

1-15 Queen Victoria Street & 147-148 Friar Street, Reading Draft Management Plan

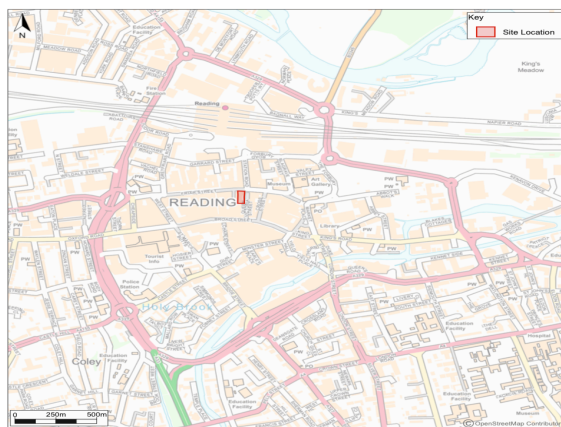
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 1-15 Queen Victoria Street & 147 – 148 Friar Street

The proposal is for a mixed-use scheme comprising a market square, retail and apart- hotel that represents a unique opportunity to enhance and utilise this highly accessible location within the town centre. It will bring a largely vacant and dilapidated site back into viable use, including the restoration and secured longevity of the Listed Buildings with significant focus on public realm improvements and creating a hub for independent retailers and a destination venue for Reading to meet the Council's aspiration for the site. This outline Management Plan has been prepared to accompany the planning application

1.2 The Site

The application site is located on the corner of Queen Victoria Street, which is pedestrianised, and Friar Street which is a predominantly bus focused red route.



The pedestrianised area to the east and south of the site, on Queen Victoria Street and Broad Street, restricts vehicular movements except for loading between 6pm and 10am.

The section of Friar Street to the west of the application site is a single carriageway comprising an eastbound and westbound bus lane and to the east Friar Street is subject to one-way circulation

1.2 VISION

The site is a prominent plot located on the corner of Queen Victoria Street ("QVS") and Friar Street, with significant frontage to both. QVS is the principle pedestrianised access point to the town centre from Reading Railway Station. The proposals will reinvigorate this prime and essential retail frontage in the Primary Shopping Area that is a key gateway to the town centre, provide economic stimulus and investment to this part of the town centre and enable the retention of the listed heritage assets, whilst bringing them back into optimum viable use and securing their future longevity.

A new Market Square will make optimum use of the space to the rear providing its own destination and reinvigorating the retail experience. The Market Square will be connected to both Queen Victoria Street and Friar Street creating a retail hub and visibility on two main street frontages. Some retail units will have dual aspect providing further connectivity to the Market Square behind. The square will be adaptable to multi-function uses such as community events, sporting occasions and themed markets.

The provision of a public market square, accessible from the pedestrianised QVS and Friar Street will deliver an enhancement to the public realm and an active public open space for socializing, eating and drinking, as well as enjoying public events. This element of the proposals clearly represents a benefit to this location, an enhancement to the vitality of the town centre and enhancing access to open space in this part of the town centre.

The management of the site is a key to its success and a strong and effective management system will operate to ensure the space is inviting to families and protects the amenities of surrounding patrons.

1.2 MANAGEMENT PLAN MARKET SQUARE

This document provides an overview on the measures that will be further developed and be applied to ensure both the existing surrounding residential properties as well as the impact upon potential occupiers of the proposed apart-hotel in terms of noise, artificial lighting and general disturbance for the proposed market square providing details of the proposed hours of use, noise controls, details of external lighting and general management practices including how access from the two entrances would be controlled.

Reading Council's Policy CC7 (Design and The Public Realm) seeks to ensure developments create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime do not undermine quality of life of community cohesion.

2.0 SCHEME PROPOSALS

- 2.1 General Arrangement layouts of the proposed scheme are included in Appendix A with the overview of the schedule of accommodation as set out below together with CGI of proposed scheme.



The proposed development seeks to provide 3,308 sq2 of high quality retail space and aparthotel space.

The proposals will provide a retail hub and market square to invigorate and complement the existing high street

The scheme will include the following:

- A publicly accessible, privately owned and managed, courtyard
- 16 retail units (Use Class E(a) (retail sale of goods), E(b) (Sale of food and drink))
- 40-unit apart hotel - the units will be a mix of studios, 1- bed and 2-bed apartments, which will be for short-term let (Class C1)



Public market square, creating a new public realm in this location, supporting active uses of the ground floor retail and providing a public space for events, exhibitions and cultural activities.

The aim is to create a flexible and active space that can adapt to a variety of uses. The courtyard will provide the opportunity for a mix of:



- Food Markets
- Sporting Events
- Music / drama Performance
- Passive enjoyment with the provision of public seating
- Outside seating for restaurants and retail
- Occasional one off events
- Christmas Markets



Pedestrian access to the square will be gained from new passages to be created from both QVS and Friar Street. This will also create permeability through the site where this does not currently exist and enhance the connectivity of Friar Street and QVS.

The proposals will bring a total of over 1,050 sqm of net internal enhanced and additional retail space in new functional and modern fit-for-purpose layouts of Use Class E(a) and E(b).

Ten of the proposed retail units will be under the 75 sqm identified for small shop units, which will retain and enhance this existing provision and character to QVS, assisting small businesses and a community of independent retailers and groups.

The end use occupiers for the retail units have yet to be identified. However, as per above is to create opportunities for small business in particular the design and creative communities. The ambition is to provide opportunity for / to attract new and innovative enterprise. It is the ambition to attract independent or small chains.

4.0 MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Thackeray Estates' Managing Agents would be responsible for management of the buildings and the courtyard and will ensure compliance with statutory regulations and public safety.

It is the intention that this will be retail led scheme with food and drink uses however the exact occupiers/operators is yet to be established and this Management Plan will be updated prior to occupation.

It is the intention that a management office will be set up in the scheme (the exact location is yet to be determined but will be within the basement area) and this will provide management and security resources for the scheme.

The Managing Agents will provide a 24 hours, seven days a week contact number to allow residents, retailers and occupiers to raise any issues of concern to be resolved as a matter of priority. There will be a thorough and transparent system for recording calls and reporting progress and resolution.

- 4.2 A Management Strategy would be further developed (and agreed with the Council as part of a planning condition) which would include for:

- No smoking permitted in the courtyard;
- Restriction in the hours of use and access to the market square – gates will be closed at night;
- The establishment of a residents' liaison group for on-going engagement with neighbours.
- Noise surveys, if necessary and appropriate.
- A Code of Conduct will be established covering such items as per below:

CODE OF CONDUCT

To ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for you, your family and friends, QVS Management asks that you take a moment to become familiar with our Code of Conduct.

- Please always keep an eye on any children in your care.
- Intimidating behaviour of any kind towards our visitors, staff or occupiers is not acceptable.
- Animals are not allowed, unless they are assistance dogs or on a lead.
- No litter dropping, except in the bins.
- Distributing printed materials, placement of any signs, banners, flags, advertising and / or soliciting of any kind is strictly prohibited,
- Selling goods without the Management approval is not allowed anywhere on the development or associated areas.
- Busking / street performing is not allowed, unless agreed with Management Team.
- Climbing or sitting on any balustrade, barrier, fence or railings is off limits.
- No ball games.

- *No cycling, skate boarding, roller blading.*
- *Bicycles and motorbikes should be parked and left only in designated parking areas.*
- *No swearing, shouting, mischief, vandalism or other disruptive behaviour will be acceptable.*
- *Commercial filming and photography are only allowed with the Management approval*
- *Crash helmets should be removed upon entering the Square.*
- *Attire that may be considered objectionable, constitutes a disguise, hoods and / or is intended to conceal identity is not permitted. Shirts / tops and footwear must be worn at all times.*
- *Smoking is permitted only in designated open space areas.*
- *Alcohol consumption is permitted only in designated and licenced premises.*
- *Images are being recorded for the purposes of public safety, crime prevention and prosecution, property management.*
- *The walkways, entries, corridors and other open areas must not be obstructed.*
- *Any act of vandalism will be dealt with accordingly and the local authorities informed.*

4.3 Early Engagement will be undertaken with Reading Council's Building Control Licensing Officer to agree specific requirements that will need to be captured in both the overall management strategy and in relation to any future Alcohol Licensing application.

4.4 Fire Safety Provisions – a fire safety strategy would be developed, which would be consulted with and agreed with the Fire Authority.

5.0 SECURITY & SAFETY

5.1 The principle of the security strategy is to promote community safety and remove, where possible, the fear of crime through sensible design of the built form. The pre-application consultee advice of the Crime Prevention Design Advisor has been considered to ensure this is achieved.

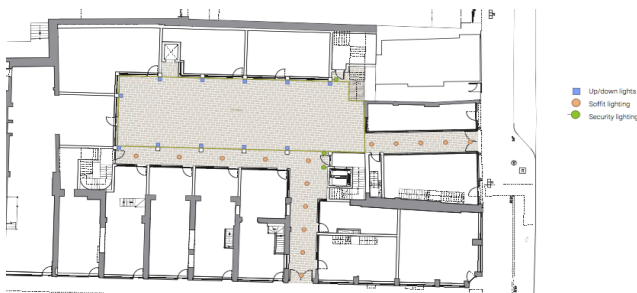
Whilst it is inevitable that this will be enhanced by way of digital surveillance, the promotion of natural surveillance is the primary objective. The nature of the market square behind the main high street will require some form of restricted access during the hours of darkness, however, the intention is that users of the aparthotel will be given 24 -hour access. An overview of the strategy is set out below.

Experienced security personnel will be employed to ensure the safety of visitors, residents and the public. They will be in the central management office, with designated patrols on the area which will be focused on the Market Square and the two access points. The level of security will reflect circumstance and it is envisaged will increase during the evening and during the night. There will be increased security provided for specific temporary events and activities in the market square.

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1. Secure entry gate to be locked out of hours. Gate to Queen Victoria Street to have video call link to allow access to aparthotel visitors out of hours.
2. Main entrance to aparthotel with video call access control. Authorised users of the aparthotel will be issued with a fob for entry.
3. Retail units to be secured internally if required by individual tenant.
4. Fire escape only, no access.
5. Entry to basement for maintenance only



The market square will be gated at the main entrances from Queen Victoria Street and Friar Street. These gates will be full height and positioned approx. 300mm (behind the main column on the elevation) so as not to create a hidden or recessed area when they are closed. These gates will have pass-through pedestrian gate that is controlled from the Aparthotel reception for residents arriving out-of-hours.

Access will be restricted during night-time hours to provide additional security for the rear retail units and the access to the aparthotel. Access through these gates now will be controlled by the aparthotel reception for residents arriving out-of-hours.

Access to the aparthotel main entrance will be controlled via audio/visual link to reception and electronic key card access for guest once they have been registered and checked in. Internally, guests will utilize passes that will only allow access to their rooms and circulation space associated.

The site will benefit from the natural surveillance of the busy high street and the digital surveillance of the on-street CCTV network and as such the main high street shops will largely be unaffected from the current situation. The retail units from Queen Victoria Street and Friar Street will have their own dedicated CCTV system and the Market Square will also be provided with CCTV coverage. Dome cameras will be installed throughout the stairwell, lift, reception and main corridors to the Aparthotel

The new market square will be provided with adequate lighting to ensure the area is well-lit and does not create any dark corners.

A more detailed proposal will be secured by way of condition; however, the principle of the proposal will be to light the undercroft and cut-through with high-level soffit lights

This will be supplemented with up/down lights on the piers of both the colonnade and new retail units.

Further security lighting will be used around the entrance to the aparthotel and bin store.

6.0 HOURS OF OPERATION

These will not be finalized until the Retail operators have been selected but it is envisaged that the opening hours will be as follows:

Retail Use Class E(a) (retail sale of goods):

07.00 – 23.00 Monday to Saturday
07.00 – 18.00 Sunday

Retail Use Class E(b) (Sale of food and drink):

07.00 – 23.30 Monday to Wednesday – with last orders at 23.00
07.00 – 24.30 Thursday to Saturday– with last orders at 24.00
10.00 – 22.30 Sunday - with last orders at 22.00

ENTRANCES AND EVENING EXIT STRATEGY

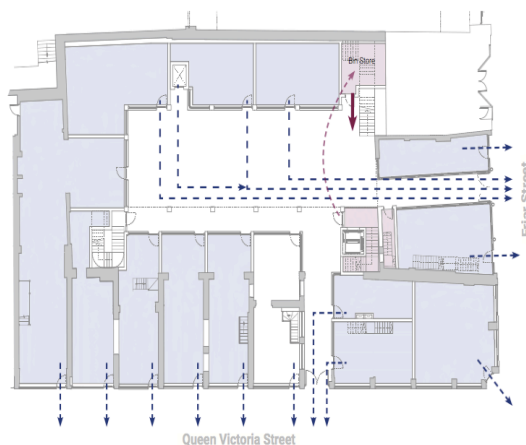
The market square will have two separate access points, which will provide open access during the day but as per above will be gated and closed at night.

There will be careful monitoring of the access routes in the evenings and during the weekends to ensure minimum disturbance to the local area.

A management strategy will be developed with each of the Retail Unit occupiers that will allow them to reserve the right to refuse entry or to remove persons from their own premises if deemed required and they will have a direct link to both the on-site and off-site central offices always.

7.0

SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS



Refer to the Servicing and Delivery Plan produced by Mode Transport Planning which forms part of application documentation – with the headlines as follows:

- The key principles of the DfT Quiet Deliveries Good Practice Guide would be adopted.
- Servicing and deliveries to the application site will take place as per existing arrangements and in accordance with the specified times from Queen Victoria Street which, while pedestrianised, has allowances for servicing and deliveries to the properties located along the street; whereby access is allowed for loading between 6pm and 10am.
- The occupier of the apart-hotel will determine the requirements for deliveries and servicing which will be within the parameters of the local restrictions. This will be in consultation with RBC, if required.
- Designated loading bays are provided on Station Road and Friar Street to the east of the site where loading is permitted between 5am and 11pm. Goods can be trolleyed a short distance from this location, to the application site.
- Alternatively, Friar Street to the west of the site permits loading on sections of double yellow lined kerbside outside of the 7.30am – 9.30am and 4.00pm – 6.00pm exclusion time period

8.0

M&E PLANT

Refer to the M&E Report and Noise Reports which forms part of application documentation. All new extract and plant equipment would conform to the necessary legislation and controls to ensure that there is no impact on residential amenity by way of smells, vibration and disturbance.

The building services plant and equipment would be designed to comply with the applicable requirements, in terms of acoustic noise, vibration and fume extraction.

9.0

CLEANING / REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

A strategy will be devised and implemented that will ensure that the highest levels of cleanliness of the market square will be maintained at all times. The Managing Agents will oversee this and will ensure that any required repairs and maintenance issues are attended as quickly as possible.

10.0

HEALTH & SAFETY

All required health and safety and fire risk assessments will be carried out frequently and be available on site for inspection.

11.0

NOISE CONTROL

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This application is accompanied by a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA), produced by KP Acoustics. This assesses the impact of the proposals on existing sensitive receptors, as well as the conditions for future occupiers of the development, notably the proposed aparthotel.

The NIA has assessed:

- (1) The impact of proposed plant, which will be located on the roof of the proposed rear extension (main plant enclosure), on the roof of the two-storey rear addition in the public square (secondary plant enclosure).
- (2) The potential noise generation from activity in the public square and the retail units themselves has also been taken into account. The Applicant controls the first floor of 146 Friar Street and it is not in residential use.

The NIA makes recommendations/measures to ensure appropriate noise levels are achieved for the aparthotel use and they have been incorporated into the proposals accordingly including the use of secondary glazing of the Aparthotel rear windows.

This will ensure noise levels to sensitive receptors will remain below the identified standards and will not give rise to detrimental noise impacts. This will protect the amenity of existing surrounding residential and commercial uses as well as the proposed future occupiers of the aparthotel.