

Reading Borough Council

DRAFT HOSIER STREET AREA DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION

November 2018

Statement of Consultation.

Background

The Council prepared a Draft Hosier Street Area Development Framework which was approved for public consultation by the Council's Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee in July 2018.

Consultation was carried out during July, August and September 2018. A longer than normal period of consultation was provided to allow for the fact that consultation was taking place over the summer holiday period. Details of the consultation were sent by email and letter to all those who are registered with the council for planning policy related consultations. Some additional groups and individuals with known interests in the framework area were also consulted by email. A press release was also issued and notifications were put up on the consultation page of the Council's website.

As part of the consultation exercise, 2 exhibitions/drop-in events were held in the Hexagon Theatre the first on the afternoon/evening of 31st July 2018, the second on the afternoon/evening of 5th September 2018. These were both well attended.

An interactive event, led by the Council's urban design consultants was also held on 13th September 2018, again at the Hexagon Theatre. Invitations were sent to community groups and other interested parties to take part in the event. Approximately 45 people attended.

Content of the Consultation:

Notifications of the consultation pointed to the Consultation Page on the Council's Website (<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/dens/draft-hosier-street-area-development-framework>). The Website provided context information about the Development Framework and the consultation and provided a link to the document. It also provided a link to a "Give us your Views" form which allowed respondents to return their comments via a Webform. Email/letter notifications and the website also provided for inviting written responses to be submitted via an email address.

The two Exhibitions comprised a small display using plans, photographs and extracts from the framework, manned by officers between the hours of 3.00 and 7.00.

The agenda for the Interactive Event on 13th September 2018 included introductions by Councillor Tony Page, Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport at Reading Borough Council, and Giorgio Framallicco, Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services for Reading Borough Council. There followed a presentations by James Gross, Director of Urban Place Labs, the Council's Urban Design Consultants outlining the methodology and findings that fed into the Framework. This was followed by a Question and Answer Session. The remaining time was given over to topic work, exploring the report findings with regard to:

- Uses, and Response to Context
- Townscape, Massing and Tall Buildings
- Landscape and Public Realm

Results of Consultation

A total of 18 responses were received, some of which were very detailed. All the written representations have been summarised and set out in the table below along with officer recommended responses and action/proposed changes to the Framework.

The responses received and recorded under the written representations are analysed under the following headings:

- Uses, and Response to Context;
- Townscape, Massing and Tall Buildings;
- Landscape and Public Realm.

The table recording the written representations is followed by officer notes of matters raised in the 2 exhibitions and then by the consultant's notes of the matters raised at the Interactive Event.

All these results of consultation have been fed back into a Revised Hosier Street Area Development Framework.

The Council would like to thank all those who have contributed to the consultation and thus the content of the final document.

Written Representations

Uses and Response to Context

Respondent	Summary of comment	Officer comment
BSANA	The HSADF fails to mention how it helps the establishment of a sustainable community and how it meets the needs of families, the elderly, the vulnerable and other members of society and how this community will integrate in with surrounding communities. The HSADF concentrates on maximising the number of dwellings that can be built within the sites confines without looking at how it will work for those who will live within it. A high-rise very high-density development of up to 3,000 potential residents needs to be handled with great care if it isn't going to create a 21st Century slum and/or a poverty trap. There are many examples of failures for this to be an area of significant concern that should be addressed.	The HSADF is primarily an urban design framework interpreting policies in the RCAAP. Applications will be determined in relation to all development plan policies, including those which deal with housing mix and infrastructure provision.
BSANA	No mention is made as to how the demand for school places from this large development will be met.	This is addressed through the development plan process and via school place planning by education officers.
BSANA	No provision for child play grounds and facilities within the site and facilities neighbouring the site are virtually non-existent.	Reference to inclusion of such facilities within open space area of the site.
BSANA	There is also no provision for any community assets including meeting rooms.	There is potential for community uses to be delivered within a development. However, the experience has often been that such spaces, when provided, often remain unused unless there is a clear end user for the space.
BSANA	The HSADF fails to adopt the advice in the local plan on creating a healthy environment.	There is an existing drop-in centre at the Broad Street Mall. This centre also registers patients for regular appointments. The Clinical

		Commissioning Groups are consulted on significant planning applications and any concerns raised would be addressed at application stage.
BSANA	Health facilities need to be improved to cater for the additional population.	The CCGs are consulted on planning applications and any concerns raised would be addressed at application stage.
BSANA	Serious thought needs to be given to the availability of leisure facilities that are easily available by foot to people living in central Reading. This is especially the case given the obesity crisis that we now face as a country.	Reference to provision of commercial leisure facilities within the site.
BSANA	The policy seeks a proportion of affordable housing as social rented accommodation. This type of accommodation, particularly where it is for single people, often caters for the most vulnerable in society, who may not be suited to the high-pressure living environment of the centre. While this issue will still need to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, there is a need to avoid an over-concentration of one-bedroom social renting". Given the acute need for social housing and the likelihood that the many vulnerable people who fill the waiting lists for social could be the most likely tenants, assurances need to be given that the goal is creating a sustainable well-balanced community rather than using the site as a response to house only our most vulnerable. For many of these people, high density living may not provide a suitable environment and it can indeed perhaps be detrimental not to their own mental well-being and growth, but detrimental to the healthy lifestyles and happiness of their fellow community neighbours.	Planning policies seek mixed and balanced communities and a range of accommodation is sought in line with those policies. However, most of the need for affordable accommodation is actually for one- and two-bed accommodation and town centre sites will provide most of the housing provision in Reading.
BSANA	The plans must be assessed by the Thames Valley Police to ensure that they are satisfied that it can be policed effectively and efficiently.	The Council consulted Thames Valley Police's Crime Prevention Team, and did not receive a response. TVP will also be consulted on planning applications on the site.
BSANA	This is an area with very high levels of deprivation and anti-social behaviour. As a result, this development requires very careful planning not to aggravate an already bad situation. The development could and should be used to help improve the lives of surrounding neighbourhoods.	Noted.
BSANA	The Council has previously said that it is committed to seeing a full-size supermarket provided	Change made to include

	<p>in the town centre that does justice to a growing population in a way that the Sainsbury's development does not. No mention is made in the framework about provision for a supermarket. Food poverty (the inaccessibility of fresh and healthy food) without the provision of a true supermarket is a very real concern. Not to provide such a necessity is forsaking the responsibility of the Council to ensure healthy eating provision for new residents within the HSADF area.</p>	<p>reference to possible provision of a supermarket within the Broad Street Mall. It should be noted however, that this is largely out of the Council's control and will depend of rising demand generated by residential development within the town centre.</p>
BSANA	<p>To use this RBC land almost exclusively for residential development when there are increasing demands for leisure facilities is a significant lost opportunity.</p>	<p>Reference to provision of commercial leisure facilities within the site. It should be noted, though, that the Council's leisure strategy does not include the provision of facilities by the Council on this site.</p>
BSANA	<p>Clever design may lead to a more tiered structure where a large supermarket can be incorporated beneath public realm along with leisure facilities and residential developed around this.</p>	<p>Reference to the opportunity for bulky floorspace under the podium to be used for leisure facilities or a supermarket, although the Broad Street Mall may be able to accommodate these uses.</p>
BSANA	<p>The current outdoor market is very small and it could be expanded upon to make for a larger more flexible market space, potentially on the top floor of the shopping centre car park, maybe undercover and again maybe there is an opportunity for creating a more dynamic eating space, noting how well the street food works in Market Place. Small and flexible commercial spaces may help give Reading a unique edge over neighbouring towns and help better represent itself beyond the traditional chain stores that are expected and don't give a unique pull.</p>	<p>Reference to a significantly upgraded market added.</p>
BSANA	<p>A resilient plan needs to be put in place for the careful maintenance and management of the site so that it doesn't become a run-down no-go area. As a condition of providing the owner of the shopping centre with planning permission, it is suggested that it should be a requirement that they manage and maintain the streets surrounding their development. It</p>	<p>Change made to emphasise the importance of maintenance and management. This will also be addressed at planning</p>

	would be in their commercial interest that the surrounding area is kept in a well-maintained condition.	application stage. However, legal agreements must meet the relevant tests in the regulations.
BSANA	This focus is evident in that the HSADF fails to deliver anything much beyond housing; it takes and gives little back in an area that is already suffering from acute levels of deprivation.	Housing is Reading's highest priority in order to meet the critical need for housing in sustainable locations. Lack of access to housing is an aspect of deprivation, and one that is of particular significance in Reading. Additionally, this site is in urgent need of regeneration and reinvestment that will benefit the whole of Reading.
BSANA	The time frame in which this development is being pushed through is far too aggressive for such an important development. There is more need for public consultation and participation as far too many problems with the existing plans were highlighted in the initial consultations. This should be an iterative process to allow for the best possible outcome. There appears to be a wish to rush this through as quickly as possible which we believe is wrong.	The area is in multiple ownerships. The Council understands that planning applications on this site are imminent and the framework is primarily intended to assist in decision-making in relation to the piecemeal development of different ownerships. The framework has no weight as guidance until it is adopted and thus is of no value in determining imminent planning applications unless it is approved in time. It should also be noted that the Framework has been developed out of policy for the area that was adopted over ten years

		ago, and which has been reviewed through the Local Plan over the last three years.
BSANA	RBC has a notable conflict of interest in this development framework with them both being responsible for the development framework's approval and owning a substantial proportion of the development site with which they are placing aggressive demands on the number of dwellings that they wish to see being built. This large-scale development requires independent overview.	While we acknowledge that the Council is owner of a large portion of the site, the framework seeks to interpret existing adopted policies, which have been subject to precisely that independent overview. All guidelines will apply to all owners and developers, including the Council.
BSANA	The HSADF failure to mention the Russell Street / Castle Hill CA and surrounding residential areas is a glaring omission.	Change made to emphasise this Conservation Area.
BSANA	Historical significance of the Area, adjoined by 2 conservation areas	Change made to include reference to the historic significance of both adjacent Conservation Areas.
BSANA	Site was redeveloped in the 1970 at the same time as the IDR was constructed.	Noted and referred to in the framework.
BSANA	Area suffers very high levels of nitrous oxides.	Air Quality is an issue for many parts of the urban area of Reading and is being addressed through a variety of initiatives including planning policies that seek to mitigate and limit additional pollution. This will be addressed at application stage.
BSANA	Area already has high density of fast food outlets. There is a need to provide food that is conducive to good health.	Although we agree and acknowledge that planning for good health is important, planning policies are unable to control the types of food

		retailers that establish themselves in the area. Policies are only concerned with particular use categories, such as Class A3 “food and drink” or Class A5 “hot food and takeaway”. Planning policies do aim to prevent proliferation of such uses, for example many consecutive takeaways.
BSANA	Proposals for the site will produce an estimated population which is similar to the population of the large villages of Theale and Pangbourne.	Noted. However, national planning policies emphasise the need for high density development in sustainable locations close to services and facilities with high levels of accessibility to transport. The alternative to high-density development in sustainable locations is building on greenfield sites in unsustainable locations. Unlike some 15-20 years ago when there was little residential development in the Town Centre, planning policies now give great emphasis to residential development in town centres. This is part of achieving sustainable development and regenerating areas.
BSANA	The BSANA area has been identified as being very highly deprived especially in terms of Living Environment Deprivation and crime (receiving the lowest possible national rating) as evaluated by Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD). Special consideration needs to be given to any developments taking place nearby in order to avoid exacerbating the many	Noted.

	problems the area suffers from.	
CAAC	This is the site of Reading's oldest market and if Reading wants to create a 'destination market' it needs to try harder. However, Reading is not a theme park and the market needs to be fit for purpose for traders and customers to cater for all tastes and pockets. The proposed location on either side of St Mary's Butts would accentuate rather than reduce the busyness of the area. In order to open up a walkway from Castle Street alongside the Sun public house, the demolition of the market storage area is mentioned. This would seem to be a direct attack on the viability of the market in this area and is not acceptable.	Change made to emphasise the aim for an upgraded market. The location of the market (either adjacent to the Broad Street Mall or at St Mary's Butts) requires more detailed study. A long term strategy for the market is not something that the framework can provide.
CAAC	We have not commented at this stage on the provision of facilities and infrastructure for residents of the proposed housing and may wish to comment in the future.	Noted. Infrastructure provision is addressed by policies in the Local Plan and through arrangement via S106 and/or under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
CAAC	The document assumes that over a foreseeable period, the police station and magistrates' court will be redeveloped. The Civic Offices site is already available and Broad St Mall owners have expressed the intention to add to their property by building above. The framework may not be flexible enough to deal with the scenario that not all these properties become available and the complications that might arise in relation to other assumptions such as the retention of the podium. The Hexagon may remain for many, many years to come.	Without a framework, development of the area will occur in a piecemeal fashion and will likely be unsatisfactory. The framework is intended to be flexible and may evolve over time to take account of changing circumstances, for example any changes regarding the Hexagon Theatre. The framework is flexible to accommodate the retention of buildings such as the Hexagon and magistrate's court.
CAAC	The corner of St Marys Butts and Castle Street (from the Sun to the Horn and to Kall Kwik printing) is within the CA. The only significant change proposed is to open up the alleyway via the courtyard of the Sun pub. This change to the street plan of the area would leave the Sun	This is an aspiration to provide an obvious pedestrian connection that is over private

	as a disconnected building between the road of the underground car park and the enclosed pedestrian walk. The benefits of this might outweigh the disadvantages but a graphic of this would help to form an opinion.	land and will require negotiation with private landowners.
CAAC	Views into the CA from Hosier St and within the CA NE from the Horn are important. They are marked on the CA appraisal map as 'significant views'. The proposal should present 'now' and 'proposed' views so that a balanced judgement can be made about the impacts on views.	A range of modelled views are provided in the framework
CAAC	The Jubilee drinking fountain should be restored to order.	The fountain is referred to in the document.
CAAC	The 2008 Conservation Area appraisal for St Marys Butts/Castle St identified many negative features which the framework seeks to address. This appraisal is now 10 years out of date and is not necessarily a reliable reflection of the current situation.	Noted. Although the appraisal is ten years old, it is not considered necessary that an updated appraisal be used to inform the framework.
CAAC	The market proposals seem half hearted and not thought through.	A long term strategy for the market is not something that the framework can provide.
CAAC	There is considerable explanation of impacts on the St Marys Butts/Castle St Conservation Area, but there is barely a mention of Russell Street/Castle Hill. This is a serious omission and fails to comply with Core Strategy policy CS33 and the emerging policy EN6 in the New Local Plan which states "new development in the vicinity of historic assets or at the edge of conservation areas should be sympathetic."	Change made to note the relationship between the site and the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area.
Ian Dennis	Restaurants are failing throughout the country, including at the Oracle. Would people go in enough numbers to a new location which is out of the centre of the town and does not have the attractions of the Riverside? If the prison becomes an Arts Centre (which would be wonderful for the town), the likely traffic to the Hosier Street cafes would surely be insufficient for them to be viable.	Town centres are facing considerable challenges in terms of retail footfall and need to adapt and develop new attractions, many of which could be leisure related. At the same time, considerable residential development in this area will bring a substantial population that will increase demand for services and facilities. There will therefore be increasing demand for retail and food and drink

		establishments.
Robert Pye of Ethos Valuable Outcomes	Major city centre redevelopment represents unprecedented opportunities to “think differently” about using these projects to enable a more collaborative approach to skills and employment. If we provide job opportunities for local people we will inevitably reduce demand for public services across the Council, Police and Health services. We believe that Hosier Street presents an opportunity for energy engagement with planners, developers and clients to enable strategic skills outcomes. Look at major development at the Manchester Campus as an example.	Noted. Local Plan policies and the Employment, Skills and Training SPD require consideration of employment and skills both during construction and use.
Highways England	We have reviewed the consultation and have no comments on it at this time.	Noted.
Moorgarth	It is clear that this part of the town centre has been left unloved for too long, and whilst Moorgarth’s primary objective is to ensure the Mall remains a vibrant shopping and leisure destination, we share the Council’s aspirations to investigate further potential for alternative uses, including residential, aimed at creating a new mixed-use offer. We have already embarked on a series of improvements both internally and externally at the Mall. Fountain house has been refurbished, as well.	Noted.
Moorgarth	It should be noted that while affordable housing should be included, the Council’s policies clearly state that this is subject to viability. Furthermore, works secured by S106 must comply with the relevant tests set out in CIL Regulation 122.	Noted. This is acknowledged by the Council’s planning policies and will be addressed at application stage.
Moorgarth	Moorgarth recognises the role that the existing car park plays at Broad Street Mall, however a balance must be struck between car parking and new residential uses and associated amenity areas at roof level. Provision of parking within the multi-story car park should be considered at application stage and based on evidence of need.	Noted. Provision of car parking will be considered at application stage according to the Council’s planning policies. Car parking for the proposed residential development can be provided at a reduced rate due to the sustainable location of the site and high access to public transport, but any losses of public parking must be justified
MP Matt Rodda	Regenerating this area is a once-in-a-generation opportunity, however, I am concerned about the proposals for the following reasons:	The site will deliver significant opportunities for walking and cycling. It is unclear how the

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site should deliver significant opportunities for walking and cycling, such as a link to Katesgrove Lane and the north of the town centre. This could also link the Sustrans route from the Bath Road to the RBH. • RBC has a strong track record of delivering council accommodation and we need to look at what scope there is for council housing on this important site. • Given the density and massing, there should be more shops and amenities provided for residents of the town centre where there are a limited number of shops and supermarkets provided south of Broad Street. • Car-parking should be treated as a higher priority, particularly for residents who own a car and need to park it for long periods in order to commute to London or use public transport. <p>I hope that the residents' association and other groups' views will be taken into account and that planner will engage with residents at every stage of the development.</p>	<p>site could link the Bath Road to RBH since the planned route for the extension to the NCN is not adjacent to the site. Changes have been made to the document to highlight the opportunity for a supermarket on the site, perhaps within the Broad Street Mall. Because the site is in a highly sustainable location with excellent access to public transport, it is not considered to be an appropriate location for excessive levels of parking. Commuters are encouraged to utilise park and ride parking provided as part of planned MRT schemes. The revised draft of the document contains many changes suggested by residents' groups and the Council will ask residents again for their views at such time planning applications are made.</p>
RBC Transport	<p>The proposed framework seeks to retain the existing pedestrian access to and from the area and enhance them through changes to the environment. The proposed bridge linking the site with Howard Street and Baker Street will improve access to the town centre; the bridge should be able to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Vehicular access is to be gained from Castle Street as currently and this is deemed acceptable, dedicated delivery areas will be required that ensures the retention of other vehicles utilising the service area for access.</p> <p>Car parking for the proposed residential can be provided at a reduced rate due to the sustainable location of the site but any losses of public parking must be justified.</p>	Points noted

	<p>Given the current basement is very unwelcoming, dark has the potential to facilitate the homeless all cycle parking should be accessed from the ground / podium level. Any pedestrian / cycle access from basement level would require improvements to the pedestrian / cycle provision at that level to reduce the risk of conflict.</p> <p>Height of any building over the vehicle access route from Castle Street should be a minimum of 6.1 m above the carriageway; this may prove problematic given the gradient of the carriageway as it lowers to the basement level.</p> <p>There is currently an under provision of cycle parking within the town centre area and the proposal is likely to increase demand given the commercial element of the development, as such an increase in cycle parking should be provided within the Framework area and it would seem most appropriately located to be within the Public area adjacent to the church and / or along Hosier Street / Dusseldorf Way.</p> <p>The Department for Transport Local Transport Note 1/11 ‘Using shared space to improve high streets for pedestrians’ has been withdrawn. Given the number and type of vehicle movements that currently travel through St Marys Butts there are concerns that shared space adjacent to the Churchyard is likely to generate conflicting movements especially as vehicles including delivery vehicles would have to access the rear of the retail units fronting on to St Marys Butts and Broad Street.</p> <p>The St Marys Butts area is one of the busiest public transport arrival/departure areas for the town centre and any changes should be able to accommodate high levels of bus movement. Provision for public transport routing and stops <i>is an important current function of St Marys Butts and any alteration to existing facilities will have significant implications for future service provision</i> While it would be desirable to reduce bus traffic through the area, there remain considerable issues with alternative routings which need considerable further investigation.</p> <p>Transport officers have provided further detailed points relating to the current and future use of St Mary’s Butts to accommodate public transport routes and stops</p> <p>The Framework suggests the narrowing of the carriageway to the north of Broad Street Mall</p>	<p>Reference to improved environment and safety added to the Framework.</p> <p>Requirement added to the Framework</p> <p>Reference to the provision of public cycle parking added.</p> <p>Text added to say that shared surfaces and crossing desire lines will need to be carefully designed to accommodate all users.</p> <p>Refer to the need for further investigation of alternative bus routings and bus stop arrangements within the area to seek to achieve the aim of reducing the number of buses running through St Mary’s Butts.</p> <p>These detailed comments are noted and will be taken account of in the further investigation of alternative bus</p>
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	<p>but the number of bus movements along with those of delivery vehicles, other vehicles with town centre access, cycles etc. would require the carriageway width to remain as is. Any reduction could result in queues of buses through the Oxford Road / Broad Street / St Marys Butts / West Street junction and have a detrimental impact on Highway safety.</p> <p>The plan and text mentions parking but not on street disabled parking. Any loss of disabled parking should be identified and disability groups consulted.</p> <p>The plan and text does not mention the need for deliveries to access the front of businesses on from existing roads. These businesses have no alternative access arrangements and will require the further take of kerb space and also require large HGV vehicles to enter and exit the area.</p> <p>Hosier Street is to be changed to a public realm shared space but it is also stated as being used for servicing, if this is the case then a dedicated turning area will need to be incorporated into the scheme given the increased risk of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles. Deliveries are currently undertaken from within the carriageway and pedestrians general keep to the footways on either side.</p> <p>The plan and text does not acknowledge that SMB provides the only delivery and blue badge access to West Street and thus generates further traffic needing to drive through St Marys Butts apart from those needing access as noted above.</p> <p>It is stated that no taxi exists within the vicinity of the framework area, although this is true they do make use of the parking bays in the centre of the southern section of St Marys Butts. With the proposed increase in mixed uses within the framework area it is proposed to include parking bays for taxis along Castle Street and Oxford Road, however it is unlikely that the taxi association would want to be located in these areas especially on Castle Street where there would be little footfall.</p> <p>Within the parking section there is no mention of use of alternative park and ride which exists in the form of greenwave from Mere oak and the 500 from Winnersh. Both services already</p>	<p>routings and bus stop arrangements. In relation to the Oxford Road frontage, this is now solely an aim of the Framework. It is accepted that further detailed work will be required.</p> <p>The need to provide on-street as well as off-street disabled parking added to the text.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>The framework seeks to discourage servicing from Hosier Street.</p> <p>This was in the context of the increased population envisaged by the development of the area.</p> <p>Reference to Park and ride added.</p>
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	<p>access SMB and provide fast direct services which should be promoted in preference to use of central parking requiring penetration of central area roads and access by cars, thus continuing to create excessive traffic congestion.</p> <p>An extensive amount of well used motorcycle parking will be lost from within the central area located along the southern part of St Marys Butts; the Framework would need to clarify what is proposed with this motorcycle parking.</p> <p>The plans do include the provision of a restricted vehicular access at the Bridge Street junction and transport would have no objection to this being reviewed.</p> <p>None of the public realm improvements include the basement area but this will still include a significant amount of movement whether to the proposed commercial or residential units or the retained uses that will need to make use of this area. The area as stated above is very unwelcoming, dark has the potential to facilitate the homeless; it is also the first and last impression visitors we see as they enter this spaces and therefore the scheme should therefore include improvements to this basement area as it will form a significant part of the development.</p> <p>Proposed buildings above the access road would need to retain a height clearance of 6.1m.</p>	<p>Reference to motorcycle parking added.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Reference to improved environment and safety under the podium added to the Framework.</p> <p>Note added to the framework.</p>
Peter Robinson	<p>There are some good ideas in the initial plans. Firstly, they've broadened the scope to offer a vision for a wider area to include sprucing up all the streets adjoining the Broad St Mall, and the area surrounding St Mary's Minster. Secondly, they've included a public square in front of the Hexagon, and thirdly, and potentially most importantly, they're thinking ahead by covering the wider area even though the timescales for when the different plots come up for redevelopment might differ. However, I would like to see more ambition in the plans. My main complaint is the tiny amount of space at ground floor (or podium level) devoted to retail or leisure. There would probably be a couple of coffee shops along the edges of vast perimeter blocks of flats that hide away significant areas of precious town centre land as private gardens for their residents. I understand the demand for housing, but to give up so much highly accessible central square footage is, in my view, a disappointingly tame surrender to market forces. Rather than having retail/leisure below the built-part of the apartments, why not allocate the full ground floor (podium) areas A & B, and place the private residential gardens above. It's good news to have vibrant towns and cities around the region, but Reading needs to respond to this competition. We were overly exposed by</p>	<p>Framework provides principles based on one possible form of provision based on current understanding of likely demand for commercial facilities. These see ground floorspace used for commercial, retail and leisure purposes (allowing for entrances to residential unit).s There may be scope for such uses to extend to upper floors or even below the podium. The Framework does not prevent alternative forms of development that comply with</p>

	<p>concentrating so heavily on the provision of high street multiple retailers. We have a chance here, with council-owned land, to provide housing but also some new high profile leisure/cultural offerings that will tempt people from the wider region to restore their occasional trip - ideally by bus or train - to central Reading (in addition to supporting their own local centres). That'll boost the footfall in the town centre as a whole, safeguarding existing retailers (and their jobs) whilst making further development of broader cultural and leisure facilities befitting of a regional centre viable. The Abbey Ruins re-opening is great, the Gaol project would be incredible, but we could do so much more. All that said it's a big positive, in my view, that this underused area is coming up for regeneration and that we have a chance to share our views.</p>	<p>policies and principles. As indicted elsewhere, the document is not a blueprint for development and will evolve over time responding to change including changes in the market for retail and leisure facilities.</p>
Thames Water	<p>Developers are encouraged to work with Thames Water early on in the planning process so that we are able to understand what infrastructure is required, and where, when and how it will be delivered. We encourage developers to use our free pre-planning service and would like to continue to work closely with the Local Authority.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
John Wilkins	<p>It is pleasing that RBC is carrying out a consultation and as a Council Tax payer it would be interesting to know approximately what the work to date has cost. The document would be improved by use of plain English rather than planning jargon. Could I have an English translation of the second bullet point on page 32?</p>	<p>Preparation is on-going utilising in-house staff resources and expert consultant advice. As an on-going project it is difficult to cost to date. Comments on language noted and being addressed in final version.</p>
John Wilkins	<p>It is assumed that the existing "podium" is retained. Has this been subject to a long term structural assessment?</p>	<p>A structural assessment has not been undertaken at this time. Such an assessment will obviously be needed prior to any development taking place.</p>
John Wilkins	<p>It is not clear how the large number of bus movements through the area are being accommodated and they do not seem consistent with the concept of the realm. While shared space seems to be fashionable, I think segregating vehicles and pedestrians is essential and provides safety. Perhaps RBC could give consideration to a central bus station as a way of improving interchange and concentrating stops.</p>	<p>Segregating vehicles and pedestrians is not feasible and would require huge expenditure in reconfiguring the space. All plans will be subject to consultation with both Reading Buses and RBC Transport in order to resolve all safety concerns, as well as to mitigate</p>

		impacts on the public realm. There are no proposals for a central bus station in Reading, and this is not a matter that could be dealt with in this document.
John Wilkins	The future of the Hexagon would seem to be a key issue for the area and one of the areas of which RBC has control. My reading of the document is that the Hexagon may stay or go but the intention is to reserve the space for theatre or similar use. Further clarity is needed.	Change made to clarify the Council's intention to retain the Hexagon at least until an alternative and comparable venue is provided either within the Hosier Street site or elsewhere in Reading.
Reading Civic Society	We support the careful and considered redevelopment of the area, but the Framework needs further work and further public engagement. The Interactive Event was successful, but further events should be held in evenings and on weekends. The two public exhibitions were unimpressive. The process seems to be done in haste.	The area is in multiple ownerships. The Council understands that planning applications on this site are imminent and the framework is primarily intended to assist in decision-making in relation to the piecemeal development of different ownerships. The framework has no weight as guidance until it is adopted and thus is of no value in determining imminent planning applications unless it is approved in time. It is not considered that further work and public engagement are necessary or would result in a markedly different outcome. Additionally, consultation is quite an expensive process and the Council must strike a

		balance between responsible use of taxpayer monies and gathering views. It should also be noted that the Framework has been developed out of policy for the area that was adopted over ten years ago, and which has been reviewed through the Local Plan over the last three years.
Reading Civic Society	The stated lack of full involvement by an architect is a glaring omission and needs to be addressed.	It is a planning and urban design framework. The views of architects could be helpful but in times of resource constraints, they are not essential.
Reading Civic Society	The opportunity needs to be grasped to satisfactorily address the future of the market in Hosier Street.	Change made to emphasise the aim for an upgraded market. The location of the market (either adjacent to the Broad Street Mall or at St Mary's Butts) requires more detailed study. A long term strategy for the market is not something that the framework can provide.
Historic England	HE support positive planning for regeneration of an area that has developed a poor character as a result of poorly judged regeneration in the later 20 th century, including dominance of large footprint blocks with poor relationship with their surrounding environments.	Noted.
Historic England	We feel that the document fails to provide an adequate response to the opportunity to enhance some parts of the area's historic character by providing a clear enough vision for how these should develop and how fractured elements of the town's historic landscape should be reunited. As such, we feel that, at present the document has not fulfilled the Council's Statutory duties with regard to its conservation areas, or achieved several of the desired outcomes that the document sets out.	The preparation of the framework has had regard to the historic environment and is positively seeking to integrate new development with that historic environment as well as

		seek enhancements. It is not clear what HE think this development could additionally achieve?
Historic England	A failure to address or acknowledge the presence of the Castle Hill and Russell Street Conservation Area runs throughout the document. This area of special architectural or historic interest, designated by the Council, lies just west of the IDR at Howard Street. It is an area of generally low level development, although its ground level is slightly higher than the general ground level of the redevelopment area. Whilst much of the area might be typified as inward looking with a strong sense of enclosure, both Oxford Road and Castle Hill form continuous streets that form part of the redevelopment area and frame views into the area that will be affected by development within it. Effects at Howard Street are likely to be particularly pronounced where the street provides views across the IDR.	Change made to address the presence of the Castle Hill and Russell Street Conservation Area. Properties within the Conservation Area are very separate from the edge of the Hosier Street site and outside the town centre. Development within the town centre will take a different form and to some extent will contrast with the form of development in adjoining areas.
Historic England	The distinctly intrusive, impact of the Broad Street Mall's existing tower in views east along Oxford Street from the conservation area illustrates how incongruous such buildings may be in views from the historic townscape of the conservation area, whilst there seems a considerable risk of the proposed tower on the former Council Offices site taking considerable daylight from Howard Street.	The acceptability of tall buildings in this location has already been established in policy terms and any impacts on surrounding areas will be further scrutinised at such time planning applications are made. Based on daylight analysis, the tall building is not expected to unduly affect the daylight of the properties on Howard Street. Additional information has been added to the Framework to illustrate this point. Existing trees on Howard Street already shield many properties from direct sunlight at certain times of the year.

Historic England	<p>The document makes a great deal of the importance St Mary’s Butts and St Mary’s Churchyard, which we support, including the proposed enhancement to these spaces (although we note that the churchyard already performs the function of a public green space and the benefits of its enhancement seem somewhat over played in the document). By comparison, however, the framework fails to provide a coherent vision for Castle Street, which, within the conservation area’s boundary, is composed almost entirely of listed buildings, including five in the higher Grade II* category (considered to be of more than special interest). This is one of Reading’s finest historic streets. Whilst Figure 10 of the masterplan identifies only St Mary’s Church as a key building, the St Mary’s Butts Conservation Area Appraisal identifies several additional buildings on Castle Street as focal buildings, which also contribute to the identification of several key views along this street.</p>	<p>A new section and further wording added referring to the Castle Street Character Area. The framework deliberately reduces the scale of buildings towards Castel Street to avoid undue impacts on numerous listed buildings and the quality of the southern side of the street.</p>
Historic England	<p>We note it is proposed to replace the Magistrate’s Court and Thames Valley Police buildings, which are identified as negative features that detract from the area’s character or appearance in the conservation area appraisal (they are considered to have a negative impact on the conservation area because of their monolithic frontages). However, it isn’t clear how the framework has sought to enhance this space following the removal of these buildings, other than through their replacement with new buildings with a more divided frontage, but apparently of even greater scale. We note that the indicative rhythm of units expected to form the new northern side to the road, even in diagrammatic form, fails to reflect the more organic rhythm of properties on the south side of the road, which creates variety and intricacy in the street scene.</p>	<p>Magistrate’s Court and Thames Valley Police buildings are part of the framework area but their development is in the future. Framework indicates relatively low replacement buildings</p> <p>A new section and further wording added referring to the Castle Street Character Area.</p>

Townscape, Massing and Tall Buildings

Respondent	Summary of comment	Officer comment
BSANA	<p>Density: With an estimated population of between 1,872 and 2,808 living on a small site of 6.16 hectares this can be considered an incredibly high-density housing development outside of any major city within the UK and London based architects would describe this as super density. Such an incredibly high housing density should be provided with very strong mitigating factors such as a very large area of open green parkland neighbouring the development, this is not the case to the contrary this development would aggravate the acute lack of open space poverty that the BSANA area suffers from, as it contains no public open space within its borders. It is not unreasonable to demand that a substantial area of the IDR will be decked over as a minimum requirement for mitigation prior to allowing any residential development to take place on the HSADF site.</p>	<p>While desirable, the high cost of decking over the IDR may be prohibitive. Nevertheless it remains an aspiration within the framework.</p>
BSANA	<p>The area should be made more welcoming by positioning buildings in a south to north direction to allow light to flow into the area and to remove shaded areas and allowing for far more public realm as shown in figure 9.1. If the streets don't receive sunlight then in winter the narrow internal streets may become liable to becoming icy and dangerous.</p>	<p>The layout picks up the existing pattern while respecting the historical street pattern. This provides an element of north south alignment. Difficult to see how additional north south routes can be achieved without harm to heritage assets.</p>
BSANA	<p>The tall buildings are located to mitigate the visual impact on the Grade I listed Reading Minster, however, this comes at the direct cost to Russell Street / Castle Hill CA in terms of their privacy, views and sunlight. The low-rise residential buildings within the CA are typically 2 to 3 storeys above ground level, the contrast between these low-rise building and the 20-storey tall buildings will be visually jarring and totally unacceptable.</p>	<p>The distance to the nearest houses is more than 60m, so there will be no direct impact on privacy. According to national policy, planning cannot protect private views from residences. Additional information has been added to clearly illustrate limited effects on daylight in the</p>

		Conservation Area. The acceptability of tall buildings in this area is already well-established through the Council's Local Plan policy.
BSANA	Placing such tall buildings next to such a large area of low-rise residential area will result in hundreds of properties being overlooked at a direct cost to their privacy and views.	The distance to the nearest houses is more than 60m, so there will be no direct impact on privacy. According to national policy, planning cannot protect private views from residences.
BSANA	Placing such tall buildings next to a conservation area is in direct contradiction to the local draft plan CR10: TALL BUILDINGS that looks to "preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the setting of conservation areas and listed buildings."	All development has an impact. It is not considered that the development described in the framework will have a significantly harmful impact that fails to preserve and enhance the Conservation Area. It should be noted that the RCAAP policy, and the Tall Buildings Strategy upon which it was based, considered the relationships with heritage assets and determined that there was potential for tall buildings within this area.
BSANA	The old civic office (now demolished) did not dominate the skyline when looking out of the Russell Street / Castle Hill Conservation area towards the development site.	The acceptability of tall buildings on this site has been previously established and current planning policy identified this site for an area of tall buildings.

BSANA	Although many other tall buildings are being developed within Reading these are well away from existing low-rise residential developments and CAs unlike the HSADF.	Do not agree. There are low-rise buildings near to King's Point, Napier Road, Chatham Street and North of the Station where tall buildings are existing or planned. Again, the acceptability of tall buildings on this site has been previously established.
BSANA	A common problem associated with tall buildings is accelerated winds at their base and with a high concentration of buildings creating narrow channels to further concentrate the effect of wind. No evidence is provided as to this being thoroughly evaluated and mitigated in the design	Wind tunnelling impact is a requirement of any application and can only be applied to detailed proposals.
BSANA	Tall buildings have a detrimental impact on the Russell Street / Castle Hill CA.	Because the Conservation Area is at least 60 m from the edge of the site, it is not considered that the proposed tall buildings will have a detrimental impact. It should be noted that the RCAAP policy, and the Tall Buildings Strategy upon which it was based, considered the relationships with heritage assets and determined that there was potential for tall buildings within this area.
BSANA	Tall buildings: bulky and dominant massing. The proposed tall buildings are placed close together.	The policy refers to a cluster of tall buildings within the western grouping.
BSANA	Tall buildings: placing a modern 20-storey building next to Victorian buildings 2 to 3-storeys in height is visually jarring.	The proposed tall building(s) are not located "next to" 2- to 3-storey Victorian

		buildings. More information has been added to the Framework to give a better idea of the impacts on views towards the site from the Baker Street area.
BSANA	Tall buildings: the 20-storey buildings will have a negative impact on hundreds of residential properties in terms of outlook, privacy and night-time lighting.	Because the Conservation Area is at some distance from the edge of the site, it is not considered that the proposed tall buildings will have a detrimental impact. It should be noted that the RCAAP policy, and the Tall Buildings Strategy upon which it was based, considered the relationships with heritage assets and determined that there was potential for tall buildings within this area.
BSANA	Tall buildings: Create safe, comfortable and attractive spaces around them, and avoid detrimental impacts on the existing public realm: existing public realm will be built directly upon.	The amount of public realm proposed represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.
BSANA	Tall buildings Contribute to high-quality views from distance, views from middle-distance and local views: local views will be dominated by the tall buildings.	This area has already been identified and adopted as an appropriate site for tall buildings. Analysis completed during the

		completion of the Council's Tall Building Strategy and subsequent 2018 Tall Buildings Strategy Update. Note reinforces that townscape sensitivity in this area remains low and any development will respect glimpsed views to St Mary's Church and the surrounding Conservation Area as noted in the original Tall Buildings Strategy.
BSANA	Fire and Rescue Access: The HSADF includes tall buildings on top of the shopping centre where access will be very restricted, proposed mitigation for fire and rescue access is not provided within the HSADF.	This issue is partly addressed by the building regulations. There are not considered to be particular reasons why the tall buildings on top of the Mall, which would be at the edge on the street frontage, will be less accessible to fire and rescue access than tall buildings in any other town centre location. However, fire and rescue access is a matter that will need to be considered as part of any planning application. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service will be consulted during the application stage.
BSANA	Maintenance and Management: Assurances need to be made that these won't turn into high-rise ghettos or poverty traps as history has shown us.	Noted. Management and maintenance arrangements will be addressed during

		application stage.
CAAC	Tall buildings: Create safe, comfortable and attractive spaces around them, and avoid detrimental impacts on the existing public realm: existing public realm will be built directly upon.	The amount of public realm proposed represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.
Virginia Day	Tall buildings Contribute to high-quality views from distance, views from middle-distance and local views: local views will be dominated by the tall buildings.	This area has already been identified and adopted as an appropriate site for tall buildings. Analysis completed during the completion of the Council's Tall Building Strategy and subsequent 2018 Tall Buildings Strategy Update Note reinforces that townscape sensitivity in this area remains low and any development will respect glimpsed views to St Mary's Church and the surrounding Conservation Area as noted in the original Tall Buildings Strategy. Individual planning applications will have to be supported by a views study.
Moorgarth	Moorgarth strongly supports the Council's vision statement in particular for a high density mixed use area that includes tall buildings.	Noted.
Moorgarth	Section 5.2 indicates a maximum threshold of 20 storeys (60 m) above podium level. Whilst the rationale is understood, specific heights should instead be given as 'indicative' permissible heights. We would like a degree of flexibility, rather than an artificial cap applied, with detailed	The policy framework for tall buildings needs to be complied with and this the

	townscape and visual impact assessment at application stage determining the appropriate height. On this basis, we suggest that Figure 22 is amended and references to storeys in the text are clearly labelled 'indicative.' We support the approach for complementary developments, but architectural expression should not be unduly controlled by design codes.	height in the framework is seen as being the maximum height that would accord with policy.
MP Matt Rodda	The towers are currently hidden from view from the area in front of St Mary's Church as there are other lower buildings planned which would obscure the view of the towers from street level. However, the view from Baker Street will be in a stark contrast to this with the towers clearly visible and showing their full height, so that residents will see very large buildings from the Conservation Area. I hope the lack of suitable screening will be addressed. Tall buildings along the IDR will alienate the population of Reading West.	Again, properties within the Conservation Area are at least 60m from the edge of the Hosier Street site. Tall buildings are already visible from this location, and there is an existing urban townscape viewed from the western side of the IDR. Additionally, large trees on Howard Street will to some extent screen much of the new development.
MP Matt Rodda	The density of flats proposed is higher than would normally be found in Reading and I am concerned about the effects on quality of life for residents. The central area of Reading is already deprived and the new development needs to be sustainable.	High-density housing will not necessarily negatively affect the quality of life for residents. Residents will have access to open space, nearby retail and leisure and a vibrant town centre. The proposed development is within a highly sustainable location. Access to facilities and services, as well as issues such as privacy, noise and housing mix will be further scrutinised at application stage. The density of housing proposed is fairly typical of recent residential development in

		central Reading.
John Wilkins	I am very concerned with the extent of high rise development proposed. It is not consistent with a provincial town like Reading. Past developments of this type have not been attractive or successful and I see no evidence that this will be different. I suspect in 30 years they will be demolished! This should be reconsidered following Grenfell Tower. If the sites would be otherwise derelict I would like RBC to be honest and justify the need for high rise to secure development and insist upon non-flammable cladding, two protected escape routes and sprinklers. Fountain House should not be regarded as a sort of justification for more tall buildings! What about asking residents of Reading if they really want tall buildings to clutter the skyline and to live in!	This area has already been identified and adopted as an appropriate site for tall buildings. Reading is no longer a “provincial” town, and tall buildings are part of the existing and evolving town centre, and it is not agreed that they will necessarily be unsuccessful or unattractive. National planning policies emphasise the need for high density development in sustainable locations close to services and facilities with high levels of accessibility to transport. The alternative to high-density development in sustainable locations is building on greenfield sites in unsustainable locations. Tall residential buildings will be required by the Building Regulations to achieve fire safety standards.
John Wilkins	The document seems to suggest that the Court buildings are objectionable. To me they are a good example of modern red brick and see no reason why they should not be retained.	Noted. The Framework does not preclude the retention of the Magistrates buildings.
John Wilkins	I note that plans should not “stifle innovation, originality or initiative”. All these things come at a price and often innovation is not lasting in appearance and being liked. The style of the 1970s is not favoured now. Will we do any better by adopting fancy innovation now?	The Framework is a high-level document that is not intended to prescribe specific design criteria. This will be better addressed at

		planning application stage and residents will be given an opportunity at that time to make their views heard.
Reading Civic Society	We have concerns about the position, height, massing, orientation and wind tunnel effect of the accommodation blocks and their impact on the surrounding Conservation Areas and the immediate public space around them.	More information has been added to acknowledge and demonstrate the limited impacts of the development on the nearby Conservation Areas. Wind effects will be properly assessed at application stage. An analysis of alternative locations for the residential tower (block B2), revealed
Reading Civic Society	Increased site permeability (north to south) should be explored further.	The layout picks up the existing street pattern while respecting the historical street pattern. This provides an element of north south alignment. Difficult to see how additional north south routes can be achieved without harm to heritage assets.
Historic England	HE support the use of tall building zoning policies to focus new tall buildings in areas where they reduce harm to the historic environment through loss of heritage assets or harmful change to their settings.	Current RBC planning policy states that tall buildings will only be appropriate in areas defined on the proposals map, based on a Tall Buildings Strategy which included consideration of effects on heritage assets. The Hosier Street site is included in the identified

		“Western Grouping” in policy RC13 of the RCAAP, and policy CR10 of the emerging Local Plan, and Historic England has not objected to this identification.
Historic England	It is interesting to see use of Lidar as a means of assessing average heights across the surrounding area and the use of various forms of illustration of the proposed development.	Noted.
Historic England	It appears some potential harm to these areas has not been given adequate consideration and, having briefly reviewed the Tall Buildings SPD; it appears this is a fault that has been carried over from that earlier document.	The council’s policy on tall buildings was established in the Reading Central Area Action Plan which was subject to examination, attended by Historic England.
Historic England	It has not been explained at any point in the document why the Council are intent on developing this area for tall buildings or what public benefits this will deliver, beyond the redevelopment of the area, which might potentially be achieved through other means. Where tall building development could potentially result in harm to heritage asset though, for example, negative impacts on their settings, this means this harm has not been robustly justified. It is not clear what alternatives have been explored that could help to avoid or minimise harm to heritage assets, such as the introduction of over bearing tall buildings within the setting of an area of generally low level historic building development as a disparate and jarring architectural intervention. As such, the SPD does not appear to support the delivery of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.	This area has already been identified and adopted as an appropriate site for tall buildings under the Reading Central Area Action. Analysis completed during the completion of the Council’s Tall Building Strategy and subsequent 2018 Tall Buildings Strategy Update Note reinforces that townscape sensitivity in this area remains low and any development will respect glimpsed views to St Mary’s Church and the surrounding Conservation Area as noted in the original Tall Buildings Strategy.
Historic	Whilst use of Lidar to provide a rapid understanding of building heights within the development	This technique has been

England	area and its immediate surroundings we are not convinced that using this to determine an ‘average’ building height is a robust methodology to define suitable building heights across an area that is both formed of a number of character areas and contributes to the character of adjacent areas. This is particularly relevant where the development area straddles the boundary of a conservation area where there is a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the area’s character or appearance which may be different to the character or appearance of other nearby areas. The assessment of suitable building heights should be more focused on understanding suitability within each character area.	used in relation to other similar studies. It provides a very accurate representation. Public sector resource constraints prevent more sophisticated and substantially more expensive techniques to be used. This is an early stage in the process and more sophisticated analysis will be undertaken at the planning application stage.
Historic England	Illustration of the SPD provides very few street level (pedestrian view) depictions of the development that would help Councillors or members of the public understand the real (lived) potential impact of the proposed development. Since the preparation of the Tall buildings SPD in 2008, technology has moved on considerably, allowing rendered 3D models of development that should enable a more representative presentation of the scale and impact of development as proposed. We note that the SPD does have a number of ‘bird’s eye’ representations of how the area is expected to develop. However, these views provide little understanding for decision makers of the impact of these developments on actual people. It would be helpful to see, for example, a rendered view of the proposed tower on the former Council Offices site as it will appear from Howard Street or Castle Street.	Changes have been made to the document to clearly illustrate views from street level. Such modelling is high cost and resources are non-existent. It is also questionable how useful this is at this stage, it is more appropriate at the application stage.

Landscape and Public Realm

Respondent	Summary of comment	Officer comment
BSANA	Under this public realm-led plan, the public realm will significantly shrink and the present open views across the area, and any sunshine, will be very largely closed-off by the medium and high-rise buildings that will tower up from the very edge of the public walkways with no forecourt to mitigate that impact.	The amount of public realm proposed actually represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of

		public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.
BSANA	This loss of public realm included in the HSADF is totally unacceptable and against RBC's own policies	The amount of public realm proposed actually represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.
BSANA	The void created by the demolition of the Civic offices is arguably not a negative feature, but a positively attractive green space and an attractive green space worthy of preservation in any truly public realm-led master plan. The current poor condition of the area exemplifies the case for regeneration of the public realm and the need for sufficient maintenance to existing public realm.	Noted. It is not considered reasonable to retain the void left by the demolition of the Civic Offices, as the location represents brownfield land in a highly sustainable location that could contribute significantly to meeting Reading's housing needs. The Framework seeks to increase (if only slightly) the amount of public realm when compared with the pre-demolition area and to provide a much more useable area. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.

		Maintenance will be addressed at the application stage.
BSANA	What is so disappointing about this public realm led master plan is the damaging shrinkage of the existing public areas as shown in Figure 5.1, open green spaces and attractive open views which will be lost through the introduction of medium and high-rise buildings which will hem-in the existing open walkways and, in some cases, be built to encroach over existing public space. Figures provided to demonstrate loss of existing space compared to the framework proposals.	The amount of public realm proposed actually represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.
BSANA	The gain to the public realm of those improvements can hardly offset the loss of existing treescape views across the area, the loss of the public lawn on the south side of Dusseldorf Way (figure 5.2), the net loss of what appears to be a total of perhaps hundreds of square metres of public hardstanding, walkway width and (to the rear of the Police Station) shrubbery that would be built over.	The amount of public realm proposed represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point. The Framework states that designs will utilise existing trees as far as practicable and aims to increase tree planting both in the ground and in planters over the podium.
BSANA	The envisaged footbridge over the IDR to link with Baker Street would be a significant gain for the public realm but its provision is described as “potential” rather than its being an essential element of the plan. There are also potentially as many negatives as positives with the development of this bridge especially as a narrow foot bridge as it is currently drawn. There is a long history of persistent local Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and drug crime in the Baker Street area, that can only more easily transfer directly into the new development via the bridge.	Further information has been added to the Framework to emphasise the importance of the footbridge and to clearly articulate phasing. Additionally, any safety

		concerns will be addressed at application stage and the police consulted.
BSANA	Within RBC's Tall Building Strategy (TBS) there is a commitment not to impact existing public realm "All tall buildings proposals should create safe, comfortable and attractive spaces around them, and avoid detrimental impacts on the existing public realm". This is another policy that is insufficiently addressed within the framework laid out by HSADF.	The amount of public realm proposed actually represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.
BSANA	As a condition of approving the construction of dwellings that will add almost 3,000 people into the area and with the acute lack of public space within the surrounding area the decking over the IDR must be committed to in mitigation.	The cost of decking over the IDR is a barrier, but this remains an aspiration of the Council.
BSANA	There is no open public space in the BSANA area which adds further to the area's level of deprivation and limited quality of life standards for the majority of the residents with no green space access.	Noted. The Framework seeks to slightly increase and improve the quality of nearby public realm within the Hosier Street site.
BSANA	RBC has an excellent report that refers to the importance of green space on mental health and we refer the reader to this report - "Creating the right environments for health - annual report from the director for public health ".	Noted.
CAAC	The framework proposed appears to reduce the amount of available public green space. The area behind the Butts Centre and towards the Magistrates Courts is despite its deficiencies of infrastructure well used. It is difficult to tell if the proposed 'managed' green spaces are all truly public or not. Most of the green space seems to be 'private' but it is not easy to differentiate between the two greens used on the Framework Master Plan (Fig 10). Similarly it is not possible to tell the difference between 'existing' and 'new' trees. It is not appropriate to consider St Mary's Churchyard as public open space in the same way as for example, the Forbury Gardens. Because of the wind along Queen's Walk it is not really suitable as a place to sit and relax.	The amount of public realm proposed actually represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point. Wind at

		Queen's Walk will be addressed at application stage.
CAAC	<p>We would like to register our interest in the retention of certain heritage features within the area including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hexagon Theatre including the 'HEXAGON' pole; • The cartwheeling boys sculpture; • The clock and (now disused) fountain and water feature; • Broad St Mall (Butts Centre) concrete facades; and • Tea Hut. 	The Framework has been revised to include the retention of existing features as far as possible.
CAAC	For Minster Square, it is disingenuous to suggest that a church yard can be a 'public space' in the same way as Forbury Gardens. It is first and foremost a graveyard, nicely landscaped, green and peaceful as it should be. A market area and integrated seating against the church walls seems incongruous.	While respecting that it is a graveyard, It is clearly a valuable green space within the town centre.
Ian Dennis	There is not enough true public realm. The sites earmarked for cafes etc. seem to be likely to be in the shade of the taller buildings and exposed to wind for much of the year.	Public realm is increased by a small amount but it is consolidated to provide a large area as a focus for the site and is capable of accommodating a range of open space/public realm uses.
Diocese of Oxford	The Diocese of Oxford as a property owner within the Minster Square (our property separate from the Minster Church) is supportive of the draft proposals. However, we wish to draw to you attention to one area of concern under Paragraph 3.3 - Minster Square. The paragraph refers to the Service Yard (point No. 5) immediately to the north of the square. For years, RBC has used this site as an "unofficial waste handling centre." To our knowledge, there is not permission or licence for this use, but as neighbours will testify the Council uses it to bring in waste from other locations before it is then re-distributed. Whilst the yard is technically outside of the Development Framework, you have identified that access to it is via the "Square" and that "its appearance should be improved." We are happy to support this, but recommend that it should go further, i.e. that it should be regulated and limited to serving those properties with rights of access and NOT as a general waste handling centre. This would significantly reduce the number of vehicular movements along the narrow access i.e. through the middle of the "key space"	Noted. The use of this area is being reviewed by the Council.

	that you have identified on the plan.	
Moorgarth	The Council's proposed phasing sequence is supported insofar as residential and retail redevelopment at Broad Street Mall is identified as coming forward first, however we welcome a discussion with officers to agree the sequence of public realm works, particularly whether improvements to the Oxford Road should occur later and similarly whether the frontage along Hosier St and Dusseldorf Way should come forward earlier as they will be associated with new residential development above and activation of retail and restaurants.	The Framework has been revised to reflect these comments.
MP Matt Rodda	There is already significant lack of green space within the town centre. The proposal further reduces public open space. The private areas for residential buildings are for exclusive use and more thought needs to be given to public vs private open space and green space within the site.	The amount of public realm proposed actually represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.
John Wilkins	It is odd that Minster churchyard is described as "new greenspace." It is existing green space.	Noted
John Wilkins	Consideration should be given to more green space, with trees planted in the ground rather than high-maintenance "planters".	The amount of public realm proposed actually represents a slight increase when compared to the amount of public realm just before the Civic Offices were demolished. Further information has been added to the Framework to clearly illustrate this point.
John Wilkins	The so called "playful interaction" with the landscape is nonsense and should be abandoned. The illustrative play and activity features look to have been created by consultants with no concern for costs. People lounging on airbeds watching a film looks like the worst sort of American-style venue and the climbing wall is unsafe.	These are illustrations of the way open space is used in other similar developments and what is possible on this site subject to detailed design as part of planning applications.

John Wilkins	Central Reading is not a suitable place for a community gardening activity, particularly if what is going on at the old Civic Centre site is an example. I am not against encouraging people to grow things but it must be in the right place. Have you ever seen an attractive allotment site?	The current community garden use is a temporary, beneficial use of the land pending future redevelopment.
John Wilkins	The possible footbridge across the IDR and the possible access from Hosier St to Castle St close to the Sun Inn are welcome potential improvements.	Noted.
Reading Civic Society	We are not convinced of the value of what appear to be private gardens for the accommodation blocks.	Policies require amenity space to serve residential accommodation. In town centre developments there are obvious constraints to how this can be provided and various options have to be considered.
Reading Civic Society	Dusseldorf Way seems too narrow in the new scheme. It will be helpful to understand the significant adverse constraints including the retention of the podium and the sub-station.	The framework now provides examples of similar spaces with illustrative examples provided in an appendix.
Reading Civic Society	More work needs to be done to make the public realm ideas convincing.	This is a framework that sets out principles and guidance. More detail will be provided as part of planning applications.
Reading Civic Society	The opportunity should be explored to expose the Hexagon and make it more visible/accessible at the heart of the scheme.	The framework seeks to do this in the face of considerable constraints mainly related to the podium structure
Reading Civic Society	The positioning and access to the tower blocks on top of the BSM should be given further consideration along with the use of the space on top of the car park.	The Council assumes that these will be matters dealt with in the forthcoming planning application to be submitted by the owners of the BSM.

Reading Civic Society	Whilst the idea of Minster Square is superficially appealing, to be deliverable the buses need to be removed from St Marys Butts.	Officers are working closely with Reading Buses and RBC Transport to determine the appropriate arrangement for buses in this area. More detail has been added in the Framework to reflect this. However, St Mary's Butts is a vital piece of the bus network in the town centre and any changes to bus services need to be very carefully considered.
Reading Civic Society	The churchyard is not a conventional "green space".	Nevertheless it is classed as open space and provides an opportunity to contribute better to the public realm in the wider town centre.
Reading Civic Society	Bridging over the IDR in some way will be welcomed.	Noted.
Reading Civic Society	The Reading Cycle Campaign needs to be involved.	Noted. The Reading Cycle Campaign received notification of this consultation, but the Council did not receive a representation.
Reading Civic Society	Future of the Cartwheeling Boys needs to be clarified, along with other heritage items.	The Framework has been revised to include this.
Historic England	The positive focus on the role of St Mary's Butts and St Mary's churchyard as a new Minster Square where improved public realm is expected to deliver an attractive market place is appreciated, although, as pointed out below, this is only one part of the St Mary's Butts and Castle Street Conservation Area.	Noted.
Historic England	The redevelopment also presents opportunities to enhance the character of the area through improvement to its setting. The past redevelopment of the area turned its back to the IDR leaving the outlook from the conservation area as the highways engineering landscape of the	Noted. The framework considers how the area should address the IDR.

	<p>IDR in its concrete lined canyon. We recognise that the framework identifies this as an area that should be enhanced with green landscaping to create a more attractive outlook but we would suggest that this fails to provide sufficient direction to break the pattern of development ignoring the space and creating a psychological barrier, whereas both requiring buildings to address the IDR and providing views into the public spaces of the development area from Howard Street could help to visually unite the two areas in a more positive way. We recommend that a requirement to address the need for a more active engagement of development with the IDR is a part of the vision for the Hexagon Quarter at page 16.</p>	
Historic England	<p>We also note that the interchange between the IDR and Castle Street/Castle Hill lies with the development area boundary in Figure 2, yet there appear to be no specific proposals to improve this junction, including potentially improving the pedestrian route between Castle Hill and Castle Street. This is identified as having a negative impact on the areas in the St Mary's Butts/Castle St Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted by the Council in 2008) and, as such it seems odd that the framework does not seek to address this issue. Reuniting these as a single street, even if only through public realm works, would help to create a high quality pedestrian route into the town centre from the suburbs directly to the south west and potentially improve the impression of arrival in Reading Town centre as an historic destination with a special "USP". At present the townscape of the IDR creates a fracture between two streets that are both acknowledged as being of special historic or architectural interest and that, historically, were a single entity forming the principle route into Reading from Bath and SW England (which is reflected in the high quality of many of the historic buildings on this route).</p>	<p>This is a very busy traffic junction and a major interchange on the IDR. There are severe limits to how it might be altered. Wording relating to improving the pedestrian cycle crossing and other aspects of this junction added to the framework.</p>
Historic England	<p>It is telling that Castle Street is not identified as a separate character area in Figure 11 and we feel that identifying this as a character area with its own vision, including the buildings on both side of the road, might help to guide thinking towards specific responses to its character and appearance. An instance might be to revise the Framework Masterplan (figure 10) to indicate that public realm enhancements on Castle Street should include works on both sides of the street to ensure that it has a unified character as a single place.</p>	<p>A new section and further wording added referring to the Castle Street Character Area.</p>
Historic England	<p>At the broader, landscape level it would be helpful to see how the proposed cluster of tall buildings will appear in some of the long distance views, including those identified as key views in the Tall Buildings SPD, as well as, some closer 'neighbourhood level' views from within the town centre. Using modern technology to better understand the impact of this proposed form of development is an important opportunity to avoid repeating past mistakes.</p>	<p>Some modelling of longer distance views has been undertaken and will be required as part of the submission of any planning application.</p>

Hosier St Interactive Workshop

13th September 2018, the Hexagon Theatre

15:00 to 18:30

Urban Space Labs (the Council's Urban Design Consultants) Notes.

Highlight Report

The draft Hosier Street / Broad Street Mall Development Framework was submitted to Reading Borough Council's Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee on the 2nd July 2018 with a recommendation for public consultation to be undertaken with a closing date of 28.09.2018.

As part of the consultation, an interactive engagement event with local stakeholders was undertaken to provide an enhanced platform for understanding local opinion. The event took place in the Hexagon Theatre on 13th September 2018

The consultants who assisting in preparing the draft Development Framework, Urban Place Lab Limited, were approached to facilitate the event where presentations on the report could be made, and more detailed feedback provided by the community.

43 participants (including councillors and council officers) plus four facilitators from Urban Place Lab were in attendance, split into 5 groups.

Following on from introductions, a presentation was made on the report methodology and findings and an initial Q&A was performed, pending a 2nd session looking at proposals on a topic basis.

Questions raised at the Q&A included (inter alia):

- With the advent of such high density neighbourhoods, has sufficient space been allowed for the private amenity of residents?
- Have long range views, and the impact of the proposals on Reading's skyline been included as part of the evidence base?
- Has consideration been given to the decking over of the IDR, and if so why would this work here but not at Chatham Street
- Has consideration been given to the removal of the podium, in favour of an 'at grade' solution
- Who will retain the freehold of the podium?

- Has consideration been given to the use of interactive visualisation software to allow for the interpretation and modelling of environmental effects?

Responses were provided by RBC Elected Member Cllr Tony Page, RBC Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services Giorgio Framalicco and lead facilitator, James Gross of Urban Place Lab, and focused on the policy background to the former local plan which included a tall buildings study and the changing nature of urban neighbourhoods and lifestyles. The panel deferred answering matters of property as representatives from the RBC property team were not able to attend.

The remaining part of the event was given over to topic work, exploring the report findings with regard to:

- Uses, and Response to Context
- Townscape, Massing and Tall Buildings
- Landscape and Public Realm

Having reviewed the content of feedback gathered at the event, the facilitators have arrived at the following findings:

Uses and response to context

There is a lack of public understanding around the policy position that supports tall buildings in the location. The community has raised concerns over what it calls 'super densities' and is of the opinion that local infrastructure will not be scaled to match requirements.

Climatic aspects of the development framework proposals, notably the effects of wind and shadow casting were felt to have been insufficiently explained in the context of previous buildings (e.g. Station Hill, having experienced similar problems previously).

Although the preservation of a view along Hosier Street was understood and appreciated, a need to understand the ratio of street width to building height through existing place examples was suggested.

A frequent comment was the closure of the Friar Street Sainsbury's and the perceived necessity to add a supermarket into the scheme composition. This was felt to sit better in the Broad Street Mall ownership areas of the scheme.

Townscape, Massing and Tall Buildings

Primary comments were levied at the location and height of Block B2, the suggested 20-storey tower block to the south of the Hexagon Theatre. Questions were asked about the rationale for siting this building, and to what extent, the shadow impact on the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area had been considered

Additionally, comments were received that suggested a redistribution of height and mass. However this needs to be set against the need to commit to a quantum of development to meet the headline viability assessment target of circa 475 dwellings on RBC land, as well as remain compliant with the Tall Buildings Strategy, that affords Station Hill, vertical primacy in the town centre.

Similar concerns were raised (see response to context above) about the height to width ratio between street and buildings at Hosier Street.

Landscape and Public Realm

Misconceptions around the scale of space outside the Hexagon Theatre led some attendees to comment that the space feels smaller than illustrated in the report. The proposed event space is in fact 3-4 times larger than the current space, although similar geometry may have confused stakeholders.

The public realm at the base of the Hexagon Theatre was questioned as being 'left over' and additional design solutions for this area were sought from the facilitating team.

Linkages to Baker Street over the IDR were queried as to what form these might take. Decking over the IDR was generally understood not to be a viable option, although improvements on a mere footbridge were sought, identifying a green bridge option as a possible compromise.

At odds with questions raised during the Q&A, a groundswell of comment seemed to focus on the breaking up of the block structure, and a redistribution of private (internal block) open space, into the public realm. This needs to be considered in the light of achieving a balance between private and public amenity, but additional (residential) open space was well received as a suggestion for podium levels on top of the Broad Street Mall.

Officer Notes;

Hosier St Interactive Workshop

13th September 2018, 15:00 to 18:30

43 participants (including councillors and council officers) + four facilitators from Urban Place Labs

Conclusions presented from each breakout sessions as follows:

1. Uses and response to context

- Market area should be longer, more active and inviting, perhaps it could be covered? Some asked if this was the best location for a market or should it be moved elsewhere in town.
- Green spaces should be more porous and accessible for members of the public
- Concerns about area underneath the podium. What can be done to make it more open and feel safe?
- How should we best address the barrier of the substation?
- Can we put more public realm on top of the Broad Street Mall for residents of the flats?
- Residents are concerned about the lack of capacity at nearby doctor's surgeries and schools. This needs to be looked at in detail.
- Concerns about a residential mix—do not want to see only one age among residents.
- Is this space a part of the “night-time economy?” If so, there are concerns about security.
- Doubts about the viability of retail, especially with so many businesses struggling already.
- What are the effects of wind and lack of daylight on uses, particularly spillout uses between buildings such as café space?
- Wayfinding should be clear with cohesive signs and gateways to lead members of the public into the space.
- Wayfinding in the carpark is very poor and needs significant improvement.
- Concerns about conflict between cyclists and pedestrians. Can this be “designed out” with a dedicated space for cyclists?
- Concerns that there will be a lack of car parking or too much car parking, more information is needed

2. Townscape, massing and tall buildings

- We need high quality architecture that is distinct and unique to Reading. Architecture should be interesting across all floors of taller buildings.
- Building B2 seems too dominant. Stepping down in height from West “does not work.” We’d like to see views from Baker Street compared with what the view was before the old Civic was demolished.

- Questions about why the blocks have been oriented in such a way. Shouldn't they be oriented from north to south to allow for more light between buildings?
- Concerns that the Hexagon will seem dwarfed and lowered compared with the rest of the development.
- B2 should be moved closer to the centre of the development and step down towards Baker St. Perhaps we should have more blocks, but lower rather than having a few tall buildings. Would like to see something at "neighbourhood scale," perhaps a grid with narrower spaces between buildings and more blocks with lower heights.

3. Landscape and public realm

- Paving must be consistent. Currently it is a patchwork of different materials and in poor condition.
- Would like to see green roofs and walls.
- Play areas for families are needed, as well as areas that are covered.
- How will rainwater be managed? Drainage is important and can provide opportunities for biodiversity.
- Again, we feel that the relationship of the development to the Hexagon is poor. This needs to be carefully managed so that the Hexagon is emphasised and is not dwarfed.
- We would like to see more public green space.
- Is this plan flexible enough? What if retail at ground floor is not viable and is replaced by residential? Have we looked at the impacts of this?
- Footbridge to Baker St should be wider.
- All public outdoor spaces need to be decluttered. We need to rationalise street furniture and make sure it is cohesive, especially at St Mary's Butts.
- We should have amphitheatre seating for informal performances, perhaps outside the Hexagon.
- How can we rearrange bus movements to make St Mary's Butts feel calmer and friendlier to pedestrians? St Mary's Butts seems too wide. Can it be narrowed?
- Edges of St Mary's cemetery should be used to provide seating.
- Widespread support for the decking of the IDR