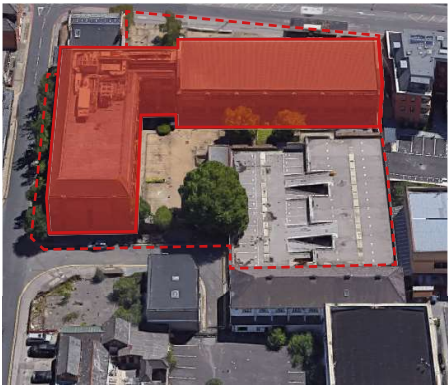




Bird's Eye View from the South



Bird's Eye View from the East



Bird's Eye View from the North

Squire & Partners

3.3 Existing Building

Site area: 1.1 Acres (0.445 Hectares)
Existing building floor area (GIA): 3,550 sq.m (38,212 sq.ft.)

The existing building is a three storey "L" shaped office building. There is a two storey car park providing 105 parking spaces at the rear of the site and 10 additional surface parking spaces fronting onto Oxford Road. The existing building provides office accommodation of Grade B quality specification.

3.3.1 Materiality

The existing building comprises red earth brickwork in stretcher bond, curtain walling panels and grey slate roof tiles. It also has a steep pitched roof in grey metal immediately adjacent to Mannson House.

3.3.2 Site access

Existing vehicular site access is to the north (rear) of the site via Eaton Place. A two-storey car park is located at the north west of the site.

The main office entrance is accessed from Oxford Road, adjacent to the surface parking spaces which front the road.

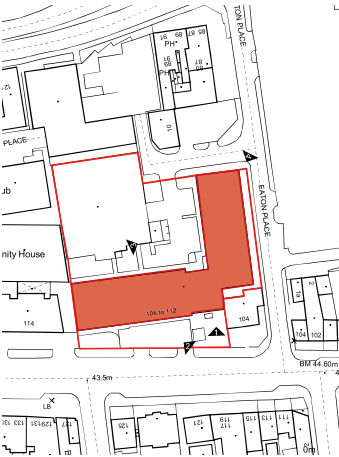
3.3.3 Site Topography

The site topography is generally flat to the north and east. There is half a metre height difference in level sloping down from the front elevation of existing Trinity House to the front of Mannson House.



Existing Building - frontage onto Oxford Road

2.4 Site Photographs



1. Junction with adjacent building on Oxford Road



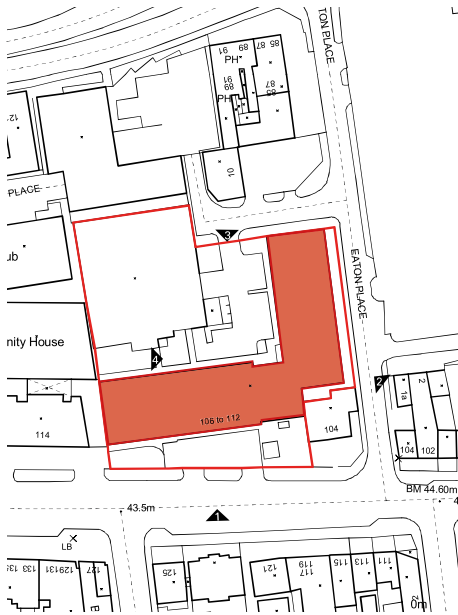
2. Car parking fronting onto Oxford Road



3. View from car park looking East



4. Corner of Eaton Place



2. East Facade - Looking from Eaton Place



3. Looking from Eaton Place car park entrance



1. South Facade and existing car park - Looking from Oxford Road



4. Eaton Court West Facade looking from car park

3.4 Site Photographs



1. Looking West along Oxford Road



2. 114-116 Oxford Road - Looking North on Oxford Road



3. South Facade - Looking from Waylen St

3.5 Immediate Site Context

3.5.1 Traffic

Oxford Road is a typical single-carriageway high street. Chatham Street north of the site is a dual carriageway feeding into a large roundabout just east of Chatham Place phase 1. This roundabout forms the junction with Caversham Road (A329) which forms part of Reading's Inner Distribution Road (IDR) which rings the Central Shopping District.

3.5.2 Retail

Around 200m east of the site, across the A329 lies Reading's Central Shopping District. Local shops run along Oxford Road immediately opposite the site and to the west and east along the north side of Oxford Road.



4. Looking East from Oxford Road



7. East Facade - Looking from Eaton Place



10. Chatham Place Multi-storey Carpark (9 Storeys)



5. Windows of 114-116 Oxford Road facing towards the West Facade of Eaton Court



8. Looking South from Chatham Street



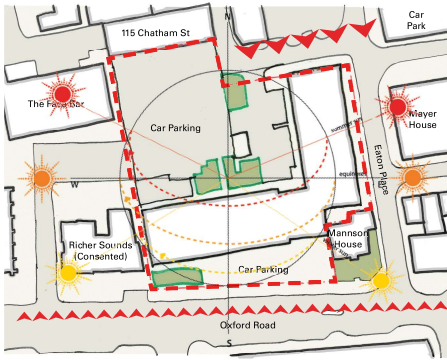
11. Chatham Place Phase 2: City Tower (19 Storeys)



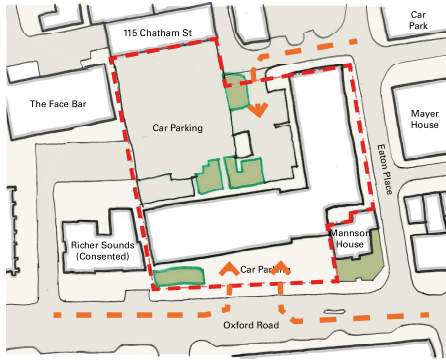
6. Mannson House setback from Oxford Road



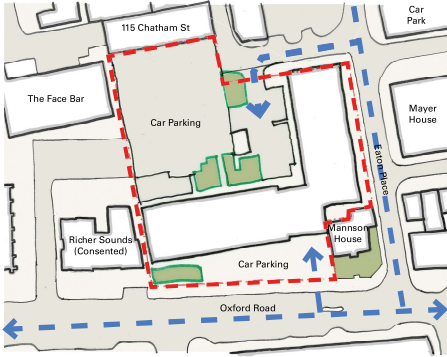
9. Looking South from Chatham Street



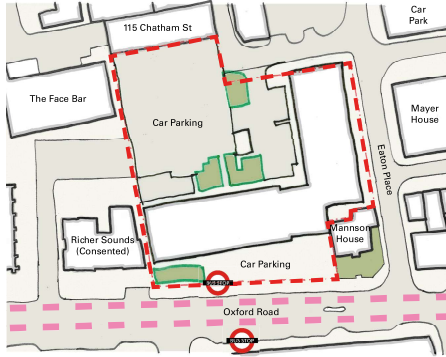
Environmental Analysis Noise Source ▲



Existing Vehicular Routes ———



Existing Walking & Cycling Routes ———



Existing Bus Route ———

3.6 Site Analysis Diagrams

3.6.1 Environmental Analysis

Oxford Road to the south of the site and Chatham Street to the north are main roads with busy traffic. The design should aim to alleviate the noise impact from both these directions.

3.6.2 Vehicular access

Currently there are 2 parking areas serving the existing building. The first, is a 10 surface space parking area on the south of the site facing Oxford Road which is used exclusively by the Royal Meteorological Society. The second is a 105 space two storey car park on the north of the site.

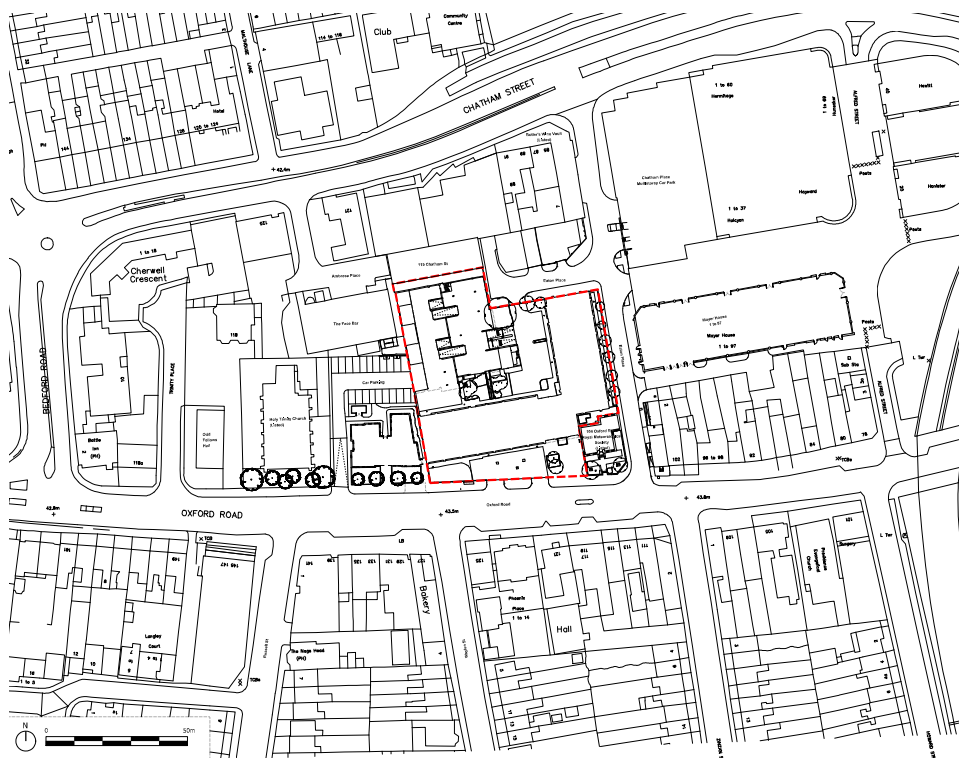
The proposed strategy is to provide parking spaces at Ground floor level, with 3 blue badge spaces within the gated central space and 11 spaces to the North of the site on Eaton Place. Parking spaces fronting onto Oxford Road will be omitted as a means of activating the main frontage to this road. Eight of the 11 spaces to the North of the site will be allocated for use by the Royal Meteorological Society. Vehicular access will remain at the rear of the site via a gate off of Eaton Place.

3.6.3 Cycle and Pedestrian movement

Cycling and walking also form an effective way to access the site with access routes to both the north and south of the site. Currently there are no provisions for cycle lanes in the surrounding streets.

3.6.4 Train and bus links

The site is well served by public transport. Reading Railway Station is under 10 minutes' walk from the site and there are two bus stops in front and opposite the site on Oxford Road.



Wider context existing site plan

3.7 Planning Context and Redevelopment Opportunity

3.7.1 Planning Context and Policy

Reading Borough Council Core Strategy Policy CS7 'Design and the Public Realm' seeks to ensure that all development is of high design quality, which maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.

3.7.2 Redevelopment Opportunity

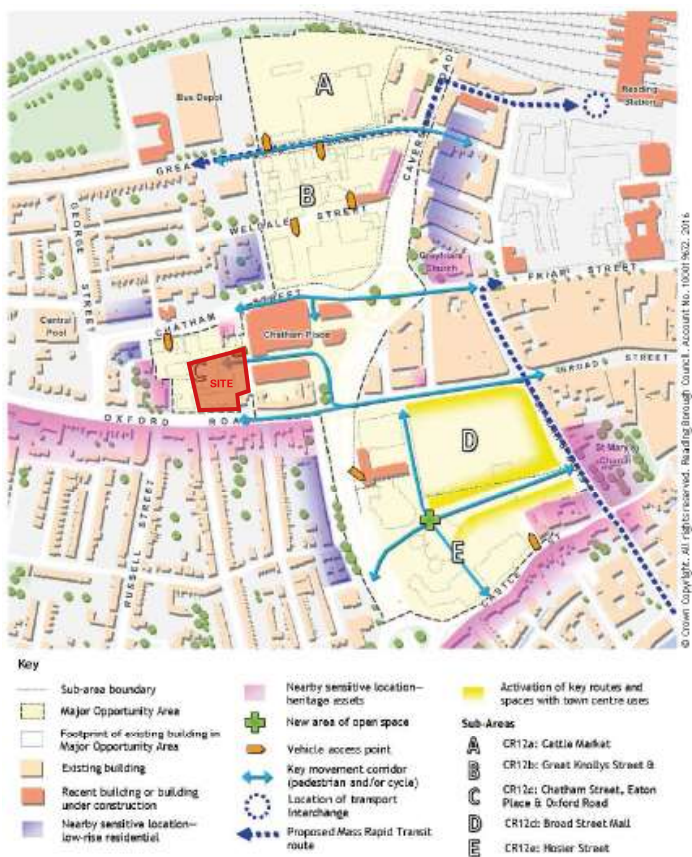
The site presents an opportunity to develop a highly accessible site on a key approach route into Reading.

The proposal will replace existing buildings that currently do not positively contribute to the surrounding townscape or the setting of heritage assets. The neighbourhood will benefit from a high quality development that is sympathetic to the scale of the surrounding townscape and in keeping with the evolving pattern of development in the area.

The proposed design will better respond to the surrounding buildings and streets and is of a scale and form that enables a coherent transition between smaller scale residential development to the south and west and the taller buildings of Chatham Place, which form part of the "Western Grouping" of tall buildings and the West Side Major Opportunity Area (Policies RC13 of the RCAAP) to the east.

The proposed design will demonstrate elevational treatments that compliment positive features and materials of the surrounding townscape and conservation area to the south.

There is an opportunity to increase activity at street level along both Oxford Road and Eaton Place.



West Side Major Opportunity Area Strategy, excerpt of draft Reading Local Plan 2019

3.7.3 West Side Major Opportunity Area

Introduced in the draft Reading Borough Local Plan 2017, the key objectives of the West Side Major Opportunity Area are as follows (Local Plan 5.4.12):

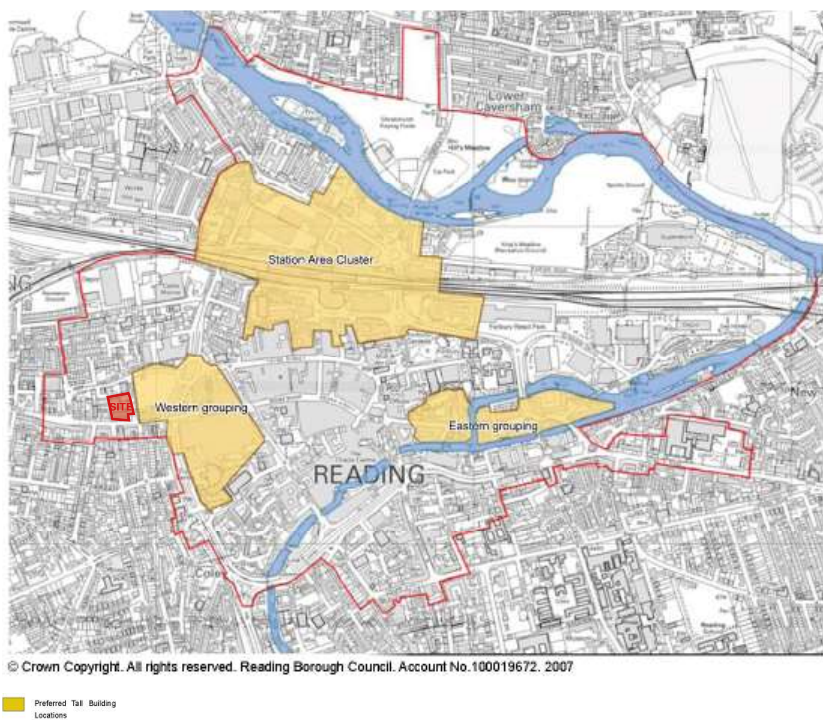
- Provision of mixed uses
- Improvement to pedestrian and cycle permeability along Dusseldorf Way and Queen's Walk - both key movement corridors
- Consideration of the transition between low and medium density residential and the conservation area
- Demonstration of a comprehensive approach to the sub-area, which does not prevent neighbouring sites from fulfilling their aspirations

The application site is located within the Chatham Street, Eaton Place And Oxford Road Area, for which Section CR12c of local plan specifically sets out the development objectives:

Development of this area will be primarily for residential, with potential for community uses. There may also be some small scale retail and leisure uses on the Oxford Road frontage. This area is surrounded by heritage assets or low-rise residential, and inappropriate building scale at the fringes of the site will not be permitted.

Site size: 1.15 hectare

Indicative potential: 180-260 dwellings



3.74 Western Grouping / Reading Tall Building Strategy

The application site is located immediately adjacent to the Western Grouping, the preferred location of tall buildings.

The site is also located at the junction of Oxford Road and Chatham Street area, which have specific characters that the policy sets out guidance to safeguard:

The document notes the immediate site context as 'high' suitability as a location for tall buildings: The existing built form is large scale and blocky, ensuring that tall buildings would not result in a significant change to the urban grain. The absence of notable townscape features ensures a suitability for re-development. However, careful consideration should be given on a case by case basis to how tall buildings would impact upon key views along West Street to Greyfriar's Church and to how they would be viewed from, or impact upon views of, St. Mary's Church. Any tall buildings should be set back from this road and the Conservation Area.

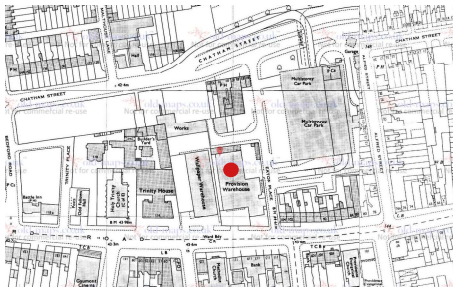
2.75 Chatham Street Development Brief

The Chatham Street Development Brief notes the potential for a new landmark tower of up to 25 storeys at the prominent northeastern corner. Taller buildings should continue on the northern edge of the site: massing should step down from the tower, but still maintain a scale of 'civic importance' (up to 14 storeys).

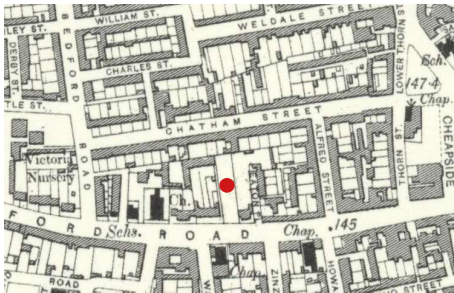
Proposals should include a transitional height zone from the taller buildings within this development to the existing residential area to the west. Buildings fronting Oxford Road should not exceed 12 storeys, while buildings on the eastern side should step down from the scale of the tower, but can retain a taller massing profile. (Chatham Street Development Brief p.35-36)



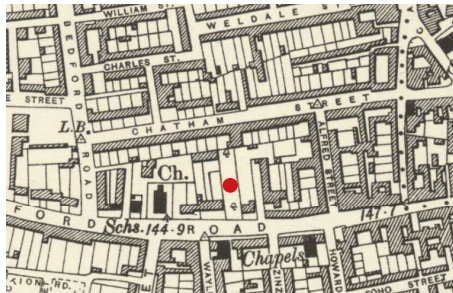
OS Map, 1973-1976



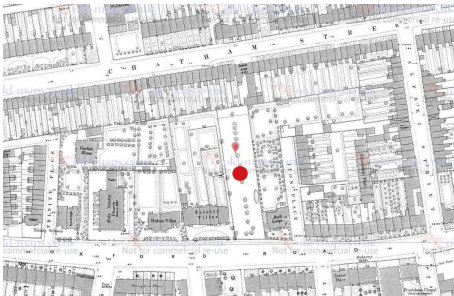
OS Map, 1962-1971



OS Map, 1913



OS Map, 1900



OS Map, 1879-1880



OS Map, 1883

3.8 Site History

3.8.1 Historical Development & Local Landmarks

The existing office buildings and car park that make up the Site are unremarkable and are considered to detract from the character and appearance of the area and do not positively contribute to the setting of adjacent heritage assets.

The Site does not include any listed buildings and does not lie within a Conservation Area.

3.8.2 Local Landmarks

There are some Heritage Assets within the vicinity of the Site and these are described in Section 2.10.

3.8.3 Previous Buildings on Site

The map regression study to the left details how the Site and its context have changed since the late 19th Century. The historic residential block form of the urban townscape, interspersed with larger religious and educational buildings, has been altered by the large building footprints of modern warehouse and office developments which have broken up the urban form and altered the character of the area.

The busy thoroughfare of Oxford Road and the widened dual carriageway of Chatham Street separate this townscape from the residential suburbs in the wider area. Development to the east includes the larger scale development of Chatham Place, which forms part of the “Western Grouping” of tall buildings and the West Side Major Opportunity Area (Policies RC13 of the RCAAP).