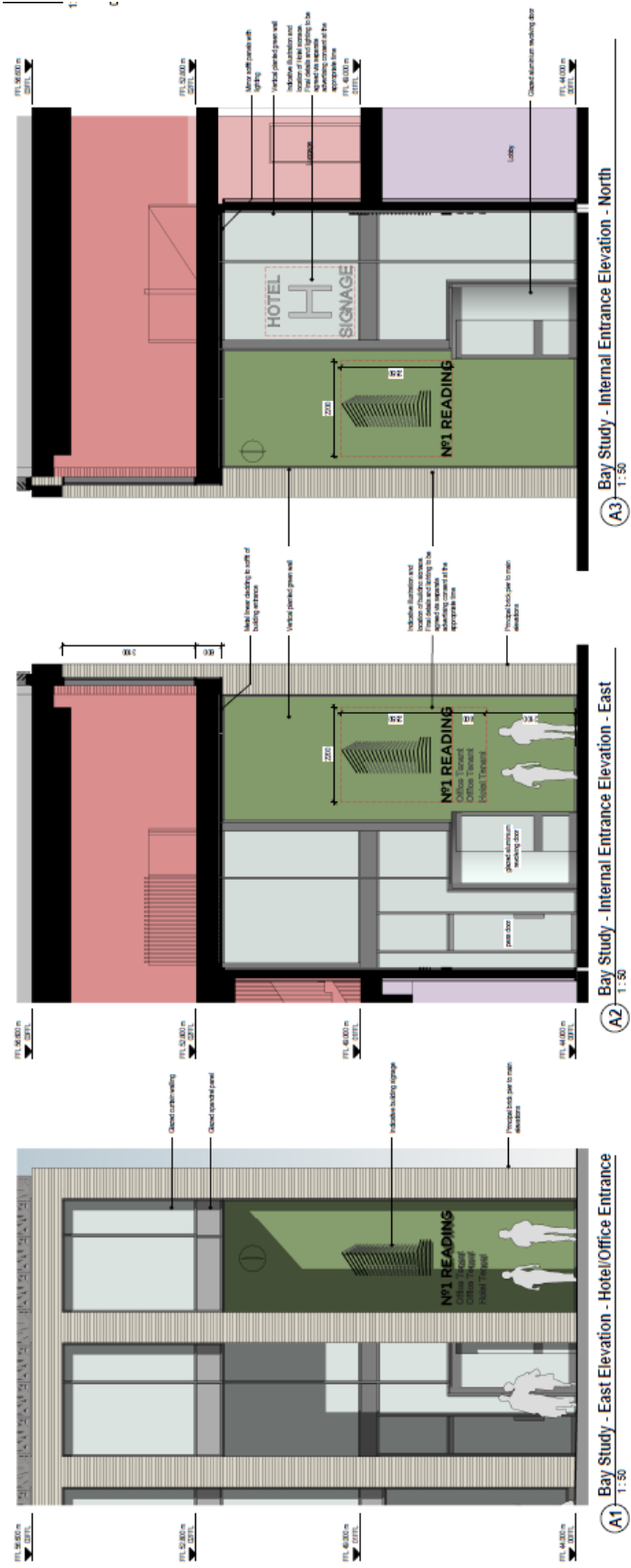
Proposed south elevation - site context



Proposed south elevation



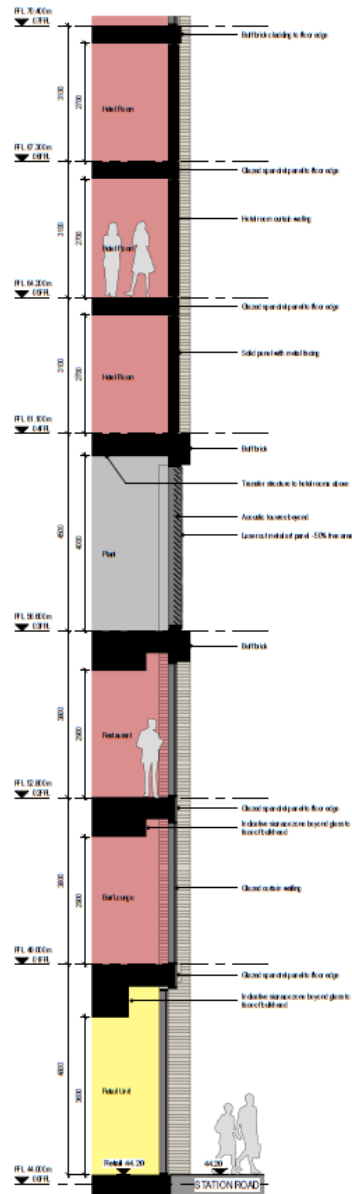
Proposed Section (east to west of main building)
 (Retail - yellow; hotel - red; office - blue; plant and associated works - grey)



Detailed elevations and floor plans showing the Hotel and Office entrance area



B1 Bay Study - East Elevation - Lower Hotel Floors
1:50

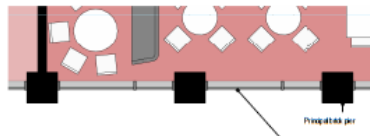


B2 Bay Section East Elevation Lower
1:50

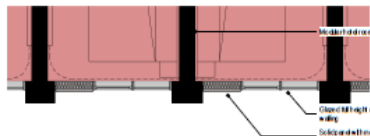
Contractors and consultants are not to scale dimensions from this drawing.
1:50
0m 2.5m 5m



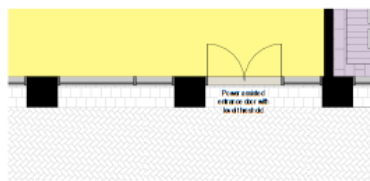
Precedent - Light Brick
Precedent - Glass and Metal Panels
Precedent - Metal Cladding Panels
Precedent - Lower Grid Metal Panel



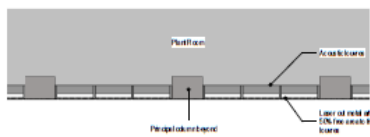
1 Bay Plan Level 01 Hotel Lobby
1:50



4 V21-Bay Plan-L04 Hotel Room
1:50



0 Bay Plan Level 00 Retail
1:50



3 V21-Bay Plan-L03 Plant
1:50

NO.	REVISION	DATE
1	Issue for planning	28/11/18
2	Issue for planning	28/11/18
3	Issue for planning	28/11/18

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 E: info@broadwaymalyan.com
 www.broadwaymalyan.com

Client: Station Road Dev Co Ltd
 Project: 29-35 Station Road

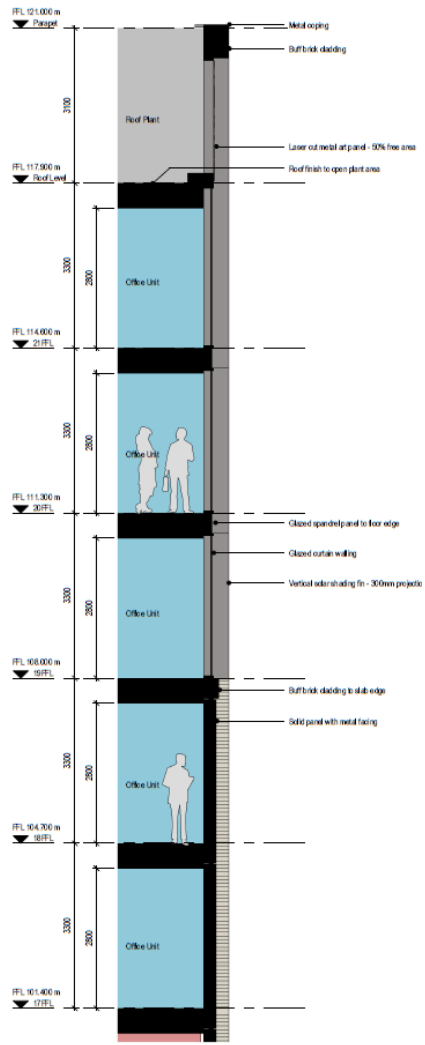
Designer: Proposed Bay Study B - Retail and Hotel Lower

NO.	REVISION	DATE
1	Issue for planning	28/11/18
2	Issue for planning	28/11/18
3	Issue for planning	28/11/18

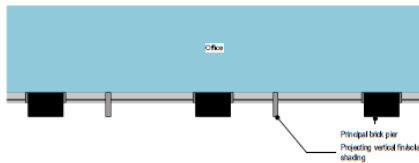
Detailed elevations & floor plans showing the Retail & lower elements of the Hotel



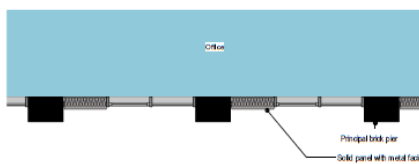
C1 Bay Study - East Elevation - Upper Office Floors
1:50



C2 Bay Section East Elevation Upper
1:50

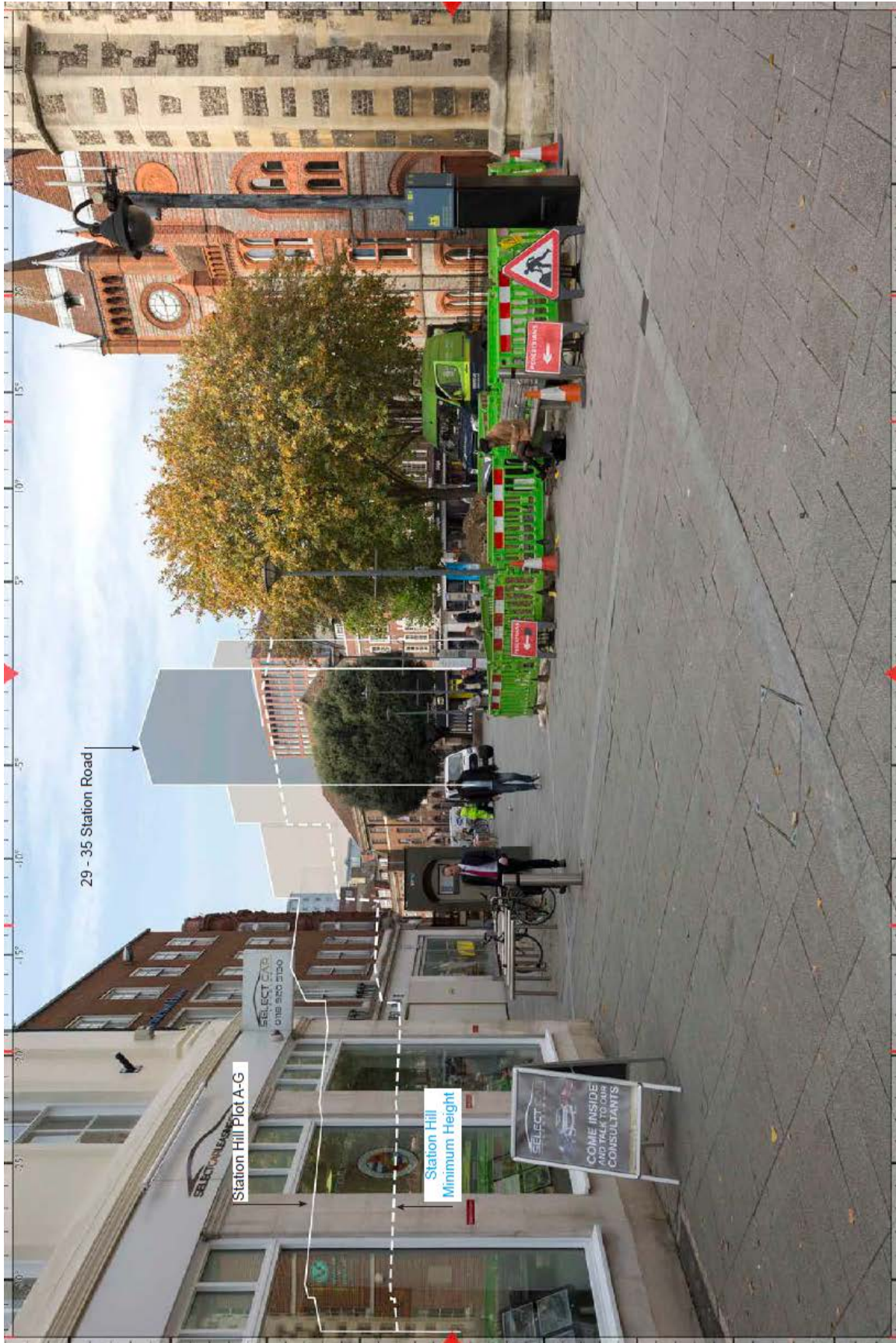


19 Bay Plan Level 19 Office
1:50

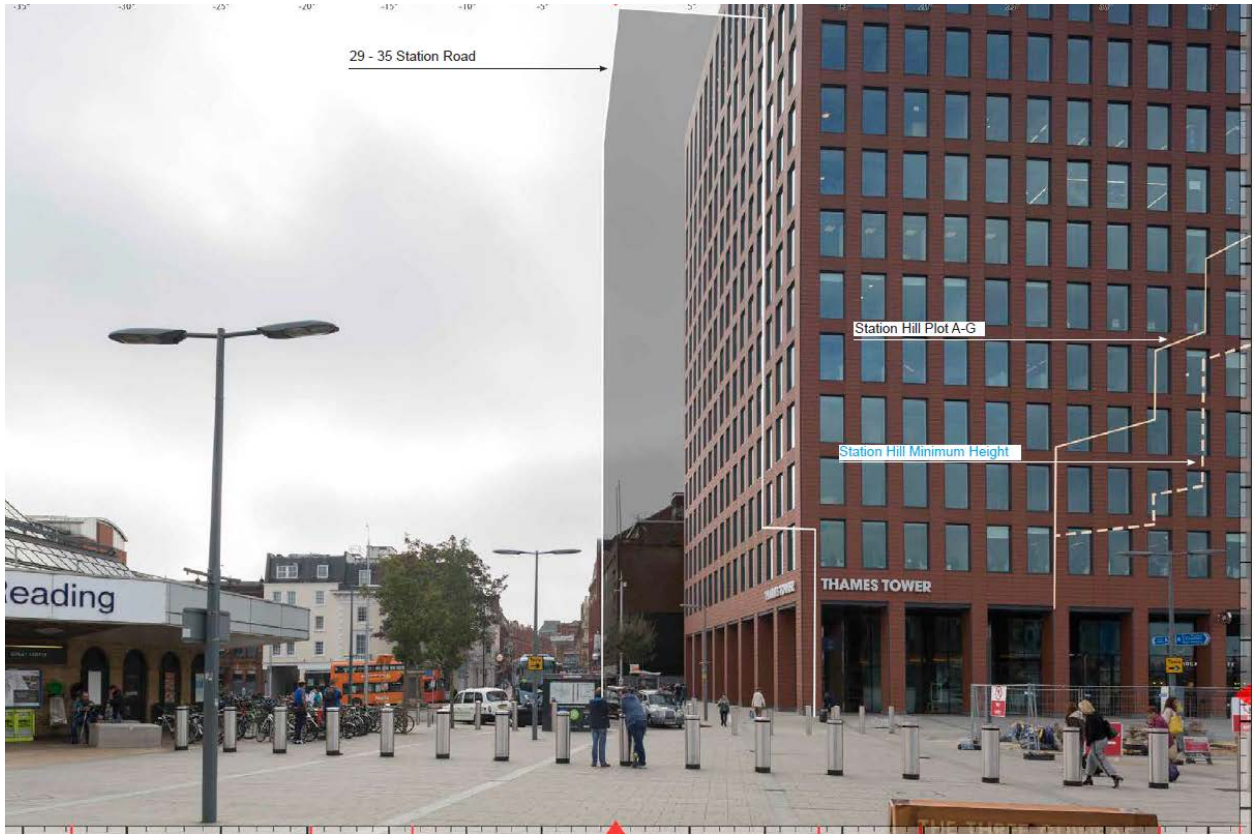


17 Bay Plan Level 17 Office
1:50

Detailed elevations & floor plans showing the Office element



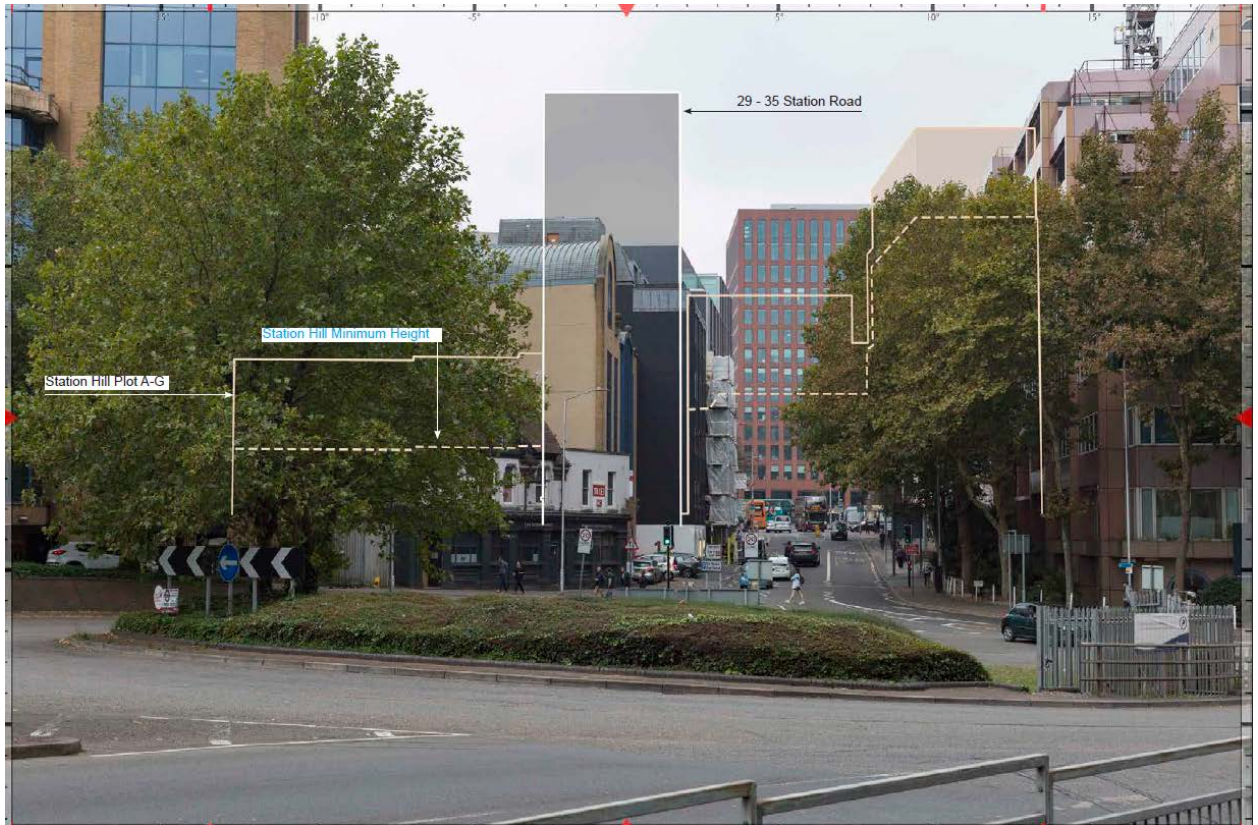
Verified view from Market Place looking north-west



Verified view from Reading Station looking south



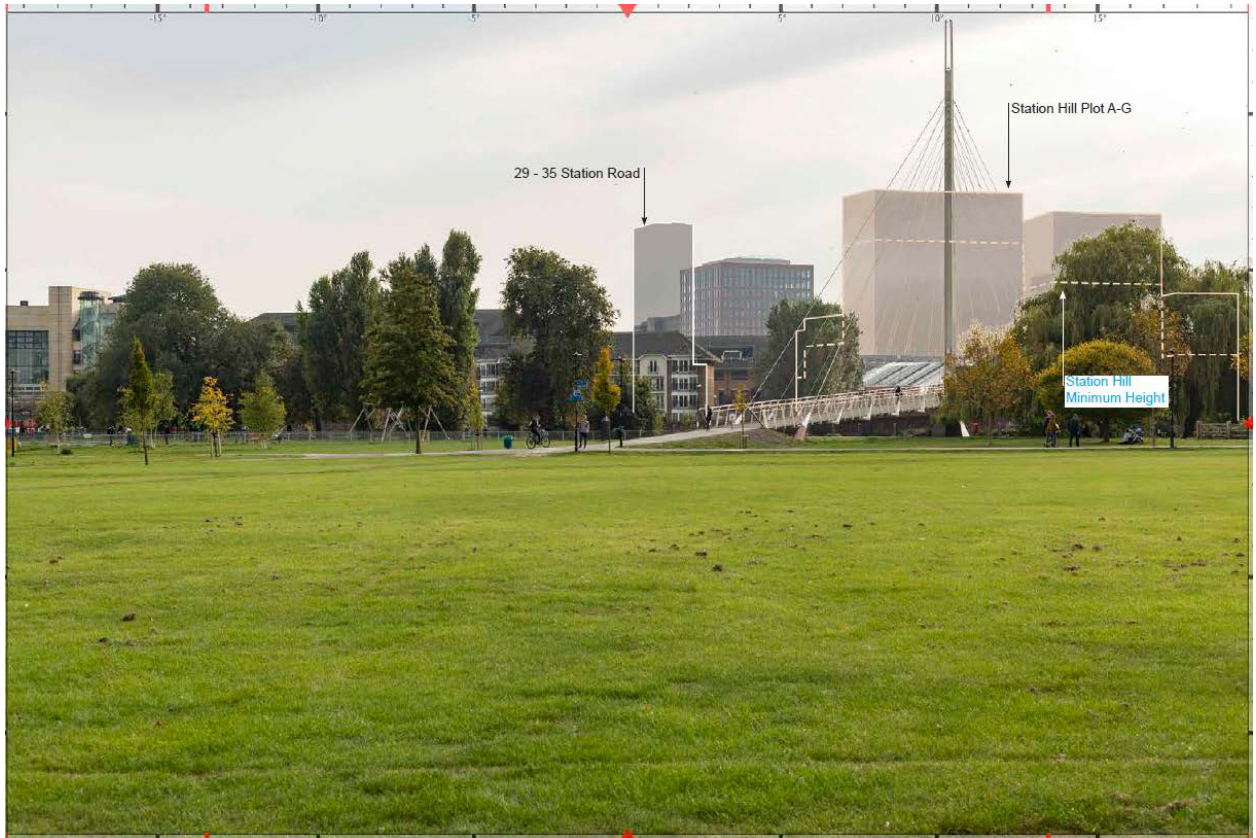
Verified view from junction of Queen Victoria Street, Station Road and Friar Street looking north



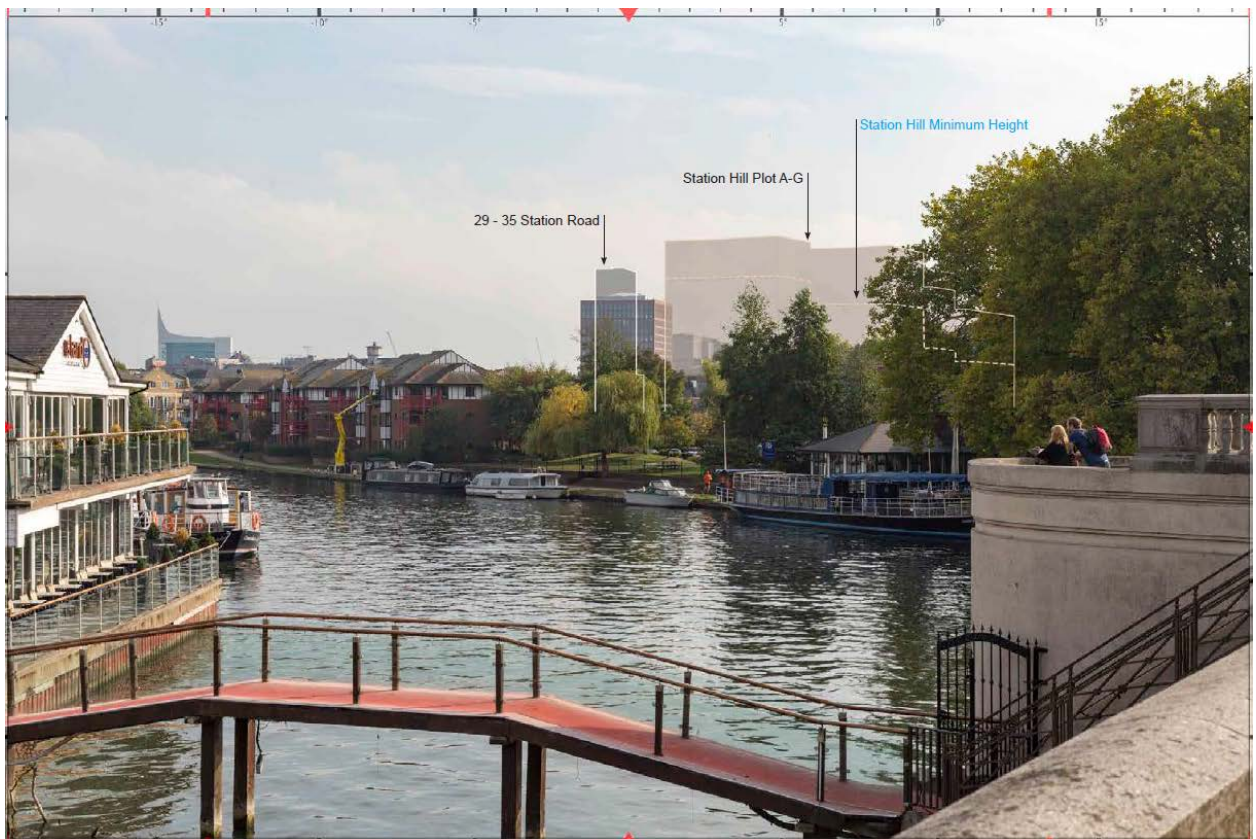
Verified view from Forbury Road looking west



Verified view from Reading Bridge looking south-west



Verified view from Christchurch Meadows looking south



Verified view from Caversham Bridge looking south-east



Visualisation of the 2005 (Refs 040516 / 04-01395/FUL) and 2011 (Refs 101247 / 10-00902/EXT) permissions (not implemented) for a 22 storey building at the site. See section 3 for full details. Image taken from p36 of the Reading Station Area Framework 2010.

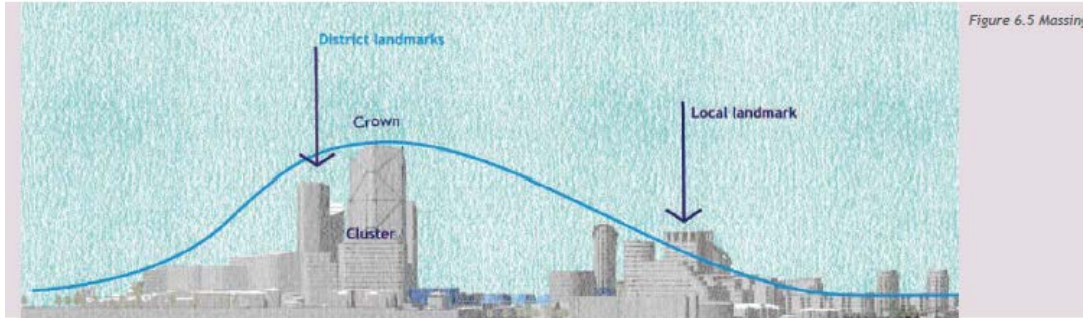


Figure 6.5 Massing

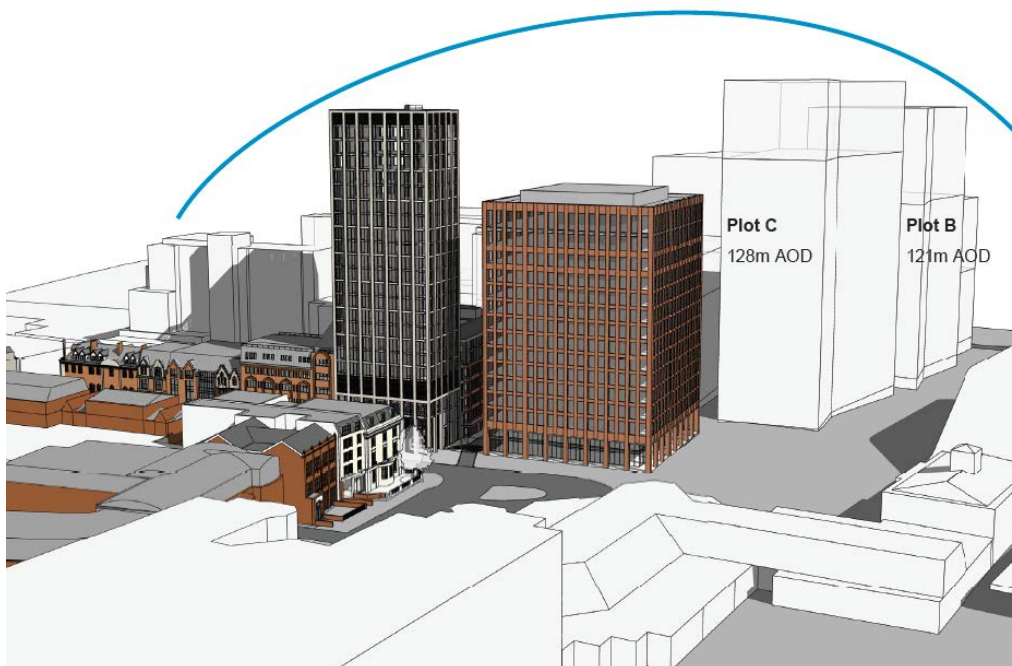
Area massing principles

- 6.11 Development in the Station Area should be characterised by high density development with an intense, fine grained urban fabric framing flexible development plots capable of adaptation to many land uses, combinations of land uses (vertical and horizontal) and many building types and forms.
- 6.12 Tall buildings should rise up around the Station 'nexus'.
- 6.13 The approach to building massing should be dramatic with a new cluster of taller buildings forming a new and distinctive skyline for the Station Area as a centrepiece of the centre.
- 6.14 The 'dome' of development is identified with the 'crown', the area of greatest permissible height, immediately adjoining and to the south of the Station entrance.

Defining the 'crown'

- 6.15 The area close to the southern Station entrance has been selected as a suitable place for the tallest buildings and for a cluster of tall buildings for the following reasons:
 - The Station entrance is a major transport node at the heart of the northward extension of the town centre.
 - A cluster will mark the Station as an important place and landmark in itself.
 - The area marks a bluff or low hill with the ground rising from the Thames flood plain to the east, north and west. Building heights can mirror this topography. Conversely, lower buildings are to be encouraged on the lower ground.
 - The combination of proximity to the Station and the existing core of the town, the availability of suitable sites and current development interest.
- The area is suitable for the formation of a cluster of tall buildings which will form a dramatic skyline in views from higher ground and open space to the north and also in views from the south east and south west.
- There are appropriately sized sites available for development in the short and medium term so that the setting of tall buildings can be controlled and adapted in ways which may not be possible with small or confined sites.
- The Council has resolved to grant the Station Hill redevelopment scheme (SH2). The redevelopment of the area will change the character of the central area by introducing a tall building cluster.
- The relative lack of areas sensitive to tall buildings compared to other potential locations.
- RCAAP policy RC13 requires that the tallest buildings will be located in the centre of the cluster, and gradually step down in height to the outer areas.

Extract from page 34 of the Reading Station Area Framework 2010 showing the dome of development



Dome of development in connection with Station Hill and Thames Tower, as signified by the applicant (p72 of DAS - originally proposed detailed design, not the now proposed detailed design)