FALCONER
CHESTER
HALL

PROPOSED HOTEL DEVELOPMENT 138-144 FRIAR STREET, READING

—

THACKERAY GROUP

—

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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P21109-FCH-XX-XX-RG-A-0001 P01 AUGUST 2022

FCH

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PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT 138-144 FRIAR STREET, READING

THACKERAY ESTATES

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FCH

138-144 FRIAR STREET, READING
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by FCH Architects on behalf of Thackery Estates to accompany the application for the redevelopment of No. 138-144 Friar Street to create a new 163 bedroom hotel with ancillary food and beverage offering.

The site is located at No 138-141 Friar Street, approx 30m from the junction with Queen Victoria Street and Station Road, and is adjacent to the approved QVS 1 site. Friar Street is a key primary retail street within the town centre and so the proposed development, in conjunction with the consent at QVS1 site, presents a unique opportunity to comprehensively regenerate this quarter of Friar Street.

The proposed development has been carefully designed with a detailed understanding and analysis of the historic context being fundamental to the architectural response in order to respect and enhance its sensitive setting. We have taken into consideration the existing buildings' position within key local views, the proposed scheme's relationship to surrounding listed buildings, and the significance of its location.

The scheme has been informed by extensive consultations with local stakeholders and interested groups as well as being developed in the context of national, regional and local planning policy through a series of pre-application meetings with Reading Council.

The application is linked to a separate application for the expansion of the QVS1 consent to include No 145-146 Friar Street, which will seek to expand on the shared vision established with Reading Council and local stakeholders .

The proposed development, will offer extensive benefits to the surrounding area, which will be enhanced further through the QVS 1 development.

These benefits will include;

- Repair and retention of the Bugle building and the architectural detailing that contributes to its significance.
- Visual improvement to these prominent retail streets with enhanced frontages, signage and lighting, respectful to Friar Street.
- Introduction of hotel use, providing visitor accommodation, supporting the needs of, and attracting, working professionals and visitors to Reading, as well as assisting in remedying an identified under-provision.
- Significant investment in the town centre which includes the associated local economy boost as a consequence of constructing the building.
- Job creation during construction.
- Job creation during operation.
- Provision of a town centre destination that will attract visitors, shoppers and workers to this part of the town centre, enhancing the activity, vitality and viability of this part of the centre.
- The proposals will arrest the decline of Friar Street and support and bolster the Reading economy, which is of particular importance at this current time and will play an important role in the post-Covid19 recovery of the town centre.
- A catalyst for future regeneration of Friar Street.



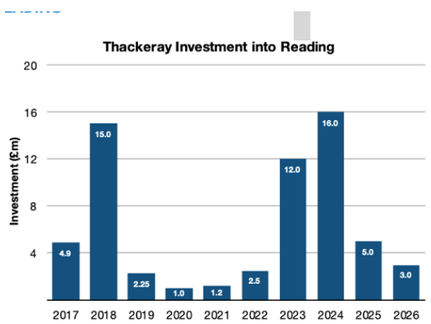
Street view of proposed development

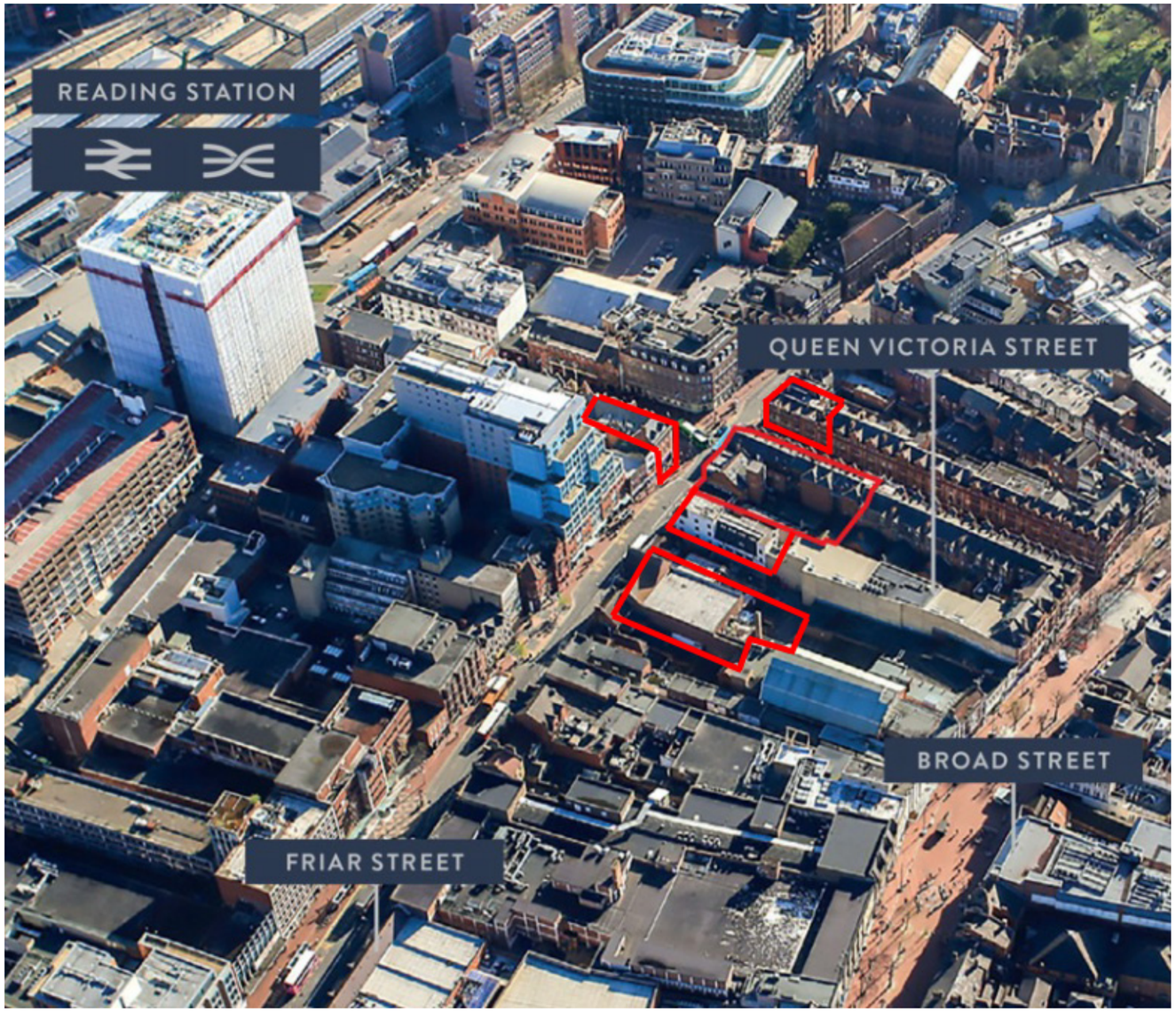
1.0 INTRODUCTION
1.2 THACKERAY ESTATES

Thackeray in Reading:
- Significant property investment and acquisition
- 5 years of ongoing investment to date
- Dedicated team working exclusively on Reading portfolio
- Expertise in place-making
- Experience in renovating listed buildings
- New and exciting tenants brought to Reading

Investment Strategy
- Station road - Works on site to create the first new Wendy's restaurant unit in UK
- Queen Victoria Street - Mixed use scheme with significant public realm / market square
- Friar Street - 163 bed 4-star Hotel
- Town Centre Apartments Station Road / Broad Street

Buildings Owned in Reading
- 1 Station Road
- 2-4 Queen Victoria Street
- 1-15 Queen Victoria Street
- 138-141 Friar Street
- 142 Friar Street
- 144-145 Friar Street
- 146 Friar Street
- 147-148 Friar Street
- 149-150 Friar Street
- 156-158 Friar Street
- 70-72 Broad Street
- 200-202 Broad Street





1.0 INTRODUCTION
1.3 FCH ARCHITECTS

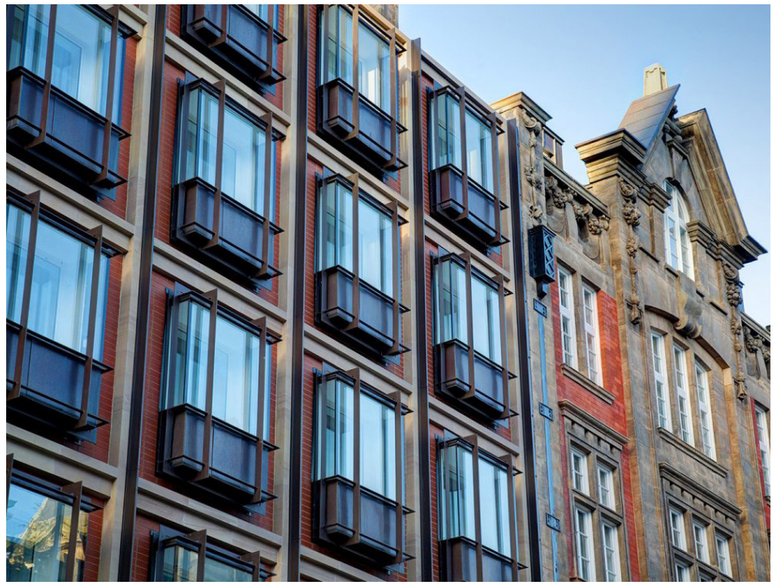
Who we are
Established in 1997, Falconer Chester Hall has an international reputation for using creative design intelligence to deliver inspirational buildings that maximise the commercial potential of a site.

What we do
We are award winning practitioners in architecture, and masterplanning.

We work across a range of sectors, taking a sustainable approach to each design, creating thoughtful and sensitive buildings that respond to and complement the site and its surroundings, be they new build or sensitive conversions, large-scale masterplans or constrained urban sites. We create exemplary places with forward thinking design solutions.

How we work
Listening to our client, to their aims and requirements, is vital. With that understanding informing our actions, Falconer Chester Hall adds value to each project. We have developed a powerful track record of working collaboratively, through all stages of the design process to ensure every stage of project delivery runs smoothly.


DoubleTree by Hilton Liverpool, Liverpool


Ibis Styles, Liverpool


Kelaty House, Wembley, London



Seel Street Hotel, Liverpool

2.0 THE VISION
2.1 OVERVIEW

Introduction
The applicant has multiple land holdings in Reading. This particular focus is their combined Queen Victoria Street and Friar Street holding.

The council recently resolved to approve 1-15 Queen Victoria Street and 147-146 Street (Phase 1(QVS1)). The site presented within the first stage pre-application submission is in respect of the said scheme - 138-144 Friar Street (Phase 2 (QVS2)).

The applicant has also secured two further buildings within this frontage (145 and 146 Friar Street) that will form part of QVS1 and will be Phase 1+ but will comprise a part of a separate planning application, although reference is made in this submission to assist with understanding the massing, context and townscape of Friar Street.

Vision
The applicant has worked corroboratively with the Council across their significant holding in Reading and shares the Council's vision of sustainable development that supports an economic prosperity of Reading whilst conserving the historic legacy.

The vision is to create a destination location that restores the listed buildings of QVS and Friar Street, that creates a market square retail experience, provides overnight accommodation in a variety of concepts and that will create vibrancy, job creation and support the local and regional economy.

Engagement
The Applicant shares the Council's view that pre-application advice assists and allows sensible, realistic and successful planning decisions to be made. Working together will ensure that schemes are developed that are viable and fulfil need.

The Applicant is well versed with Council and has already worked successfully on previous schemes, with a real desire to develop a scheme that responds to local context and fulfils a brief that will enhance the form and function of the Town Centre.

The Application
This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by FCH Architects and other members of the design team to support the planning application being submitted by the Applicant Thackeray Estates. This document should be read in conjunction with the application drawings and other documents within this application.

This Statement has been prepared to illustrate the analysis, the design development and detailed proposals for the Masterplan and buildings; to describe the thinking behind the submitted scheme and to satisfy Article 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015 ("DMPO"), which requires at Article 9(2) that applications for major development are accompanied by a statement about:

• The design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and
• How issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.

A full planning policy assessment in terms of design and access is provided within the Planning Statement prepared by Town Planning Bureau which forms part of this application

Professional Development
The Applicant has sought the input of their appointed historic building consultants, townscape assessors, sustainability & energy consultants, M&E, archeology, air quality, transport, planning, building control, et al. The said consultants assessments and professional reports are submitted to accompany this application.

Public Consultation
The applicant is an advocate of working constructively with amenity societies and local residents and businesses. This was emphasised in the QVS1 scheme with Councillors commending the strategy employed and initial public consultation with the chairs of CAAC and Reading Civic Society has already been undertaken, they have indicated they support a high quality recevelopment scheme.

The applicant has undertaken extensive public consultation, as detailed in the Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Town Planning Bureau. In summary the engagement found that the scheme presented is a positive benefit that on the feedback received, is supported by the local community and key stakeholders.





1-15 Queen Victoria Street and 147-146 Street (Phase 1(QVS1) CGI

2.0 THE VISION
2.2 STRATEGIC VISION

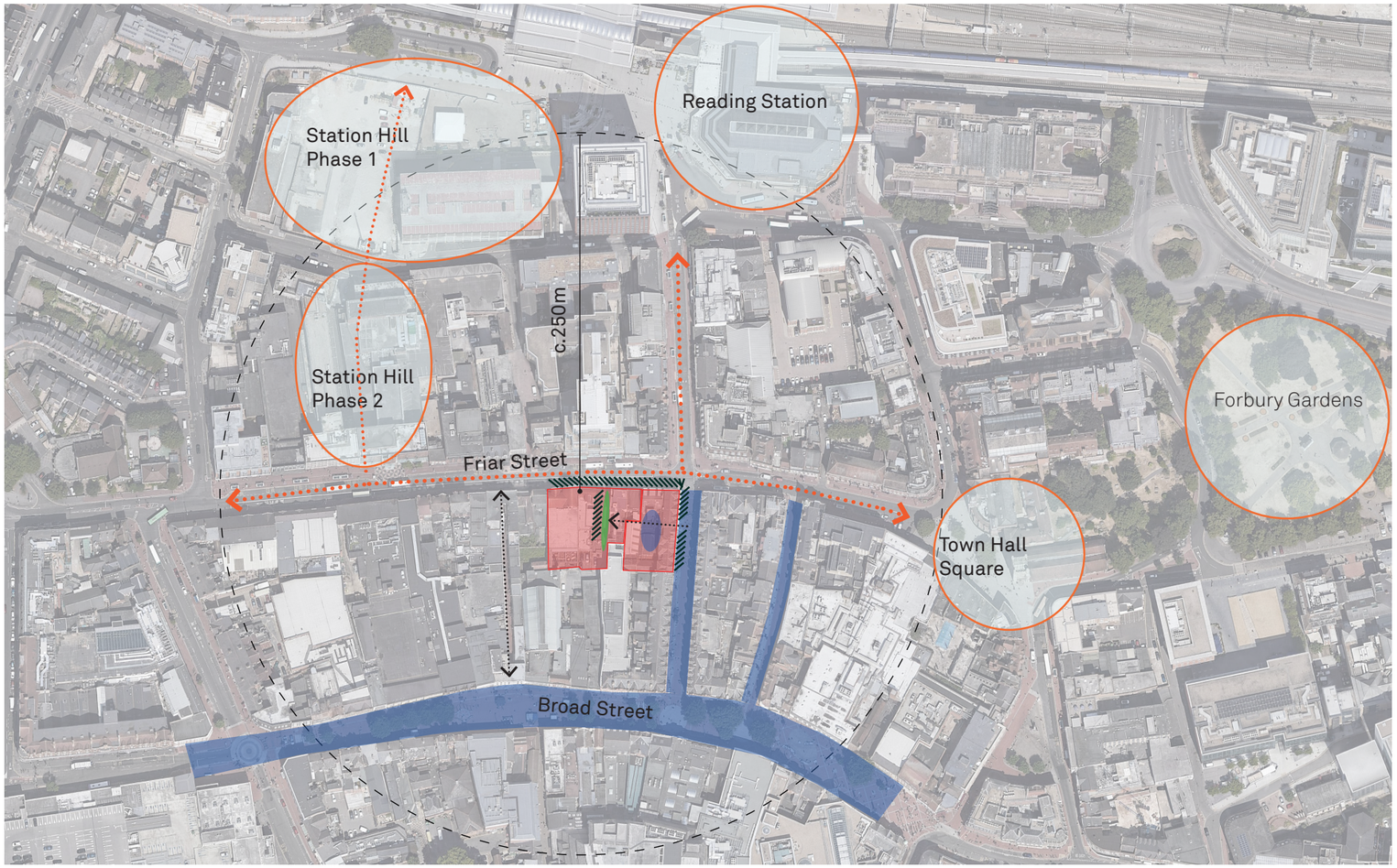
Important Town Centre Location

The site is located in the central area of Reading Town Centre adjacent to the key junction between Friar Street and Queen Victoria Street (QVS) approximately a 3-minute walk (circa 250m) from Reading Railway Station. QVS and 138-144 Friar street forms a prominent corner site that is in need of significant investment that will be a catalyst to the regeneration and redevelopment of this town centre site.

- Friar Street is a primary retail street
- Direct pedestrian access from Reading Train Station to Broad Street, the Oracle Shopping Centre and Reading Central Area
- Ground floor uses predominantly commercial Class E.
- Friar street is a primary bus route within the town centre.
- Excellent public transport links make the locality a popular destination
- Will become more popular when the Elizabeth Line opens

Strategic Site Objectives

- Implement a shared vision with Reading Council Planning Department established November 2019
- Prominent town centre location will be rejuvenated
- High quality landmark scheme
- Strengthen and improve the connectivity between railway station and main shopping area
- Vibrant destination that will improve the visual appearance of the area and reduce anti-social behaviour
- Significant investment and job creation
- Catalyst to regeneration of Friar Street
- Create leisure and business visitor accommodation to aid economic recovery



Key

- Phase 1 & 2 sites
- Pedestrian zone
- Principal route to / from station
- Arcade route
- Phase 1 Consented market square
- Opportunity for enhanced and new active frontages
- Opportunity for new pedestrian zone

3.0 THE SITE

3.1 SITE LOCATION

Thackeray Estates have a substantial land holdings across Reading Town Centre and in fact own the three corner buildings of Queen Victoria Street & Friar Street.

Buildings Owned in Reading:

* 1 Station Road
* 2-4 Queen Victoria Street
* 1-15 Queen Victoria Street
* 138-141 Friar Street
* 142 Friar Street
* 144-145 Friar Street
* 146 Friar Street
* 147-148 Friar Street
* 149-150 Friar Street
* 156-158 Friar Street
* 70-72 Broad Street
* 200-202 Broad Street



Key

- QVS and Friar Street Site
- Application site Phase 2
- Phase 1 = 210223
- Expanded Phase 1

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3.0 THE SITE
3.2 PHASE 1 - THE STORY SO FAR

Phase 1 - Planning Committee Approval June 2021

1-15 Queen Victoria Street and 147-148 Friar Street Reading

MIxed use development comprising high quality retail space, apart hotel and a new public market square.

The vision is to create a vibrant mixed use development in this key commercial town centre location while protecting one of the key heritage assets of Reading for future generations.

The proposed development seeks to provide 3308sqm of high quality retail space and Aparthotel space for Reading whilst ensuring the long term future of an important listed asset. The proposals will provide a retail hub and market square to invigorate and compliment the existing high street.

The existing listed buildings will be renovated and extended to provide an aparthotel location that will attract visitors to Reading. This will be key to aid the post-COVID economic recovery and attract new businesses and independent retail-ers.

Excerpt from 1-15 Queen Victoria Street planning application

Phase 1 site highlighted red





Excerpt from 1-15 Queen Victoria Street planning application

3.0 THE SITE
3.2 PHASE 1 - THE STORY SO FAR

QVS Phase 1

The redevelopment of 1-15 Queen Victoria Street & 147-148 Friar Street (QVS1) and 138-146 Friar Street (QVS2) has always been seen as one development in two phases with primary focus being on the repair, restoration, and regeneration of the listed buildings as the key catalyst for the redevelopment of the site and ultimately this part of the town centre.

To facilitate the redevelopment and create vitality, the site needs to be viable and therefore an underpinning use to create further viability is required, which will ultimately lead to them working together – the upper floor uses will fund the development of the market square, once operational, the market square will draw visitors that will then make use of the apart-hotel/ hotel uses.

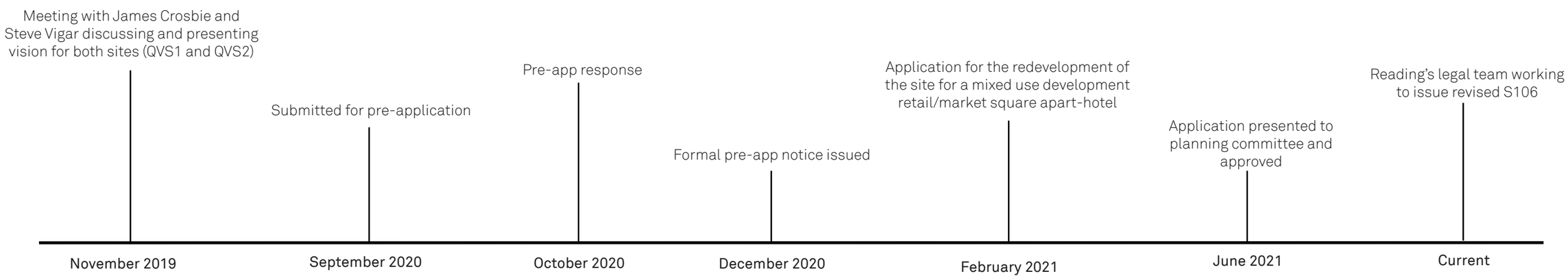
The market-square and significant enhancement of the shops to QVS is therefore a key focus that will be facilitated by the development of Phases 1 and 2, a vision shared by the Applicant, the Council and public.

There is significant interest and a preferred partner for the apart-hotel is currently in legal discussions. However, one crucial point is they are seeking further bed-spaces for the apart-hotel that they consider will be very popular and to further consolidate the viability. Accordingly, the incorporation of 145 and 146 (phase 1 +) into the apart-hotel scheme has been developed and will be submitted under a seperate application as part of Phase 1

As part of the incorporation of 145-146, the market-square will be further enhanced and the offering will be expanded upon to include the said units.

The market square and subsequent safe guarding/ regeneration of QVS1 is the key to the redevelopment of Thackeray Estates holding in QVS.

QVS Phase 1 Timeline



3.0 THE SITE
3.3 PHASE 2 - THE STORY SO FAR

QVS Phase 2

Following the extensive consultation to date and the overwhelming positive feedback from Phase 1, the primary aim of Phase 2 is to expand on the shared vision to encompas the Phase 2 site and further underpin the Market Square, heritage regeneration and new active frontages along Friar Street.

The vision remains as set out in the 'Vision Document' presented to Reading Council November 2019.

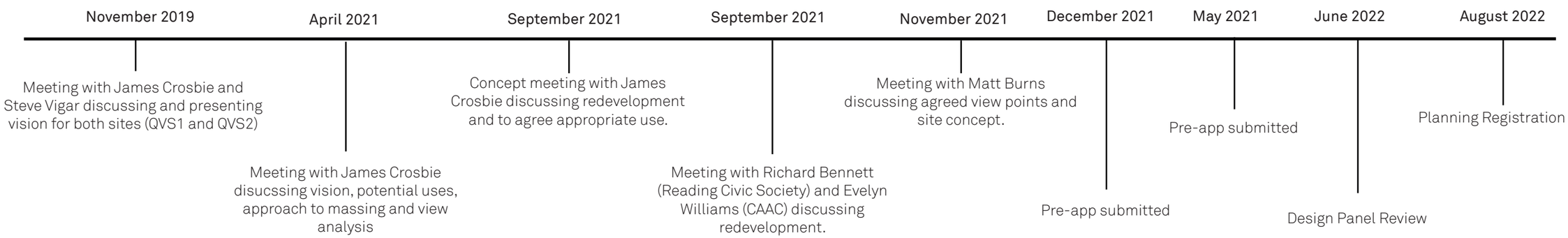
A hotel scheme is proposed for Phase 2 that integrates with the Phase 1 and allows the expansion of the market square (Phase 1+) , thus utilising the benefits of the said square and further underpinning the deliverability of the Phase 1 development.

The applicant has partnered with an international hotel operator to secure the site as it fits their exacting locational need.

As with all hotel operators, there is a minimum bedspaces and back of house area required that drives the scheme. Working with the operator from the outset will ensure that the scheme can be developed and is simply not speculative.

The below timetable sets out the extensive consultation and pre-application discussions to date which have informed the design proposals as presented in this Design & Access Statement.

QVS Phase 2 Timeline



3.0 THE SITE

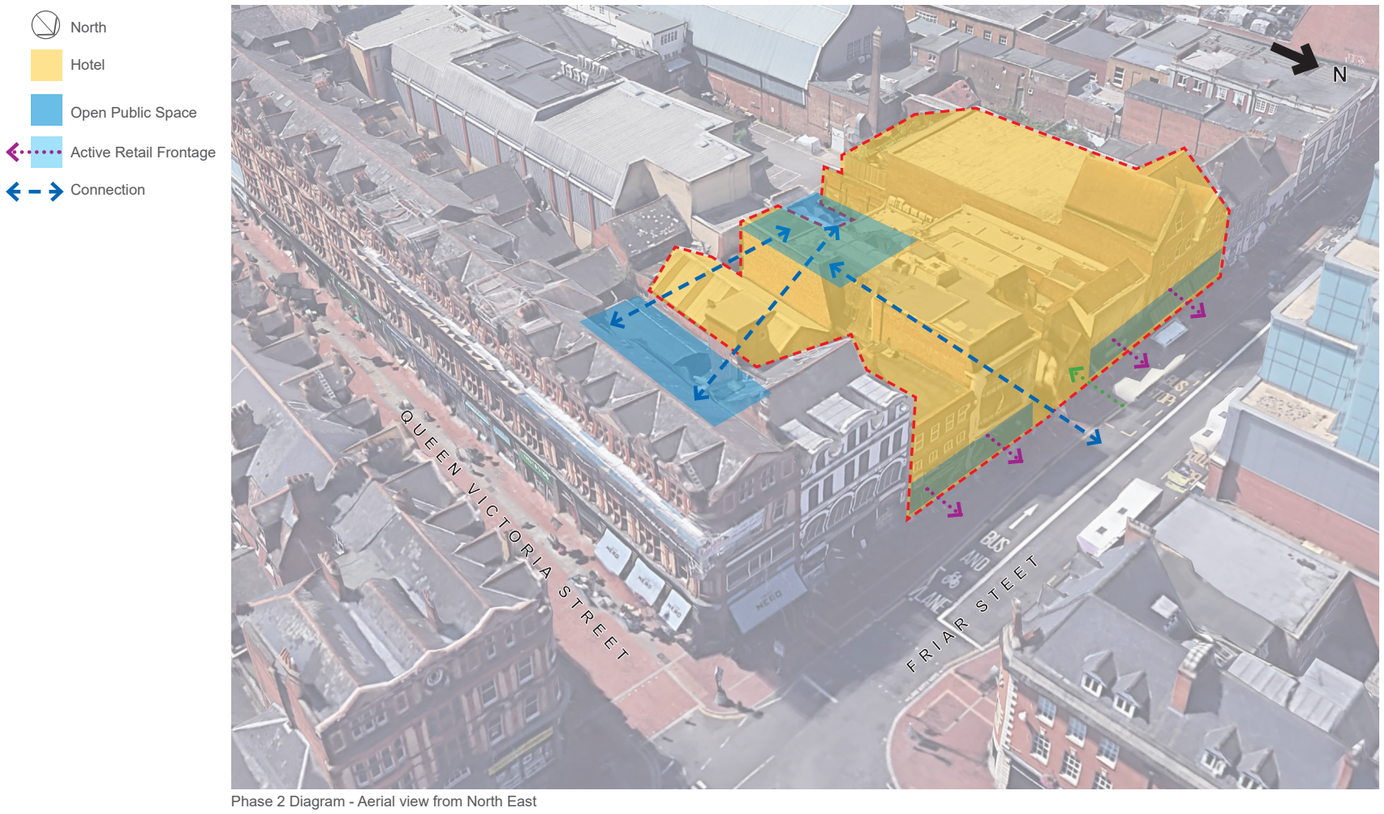
3.4 PHASE 2 - HOTEL QUARTER

Extract from Vision Document shared / discussed with Reading Council in November 2019;

Hotel Accommodation

Existing site constraints mean that an efficient residential development on site is unlikely to be possible. Therefore proposing a hotel/ apart-hotel that will cater for economic and leisure visitors to Reading is the most efficient use of the site. Such accommodation provides short-term accommodation without putting pressure on existing housing stock, which is the problem in London.

The building would be set away from the listed building (separated by Fife Court) and the height would be carefully assessed to ensure the building would be subservient and respect the heights of the existing streetscene. The proposed front facade would maintain the existing granular appearance responding to the contextual scale of Friar Street with a design to compliment but enhance the streetscene. There would be a connection to market hall creating new urban pathways, the re purposing of Fife Court as a public space and retail frontage would be further enhanced.



Phase 2 Diagram - Aerial view from North East


Floral Court Hotel, London


Blossom Street, London



Eccleston Yards, London

3.0 THE SITE

3.5 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

The Phase 2 site presents a unique opportunity to build on the core principles and vision behind the adjoining Phase 1 site. The following analysis summarises some of the key opportunities that the comprehensive redevelopment can offer.

REMOVE



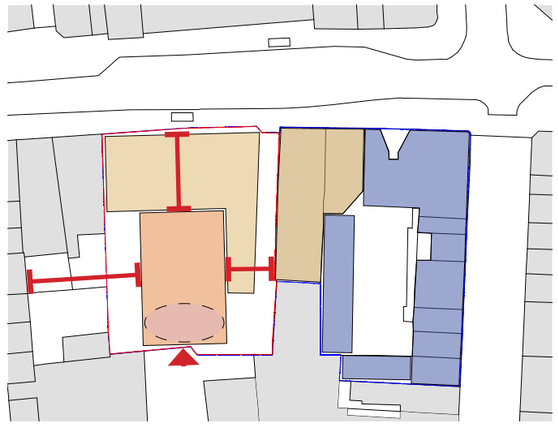
1-15 Queen Victoria Street & 147-148 Friar Street consent (Phase 1)

138-145 Friar Street site (Phase 2)

The existing buildings on the site provide active frontage on to Friar Street, however they do not allow for a new connection into the phase 1 site and they do not have aligned floorplates or a regular roof form, meaning they cannot be combined for use as a standalone development.

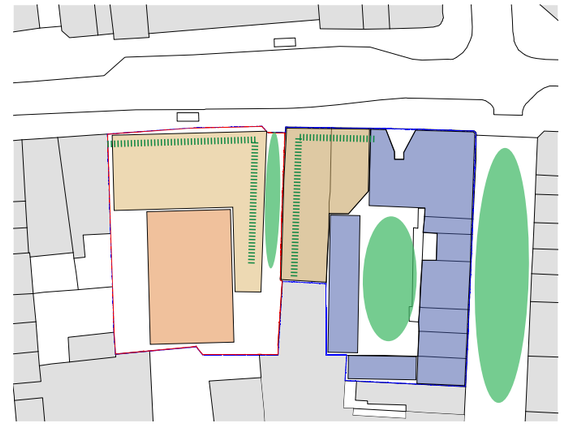
The removal of the buildings create an opportunity to connect to and enhance the Phase 1 Market Square and provide new areas of public realm and frontages.

CREATE



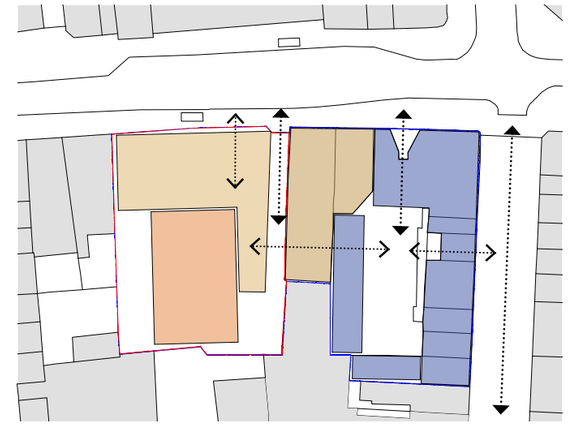
- New frontages to Friar Street and Fife Court
- Interface considerations with neighbouring buildings to inform massing.
- Surrounding views used to inform massing.
- Discrete service access to rear.

PUBLIC SPACE



- New active frontages along Friar Street and Fife Court.
- New public space and landscaping along Fife Court to create enhanced route.
- Potential for outdoor seating to support wider area traders
- New Market Square contained within Phase 1
- Underutilised site and urban grain can become unlocked.

CONNECT



- New connection to Phase 1 Market Square
- Passing trade into Phase 1 and surrounding area enhanced through Phase 2 development and new connections.
- New connections align with wider vision to unlock an under utilised site and support surrounding traders.
- Enable a currently under used and under valued area of land to the rear to become active.

3.5 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

KEY

Application site boundary

Phase 1 - Footprint

Phase 1 - New Public Square

Phase 1 - Active Retail Frontage

Phase 1 - New Link to Square

New extended active frontage

Visibility / Access Opportunities

Possible link through to Phase 1

Main Entrance

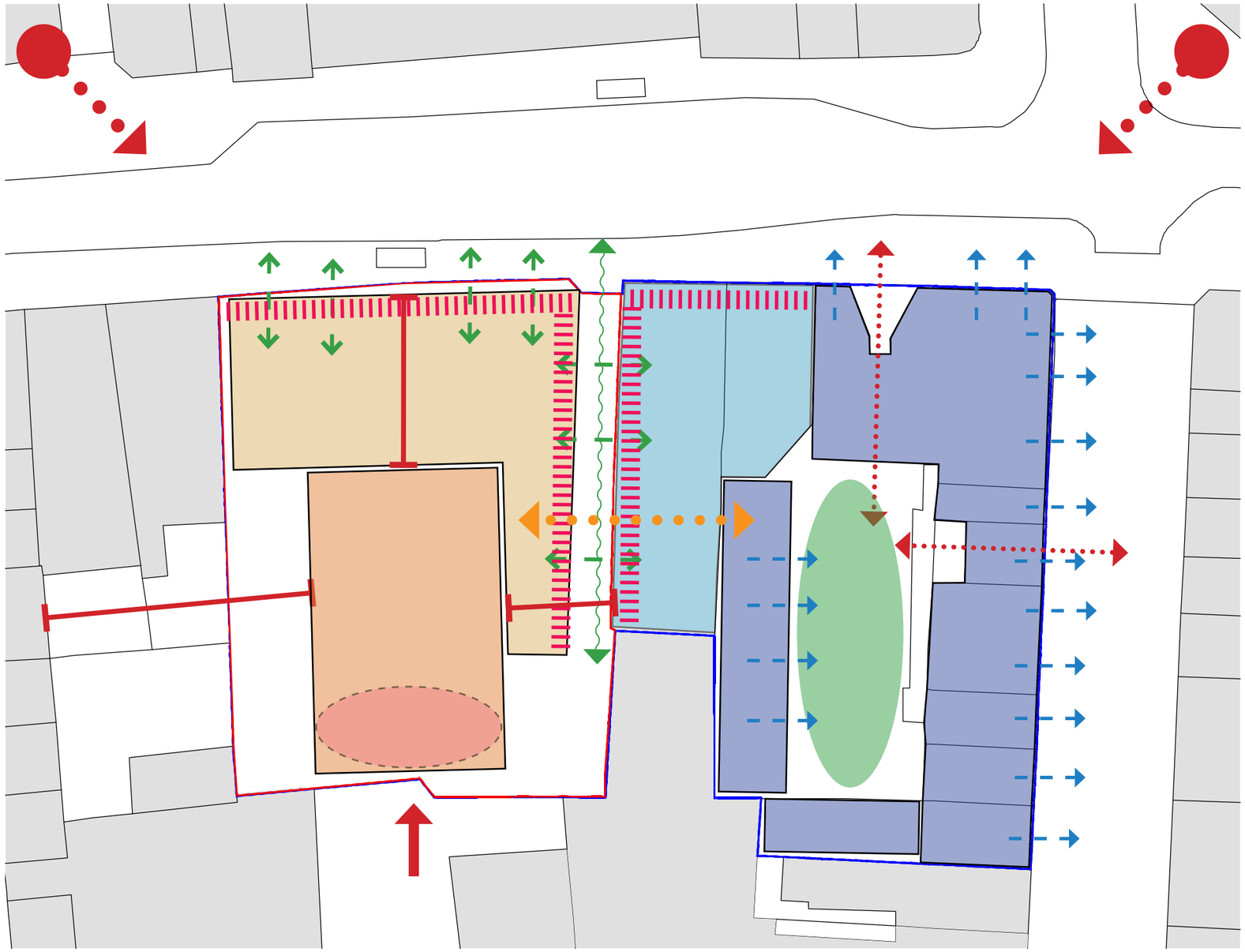
Interface / Visibility considerations

Rear service area

Rear service access

Key Local Views

Enhanced Fife Court Route

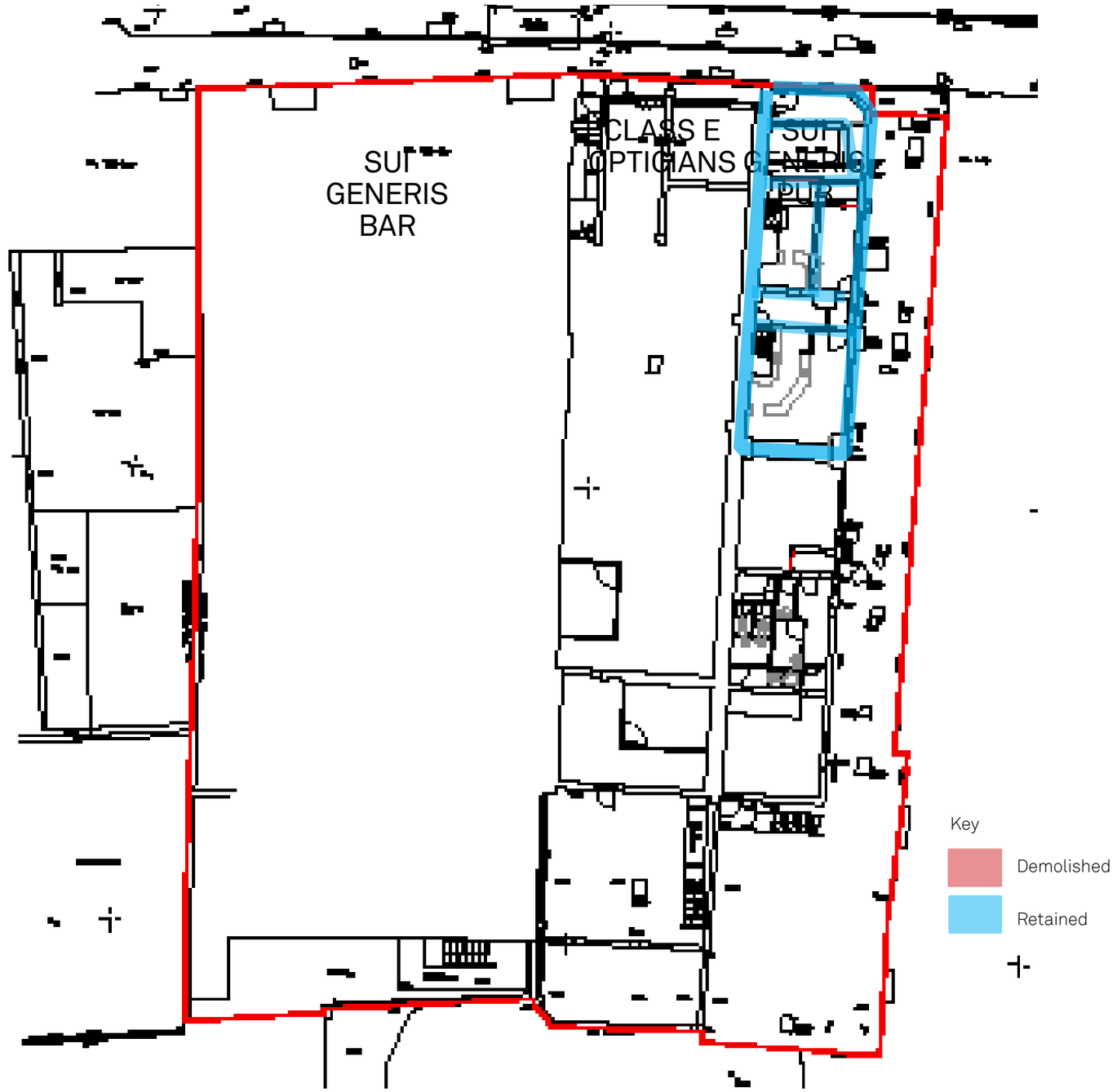


3.0 THE SITE

3.6 EXISTING SITE USE CLASSES

The site is occupied by commercial, business and services activities (Sui Generis & Class E).

To allow for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site and intrgration with the QVS Phase 1 proposal, the existing buildings on the site will be demolished, with the exception of the Bugle pub facade and internal fabric, as identified on the plan presented here.



3.0 THE SITE
3.7 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Heritage Assets within the Site

There are no listed buildings within the Site, nor does it lie within a conservation area. However, No 144, The Bugle PH has been proposed in the Council's Local List. For the purposes of this assessment, it is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.

The Bugle PH, although much altered, has communal and historic value. This is derived from its use as a beer house and the collective memory it evokes amongst its patrons within the area. Architecturally, however, the various alterations mean that the interest derived from its aesthetics is limited. The rear wing is now much altered with no vestige of the tenements. Much of it is a later addition and is of no value.

Excerpt from 'Heritage and Townscape Visual Impact Assessment 138-144 Friar Street' prepared by Revive & Tailor.











Friar Street and surrounding area historical photography

3.0 THE SITE

3.8 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

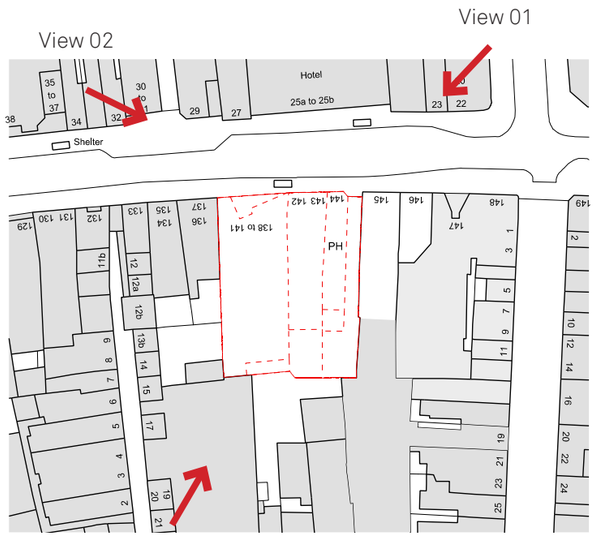
The aerial views presented here highlight the existing Phase 1 and Phase 2 sites.



View 01

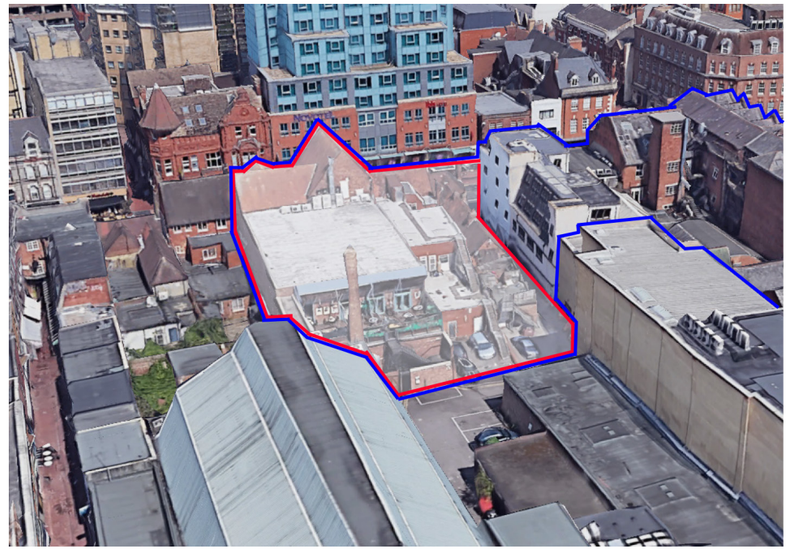


View 02





View 03



View 04

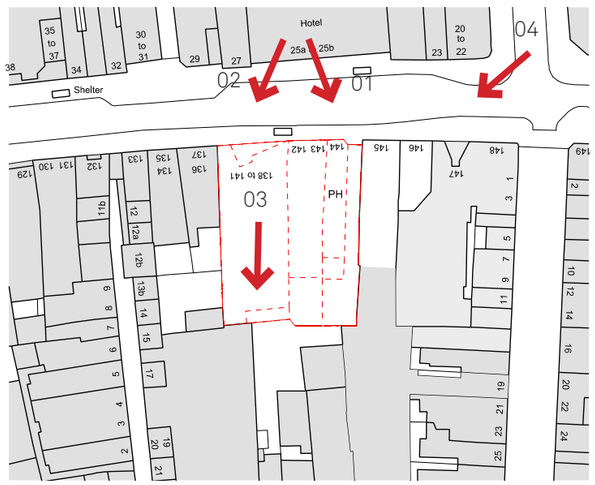
3.0 THE SITE
3.9 SITE CONTEXT

The site photography presented here highlight the existing Phase 1 and Phase 2 sites.



View 01







View 03



View 04

3.0 THE SITE

3.10 THE SITE AND IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

The Phase 2 site consists of 145 -146 Friar Street to the east of Fife Court and 138-144 Friar Street to the west of Fife Court.





