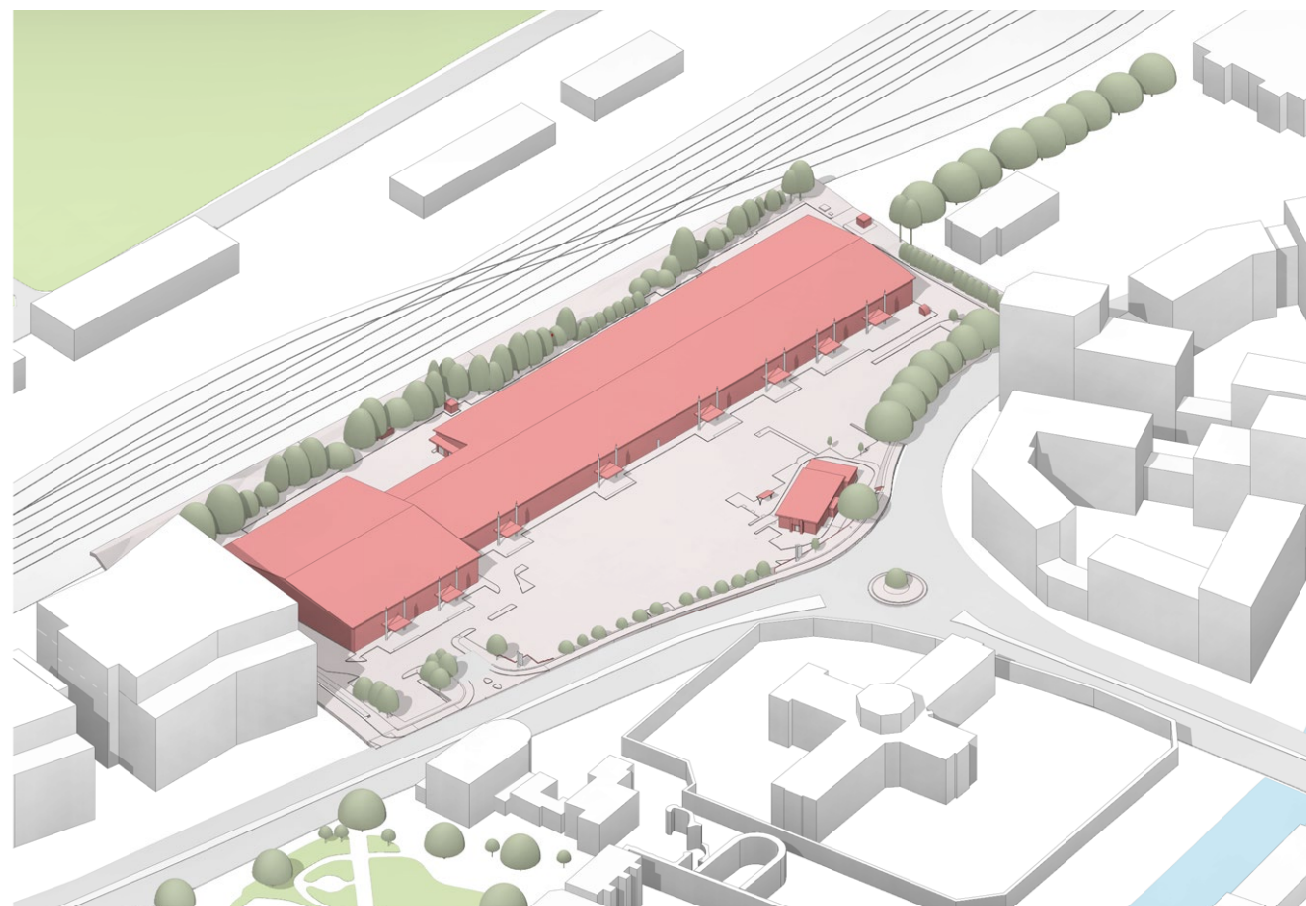


## 2.6 Transport & Movement

### 2.6.3 Existing Vehicle, Cycle and Pedestrian Routes

#### Road network

The main road through Reading is the heavily used A329, which connects to the A33 and ultimately the M4 which provides connection east to Heathrow Airport and London and west towards Bristol. The roads around the site have a high traffic flow, with quieter residential roads in the wider site context.



Existing Site 3D



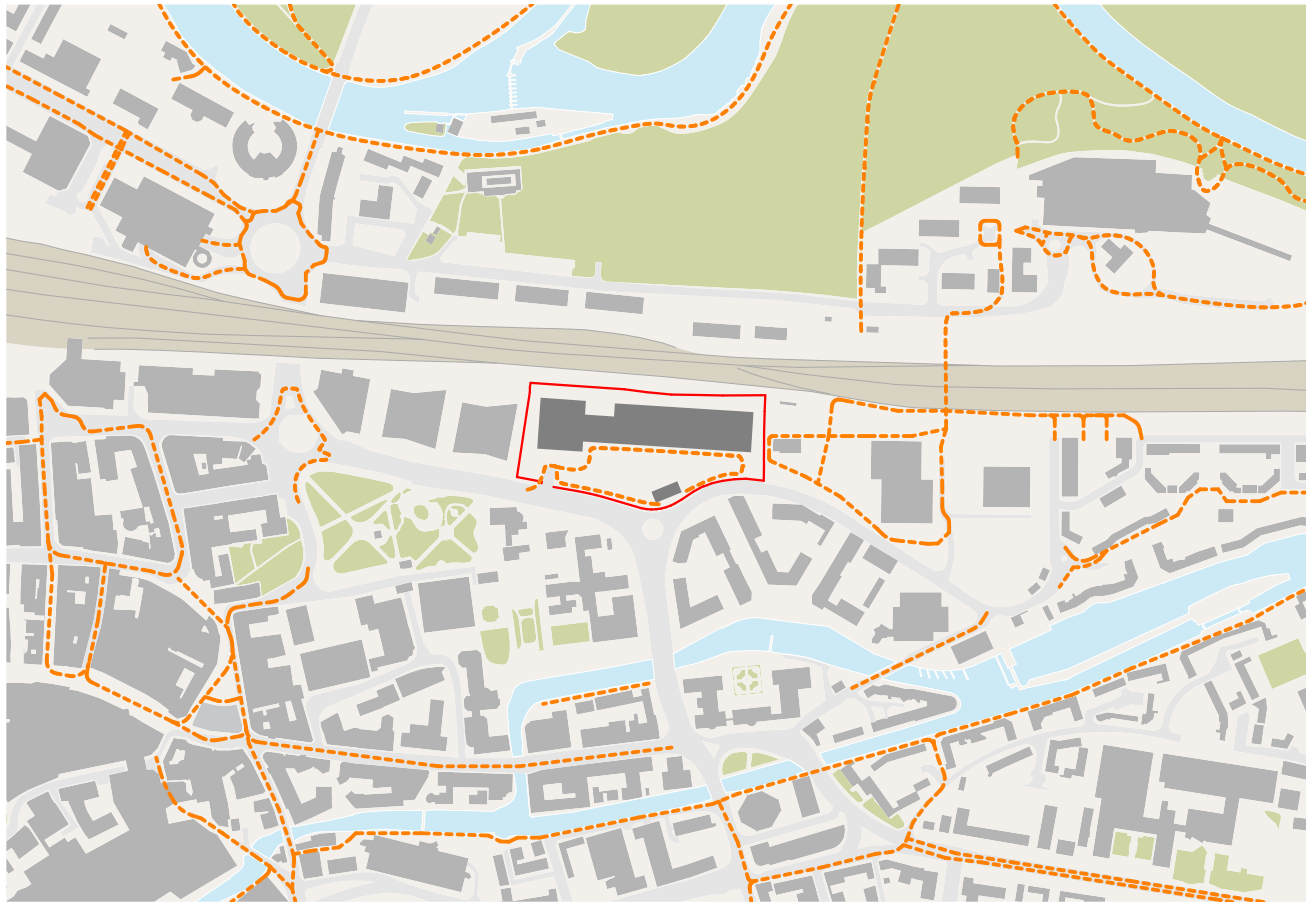
High Traffic Road

Low Traffic Road

Road networks

Cycle routes

Reading has a high rate of cycle activity with parking facilities and lots of signposted cycle routes including the new King Alfred’s Way cycling route.



Existing Cycle Routes

Cycle routes

Pedestrian routes

Pedestrian routes around the site have low movement due to their proximity to the larger roads that run through reading, the developments around the site are generally accessed by car or bus. Whereas in the west towards the high street there is much higher pedestrian movement with pedestrianised zones to accommodate for this. The railway disrupts pedestrian access to the north.



Pedestrian Crossings    Pedestrian Zone    High Pedestrian Movement    Low Pedestrian Movement

Pedestrian routes

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# 2.7

# Socio-Economic context

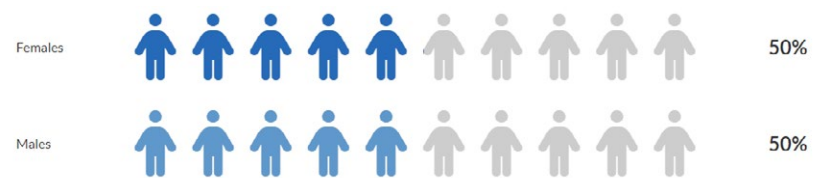
## 2.7.1 Key statistics

In order to understand the socio-economic context of the KMV OPA, extensive research has been undertaken to compile statistics relating to the existing population and economy. These factors should be considered and influence the overall vision for the proposals. Likewise, the design of the KMV OPA should be considerate to the impact it is likely to have on these existing statistics.

### Population

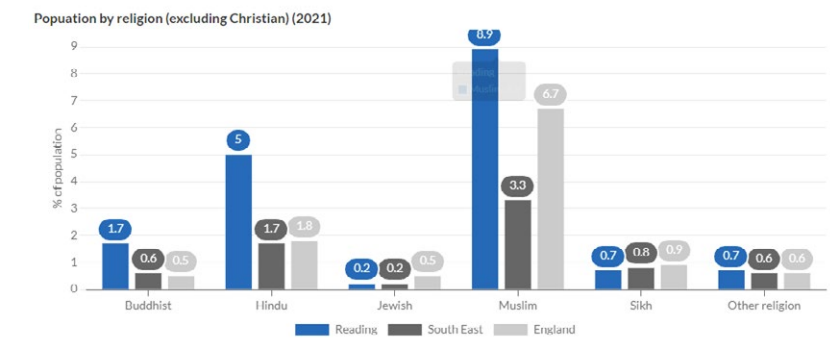


### Gender

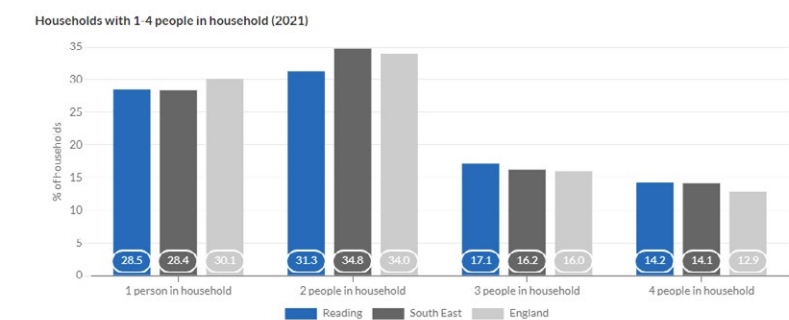


### Key statistics

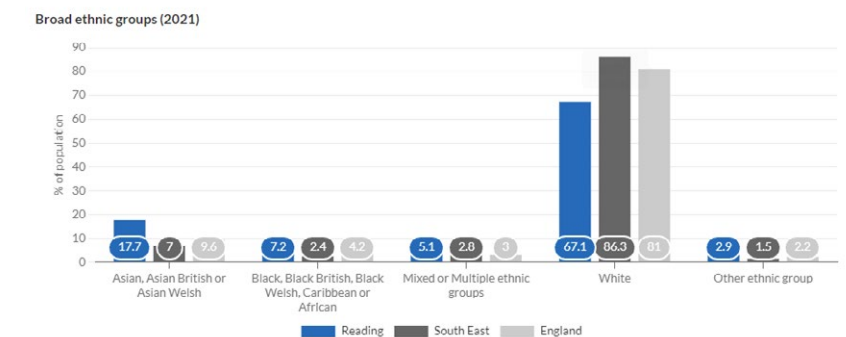
### Religion



### Household Size



### Ethnic Groups





# 3

## Planning, Context, Consultation & Community Involvement

### Introduction

This chapter of The Design and Access Statement contains the following sections:

Planning, context, consultation & community involvement 3.1

Planning history 3.2

Consultation Strategy 3.3

# 3.1 Planning Context & Policy Considerations

## 3.1.1 Planning Context & Policy Considerations

The development proposal has taken guidance from national and local planning policies, planning guidance, and other considerations. The relevant Development Plan for the site is the Reading Borough Local Plan, which was adopted in November 2019.

The policies that apply to the development proposal are derived from the set of adopted Development Plans mentioned above, as well as The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) from 2021. The proposal has been created with regard to the appropriate national and local policies, and this statement will evaluate the development against these policies.

Since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2019 Reading Borough Council has not yet publicly began preparing a new Local Plan, therefore there are no emerging planning policies for consideration at the time of submitting this application for outline planning permission.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a material consideration in relation to planning applications and provides a simplified single source of guidance at the national level. Of relevance to applications including retail elements is the Town Centre and Retail PPG, which provides guidance on retail considerations and the sequential and impact tests.

The Effective Use of Land PPG supports the more effective use of land and outlines how local planning authorities can encourage the best use of under-utilised land and plan for higher density development. The Environmental Impact Assessment PPG provides guidance explaining the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 state that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan for Reading Borough Council comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan adopted in November 2019, which includes the adopted Proposals Map (2019) and Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (2015).

There has been communication with Network Rail throughout the design period. Guidance with regards to conditions set by Network Rail received will be incorporated through the RMA process.

The relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for the proposed development include;

Affordable Housing SPD,  
Employment & Skills & Training SPD,  
Revised Parking Standards SPD,  
Planning Obligations Under Section 106 SPD, and  
Sustainable Design & Construction SPD.

According to the Council's adopted Local Plan Proposals Map, the Site currently falls within several designations, including;

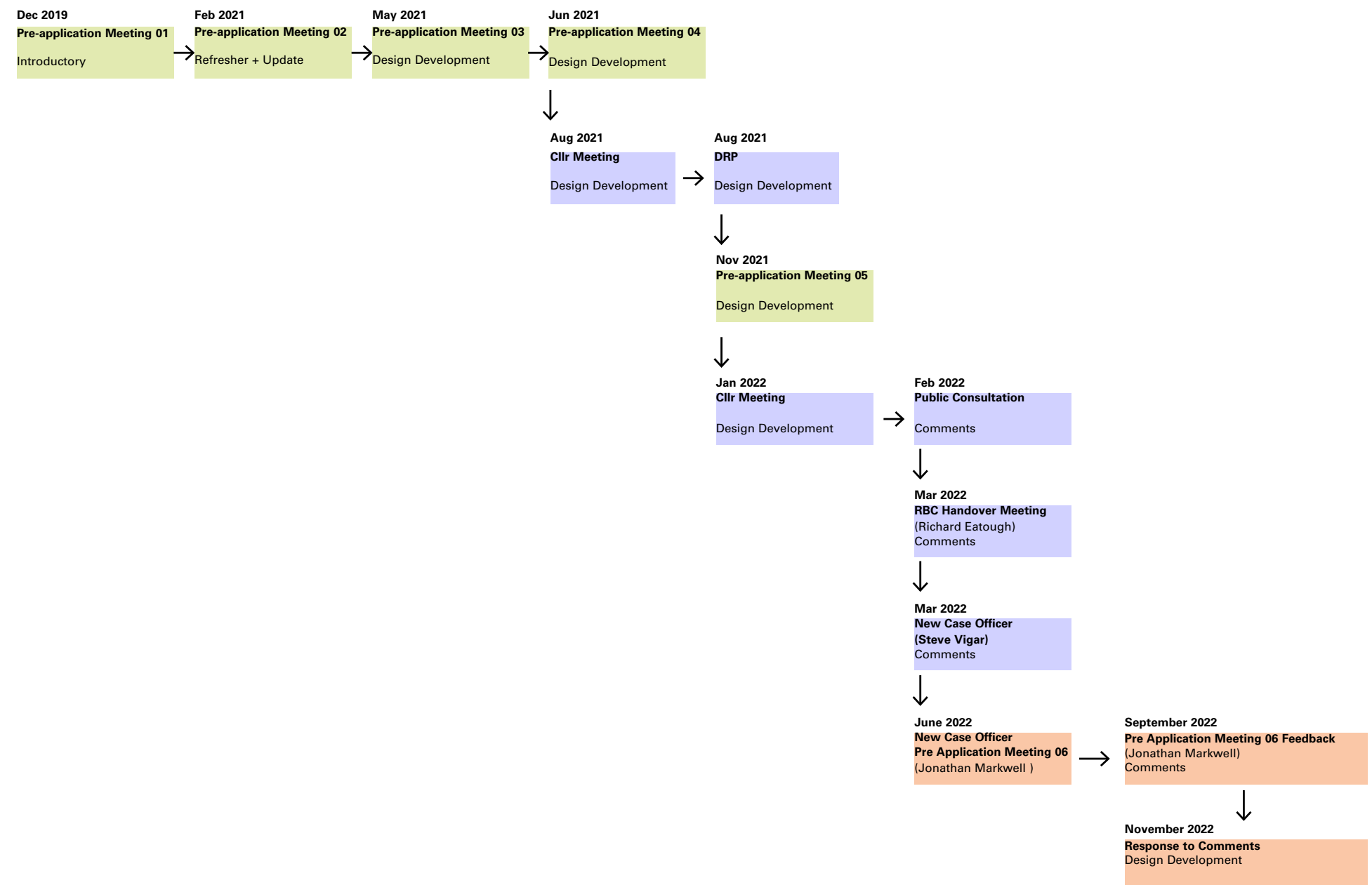
Allocated Development Site CR13b,  
Forbury Retail Park, Borough of Reading Central Area,  
Policy CR1-10,  
Air Quality Management Area, Policy EN15,  
Major Opportunity Area (East Side) Policies CR11-13 and SR1, and,  
Area of Archaeological Potential – Policy EN2.

### 3.2.1 Pre-Application Consultation

Over the course of more than three years, from December 2019 to April 2023, an extensive pre-application process was undertaken with Reading Borough Council to ensure that the proposed development would meet the necessary planning requirements and be appropriate for the local area.

This process involved several pre-application submissions, each of which underwent rigorous scrutiny and feedback from the Council, as well as participation in multiple design review panels, to ensure that the design and materials were of a high quality and would fit in with the local context.

The aim of this process was to ensure that the proposed development would be sustainable, deliverable, and ultimately contribute positively to the local community. The lengthy nature of the process reflects the importance placed on ensuring that the development is of the highest quality and are well-integrated into the local fabric of Reading.



## 3.3 Consultation Strategy

### 3.3.1 Consultation & Community Involvement

A full process of consultation with the Local Authority, local Stakeholders, neighbours and members of the public has taken place during the pre-application period.

The public & stakeholder consultation were held virtually on **Tuesday 15th February** and in person on **16th February 2022 at the Bel and Dragon in Reading**

For further information on the Consultation & community involvement, please refer to the Statement of Community Involvement within the appendices.



Public Consultation Photographs - 10/02/22

The following list summarises the key themes that were raised at or after those events:

- **Height of buildings**  
Questions about obstruction caused by tall buildings, some comments about creating more variation in height, some comments about design/materials and needing more visual interest along the Forbury Road frontage.
- **Congestion**  
Questions around air quality, noise and obstruction of the flow of traffic were mentioned especially in relation to the existing railway.
- **Infrastructure**  
Questions around a need for additional public services to support a larger population.
- **Affordability**  
Questions about the cost of new homes within the development being affordable for the community.
- **Family size homes**  
Questions about why there are so many flats and no suitable accommodation for larger families.
- **Loss of retail space**  
Questions around value placed on the current shops, opinions in favour of new retail options, cafes and workspaces.



This list outlines some more specific ideas about the scheme:

- Creating a community with the church - and potentially some co-working space
- Shared growing spaces for the residents
- Creating a connection to Biscuit Tunnel at the rear of the site
- Creating a connection to Reading Gaol
- Secure cycle parking for visitors



Public Consultation Boards - 10/02/22

As a consequence of these comments, the client & design team sought to:

- Review the percentage of affordable housing within the scheme and the percentage unit mix
- Refine parameter and Illustrative Scheme heights along sensitive perimeters to create more variation in height
- Minimise impact of servicing traffic on surrounding streetscape through careful refinement of the servicing strategy and vehicular routes
- Review pedestrian crossings with transport consultants



Public Consultation Boards - 10/02/22



# 4

## The Masterplan

### Introduction

This chapter of the Design and Access Statement contains the following sections:

Masterplan vision & objectives 4.1

Initial concept & design development 4.2

Urban form & building layout 4.3

Links, connections & public space 4.4

Height & massing 4.5

Materiality 4.6

Land & building uses 4.7

Amount & density 4.8

Illustrative Views 4.9

# 4.1 Masterplan Vision & Objectives

## 4.1.1 Vision

The vision for the KMV OPA has been developed together with Reading Borough Council and with respect to the Local Plan and can be summarised by the overarching aspirations:

Create a genuine point of difference from other Thames valley town centres by providing a new heart to Reading that is distinctive and attractive to locals, new residents and visitors alike.

Adopt a flexible and resilient approach so that future RMAs are able to adapt to future needs & demand.

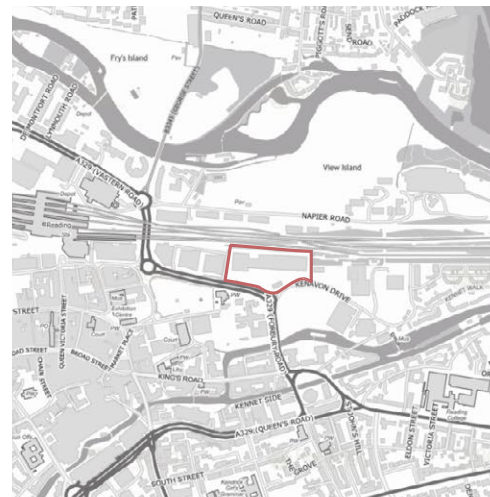
Provide a smartly sustainable development that encourages sustainable modes of transport and incorporates sustainable features.

Nurture a sense of pride and loyalty by providing a well designed town centre with a strong sense of place that local people enjoy using and are proud to call their home.

Increase confidence in Reading by providing facilities that make the town centre a successful and attractive place for commerce that increases spending, investment and the prosperity of the wider town.



Town Hall Square Reading



Site plan



Cycle routes within landscape



Graffiti by Banksy on Gaol



Signage at entrance to Reading Station

# 4.1.2 Elements of a Great Development

Having undertaken studies of various other residential developments, the design team have identified a series of elements (as described opposite) that contribute to the makings of a great development.

The balance of these diverse components is often varied within different proposals and what works or is required for one might not work or be needed for another.

The following section assesses the existing site against these criteria and this research has assisted with the refinement of the overarching vision for the KMV OPA and the project brief.



**HERITAGE**

Architectural  
Cultural  
People  
Topography  
Landscape  
Industrial  
Objects



**CULTURE**

The Arts  
Tradition  
Gastronomy  
Education  
Community  
Skills  
Values



**COMMUNITY**

Multicultural  
Diverse  
Inclusive  
Active  
Events  
Festivals



**MIXED-USE**

Experimental  
'10 Minute Town'  
Live - Work -  
Rest - Play  
Flexible Spaces  
Adaptable



**RE-USE**

Up cycling  
Creative,  
Innovative  
Re-use of Spaces



**JOB CREATION /  
PRODUCTIVITY**

Strong  
Varied  
Growing  
Opportunity



**PUBLIC REALM**

Meeting Point  
Community  
Diverse  
Joyful  
Large  
Small  
Incidental



**NATURE**

Various Qualities  
Spread  
Accessible  
Clean Air Initiative  
Central  
Diverse



**TRANSPORT**

Accessible  
Technology  
Frequent  
Close-knitted  
Tailored  
Serious Car Competitor

Lists identifying elements of a great town

# 4.1 Masterplan Vision & Objectives

## 4.1.3 Analysing Elements of the Existing Town Centre

### Summary of strengths and opportunities

#### Heritage:

Rich history & selection of interesting buildings.

#### Culture:

Unique cultural history but limited cultural offerings.

#### Mixed Use:

Mixed use developments have some good examples such as No.1 Reading and Huntley Wharf.

#### Community:

Diverse community, complementary communal use projects.

#### Re-Use:

Few successfully re-used structures other than some residential developments.

#### Job Creation and Productivity:

Economically strong town.

#### Public Realm:

Lack of high quality public realm in Reading.

#### Nature:

Beautiful surrounding countryside & variety of green spaces , however central Reading is lacking green spaces.

#### Transport:

Wider transport network and inner public transport very good.



Heritage



1. Huntley and Palmers Biscuit Factory



2. St James's Church.



3. Reading Abbey Ruins



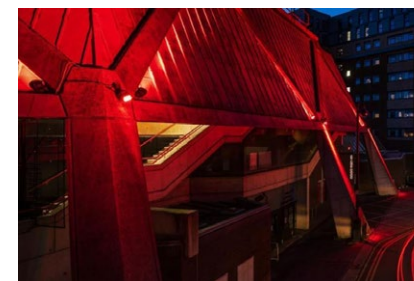
Culture



1. South Street Arts Centre



2. Reading Carnival



3. The Hexagon



Mixed Use



1. No1 Reading



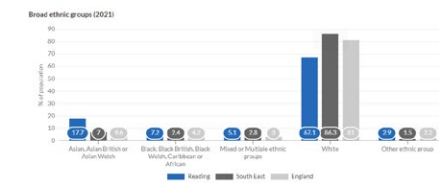
2. Huntley Wharf



3. Station Hill



Community



1. Diversity in Reading



2. Readipop Festival



3. Reading Town Hall

Photographs of existing town centre elements (including images overleaf)



Re-use



1. Jackson's



Job Creation



1. Festivals



Public Realm



1. High Street.



Nature



1. Forbury Gardens



Transport



1. Reading Station



2. Thames Tower.



2. Retail



2. Chestnut Walk



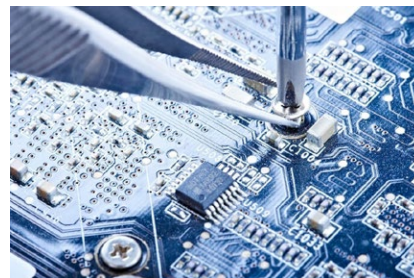
2. Kings Meadow



2. Buses



3. Station Hill



3. Tech Companies.



3. Reading Station



3. Christchurch Meadows



3. Cars

# 4.1 Masterplan Vision & Objectives

## 4.1.4 Designing for Change

### General principles for a 'town of the future'

In order to create a sustainable community based on contemporary aspirations and desires, a series of interventions are proposed within the KMV OPA.

### Sustainable ethos

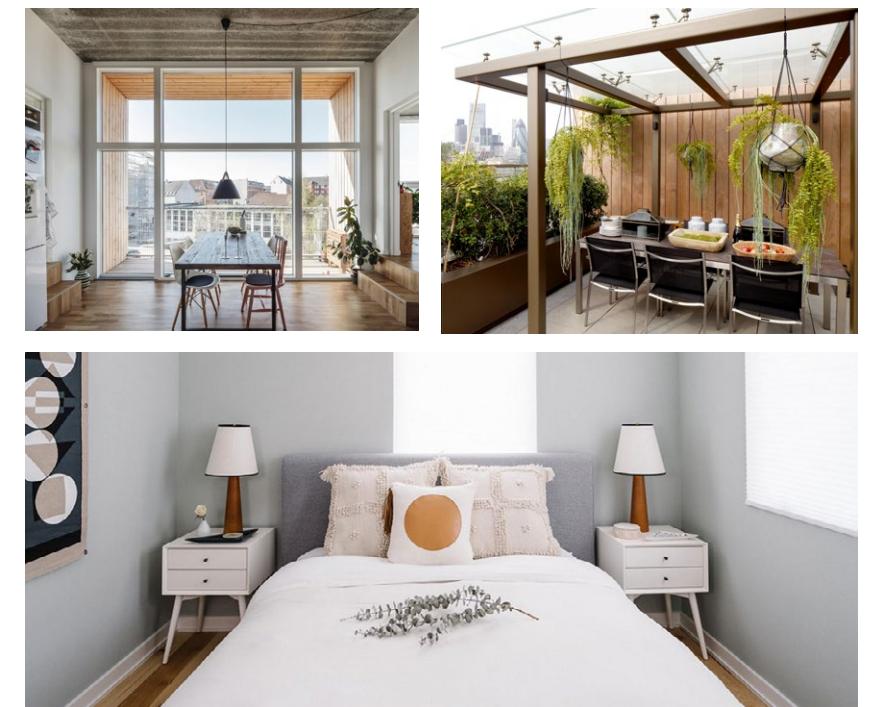
Design of buildings and landscape should incorporate energy saving and carbon minimising features and encourage the end users to do so to. Proposals should aspire to improve pedestrian and cycle routes and public transport access to reduce car reliance and enable all essential needs to be covered within very small walking distances, be it groceries, the workplace or childcare.



Sustainability elements for consideration

### Provide quality homes

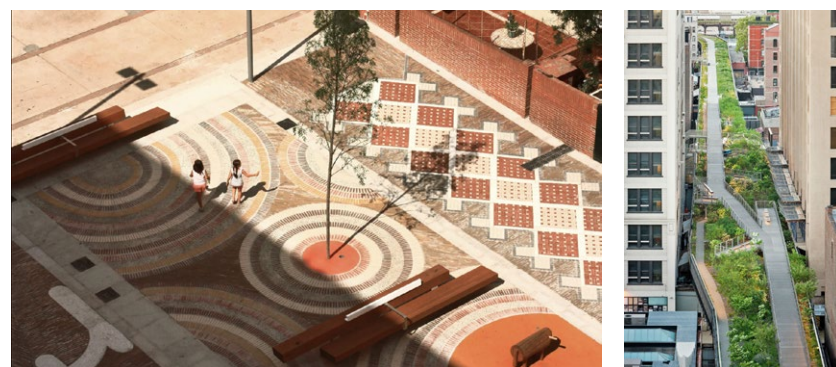
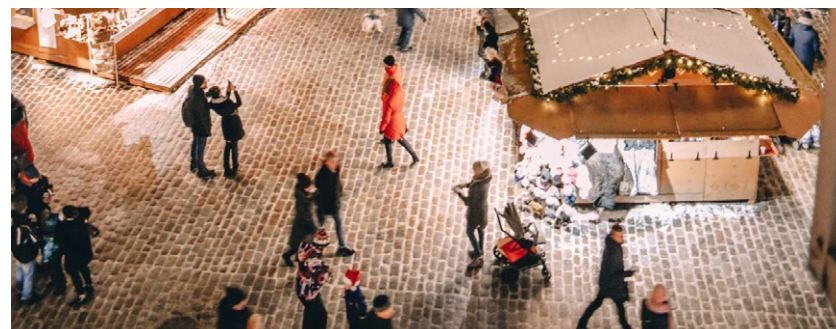
Design housing to be practical, with warm materiality, well placed fenestration that optimises daylight intake and generous amenity/ outdoor facilities.



Examples of quality homes & amenity

### Provide spaces for the people of Reading

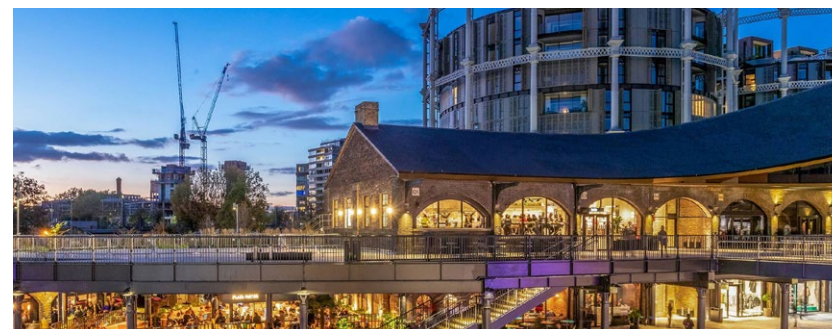
Design spaces for the diverse population of Reading in the form of a wide range of squares, parks, streets and lanes that are safe, beautiful and complement the living, working and shopping spaces that surround them.



Examples of animated public realm

### Maintain flexibility for changing retail market

With the decline of retail park vernacular, alternative forms of retail should be considered and be flexibly planned for.



Examples of flexible retail spaces

### Animate ground floor level facades

According to a study by YouGov questioning residents from several regions their number one reason to life in a neighbourhood is to be close to restaurants, leisure and cultural facilities that typically occupy the ground floor level of buildings. This active frontage sets the scene for the entire development.



Examples of town centre uses

# 4.1 Masterplan Vision & Objectives

## 4.1.5 Key Site Specific Features of the Vision

As well as the overarching vision for the KMV OPA, more site-specific features have been determined as being fundamental to the success of the development. These features include the following:

1. Provision of a new strengthened connection to/ from the train station and main thoroughfare across Kenavon Drive and Forbury Road
2. Respect and sympathetically sit within the existing context and emerging developments.
3. Provision of high quality and generous public realm.
4. Provision of high quality and sustainable residential dwellings to create a new and exciting residential development that positively contributes to Reading Town Centre.
4. Stitching of proposed new streetscape into existing wider urban grain.

These key masterplanning principles have been taken forward in the Design Codes that accompany this OPA and are reflected in the Illustrative Scheme.

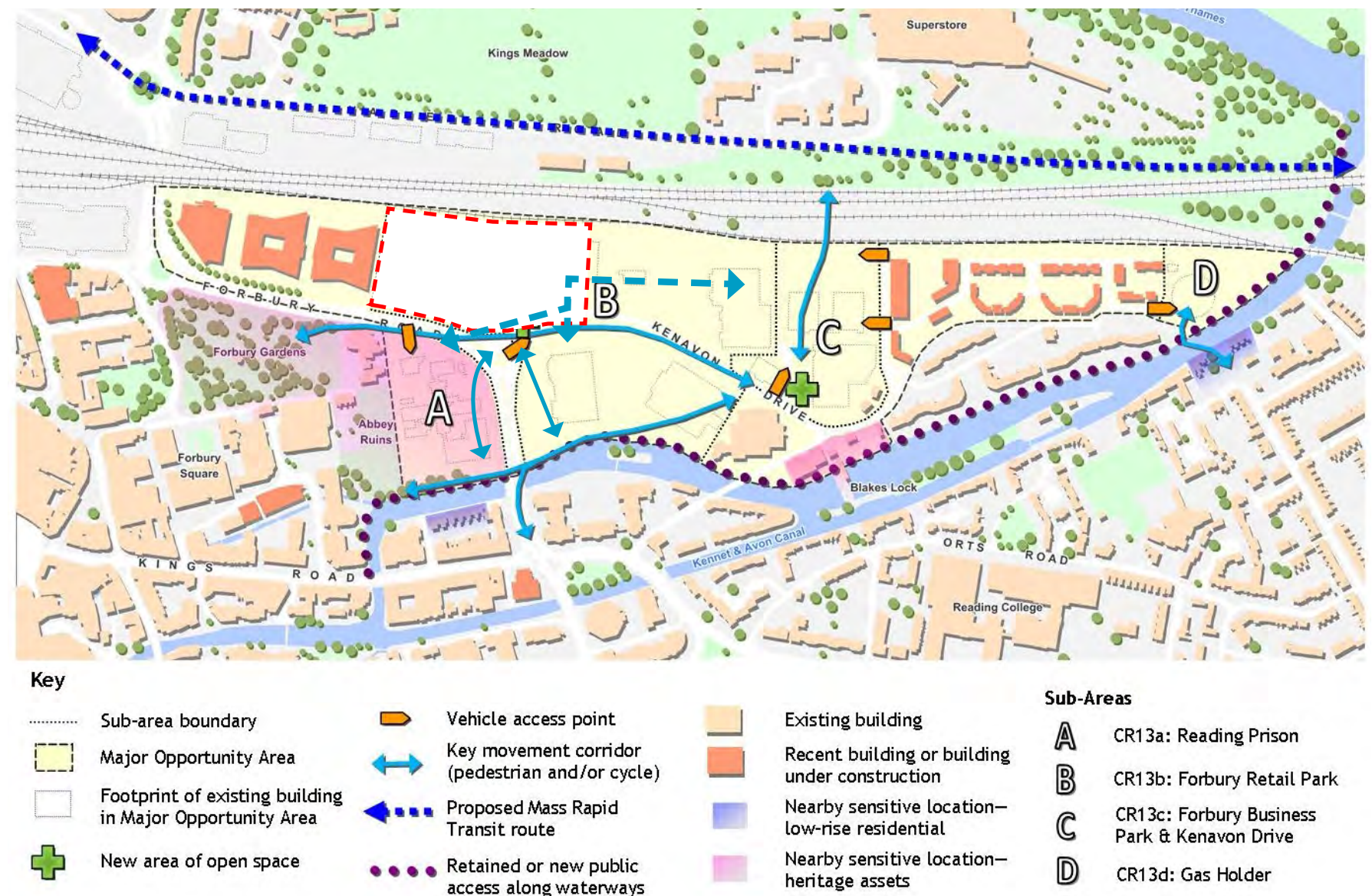


**Figure 5.5: East Side Major Opportunity Area Strategy**

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Site Plan Highlighting Key Routes Through

--- Site Boundary  
 <--> Proposed Key Movement Corridor

- Proposed Public Route (cycle/pedestrian)
- Town Centre Route
- Bicycle-friendly routes



Wider Site Plan Highlighting Key Routes Through

# 4.2 Initial Concept & Design Development

## 4.2.1 Design Development

### Evolution of design

Drawing from the extensive research and site analysis that was undertaken in the initial feasibility stage, the evolution of the design of the KMV OPA has focussed on refining the following aspects:

- Overarching vision for the masterplan
- Street network
- Primary, secondary & tertiary pedestrian routes
- Development of urban realm distribution
- Building footprints
- Building heights and massing
- Development of building typologies
- Relationship with existing townscape context
- Incorporation of desired mix targets for uses
- Consideration of residential quality
- Indicative appearance
- Retail strategy (distribution and layout)
- Development approach
- Sustainability approach

### Design Development - Consultation Progress

As outlined within section 3, over the course of more than three years, from December 2019 to April 2023, an extensive pre-application process was undertaken with Reading Borough Council (RBC) to ensure that the proposed development would meet the necessary planning requirements and be appropriate for the local area.

Throughout the process, the design has evolved taking on board the comments made by members of RBC and members of Reading Design Review Panel, the scheme has been adapted and fine-tuned to create a significant positive contribution to Reading town centre.

Throughout the consultation process, the building form typologies have shifted from cluster formations of buildings on podiums levels to distinct residential blocks defined by a rational landscaping strategy that takes into accounts inclusivity and day to day activities of its residential users as a priority, creating active and accessible public realm spaces which positively stitches into the wider context of Reading town centre.

The sketches and text on the opposite and proceeding pages of the document provide a succinct overview of the indicative sketch designs that were prepared for earlier iterations of the brief.

