

173 - 175 Friar Street Hotel
Draft Operational Management Plan

Introduction

This draft Operational Management Plan (OMP) has been prepared on behalf of Sonic Star Properties Ltd in relation to the proposed redevelopment of 173 - 175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1JL to provide a 182-bed hotel. This draft OMP sets out the guiding principles for the operation of the building as a hotel with bar / restaurant and gym.

At present there are no named operators for the hotel however this draft OMP has been prepared to ensure that any future occupier understands their responsibilities to operate successfully in Reading. Following the grant of planning permission, Sonic Star Properties Ltd will work with the successful hotel operator to refine and finalise the operational management plan with regard to the specific requirements of the operator.

The hotel operator will then be responsible for the operational management of the hotel and associated commercial uses and will put in place a robust management structure and procedures to implement the OMP.

The Applicant's vision is to develop a design and secure planning permission for a destination restaurant, bar and hotel that provides all-day animation to this superb site. It will be accessed by both overnight guests and day visitors and will be a location for local businesses and residents to meet and/or dine. The design will appeal to a reputable operator looking to create an authentic and iconic operation that matches the prestige of the location and will place interior design and customer experience at the top of their agenda.

This draft OMP follows pre-application discussions with officers throughout 2020. This OMP therefore includes the following:

- details of operating hours;
- capacity of each use;
- details of measures to minimise the impact of the uses upon neighbouring amenities and the local environmental quality;
- queuing management;
- measures to manage smokers;
- measures to ensure that customers leave the premises quietly including taxi booking arrangements;
- measures to control noise from within the premises;
- details for the management of deliveries;
- details for the management of waste and bottle collections.

The Site

The site is located on the north eastern part of Friar Street and is formed of two properties, known collectively as the former Bristol and West Arcade:

- 173-174 Friar Street;
- 175 Friar Street.

The site is located to the west of Market Place and the south of Friar Street with predominantly retail and commercial uses in the immediate vicinity of the site. The shops of Broad Street and the Oracle are approximately 250 metres to the south in Reading core town centre, whilst Reading station is approximately 350 metres to the north. The application site is therefore in a highly sustainable location, served by public transport and is accessible by walking and cycling hence, the development proposals are in line with the relevant national, regional, and local transport policies.

Proposal Details

The proposed scheme seeks to demolish the former Bristol & West Arcade to provide a 8-storey incl. basement hotel building with up to 182 rooms, a ground floor bar / restaurant and gym. The proposed scheme involves the following elements:

- Demolition of vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (173-175 Friar Street) and redevelopment of site including minor excavations at basement level to provide an 8-storey building to provide a hotel (C1 use) of up to 182 beds, creation of a bar/restaurant/gym at ground floor associated with the hotel and the provision of ancillary facilities including outdoor terrace, demolition of rear parts of 29-31 and 32 Market Place, the change of use of the retained units at 27-28, 29-31 and 32 Market Place at first, second and third floors to provide 8 residential units, retention of flexible Class E uses at ground and basement floors of 27 – 28 and 32 Market Place, retention of 260.4 sqm as a public house (Sui Generis use) at basement and ground floor of 29 – 31 Market Place with associated external works, landscaping, plant, cycle store, and substation;

Further information on the proposed scheme is provided in the supporting design and access statement prepared by Norr Architects, the planning statement prepared by Savills and the heritage report prepared by Turley.

Uses

Hotel (C1 use)

Operation description

The use of the basement, ground and upper floors of the building as a 182 bed hotel with associated facilities including bar/restaurant, gym, kitchen, back of house staff areas, plant, bin store and cycle storage.

Opening hours

The proposed opening hours for the Hotel (C1 use) use will be as follows:

Monday - Saturday, Sundays & Bank Holidays	24 hours a day, seven days a week, in line with customer expectation of a market-leading hotel
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The hotel reception and front desk will be staffed throughout the night to facilitate guest and visitor arrivals and departures through the courtyard entrance accessed from Friar Street. This will be supplemented by a comprehensive CCTV monitoring system and access control system to prevent unwanted access and anti-social behaviour.

Size of premises

The proposed hotel premises will measure up to 7,456 sq. m. (GIA), split across basement, ground and 7 upper levels.

Access

The site is located in an area of excellent public transport accessibility. Guests and visitors of the hotel and associated restaurant and bar will be encouraged to access the site using active and more sustainable methods of travel, including public transport services, walking, and cycling.

Pedestrian access to the main hotel entrance and reception area will be primarily through the courtyard entrance accessed from Friar Street. Access can also be undertaken through the bar restaurant area at ground floor, also via Friar Street. Access to the gym will be only from within the hotel at ground floor level.

The nearest bus stops to the site are located within 100 metres of the eastern boundary on Market Place. The stops on Market Place are served by a total of 37 different bus services, highlighting the central and highly accessible location of the site.

Reading Station is located approximately 350 metres to the north of the site and offers a range of rail services connecting to destinations including London Paddington, Swansea, Manchester, and Gatwick Airport. The station benefits from a taxi rank, cycle parking provision and a multi-storey car park. Crossrail, together with Network Rail and Transport for London (TfL), are working on Reading station to prepare for the start of the Elizabeth line services. When the full route opens, four Elizabeth line trains an hour (six an hour at peak times) will allow passengers to travel right through central London without having to change trains. Two Elizabeth line trains an hour (four an hour at peak times) will run between Maidenhead and Reading.

Guests arriving by road, whether by private car or taxi, will drop off directly outside the hotel entrance on Friar Street. No car parking will be provided at the site in order to discourage guests or visitors from travelling to the site by car.

Servicing

Servicing and delivery arrangements will be made principally using the existing on-street loading opportunity on Market Place, with secondary opportunities on Friar Street and Blagrove Street in the vicinity of the application site, as per the existing arrangements for surrounding businesses.

It is likely that the hotel will require the following servicing arrangements:

- C1 Hotel: 3 - 5 daily servicing movements associated with foods, beverages, cleaning products, laundry and linen.

A daily delivery and refuse collection strategy will be established to regulate and manage all vehicles delivering goods and materials together with those removing waste and laundry. All deliveries can call ahead with estimated times of arrival to ensure that a member of staff is available to receive the delivery itself.

All delivery vehicles will be no larger than a long wheel-based van and 7.5t box van. The Council's refuse vehicle (10.4m) can also be accommodated on street as per the existing arrangements.

It is noted that not all of these delivery vehicles will be additional to the existing network and as such it is considered that they can be accommodated without detriment to the surrounding highway network.

Refuse

A dedicated refuse storage area will be provided at ground floor level which accommodated both general waste and recycling bins as well as food waste bins relating to the kitchen. Smaller waste and recycling bins will be provided across the premises including within changing rooms, the bar, reception, and hotel bedrooms. Maintenance staff will be responsible for transferring waste into the main bin storage area.

Maintenance staff will also be responsible for moving waste from the main bin storage area to street via Market Way. Maintenance staff will be required to ensure that all waste is bagged correctly for collection by the collection service.

It is anticipated that refuse will be collected daily.

Plant Noise - RBA Acoustics

Plant noise limits have been set a noise level limit 10 dB below the background for all operating plant at 1m from the nearest noise sensitive receptor (35-37 dB during daytime and 32-38 dB at night-time) and are summarised as follows:

Table 8358/T4 – Plant Noise Emission Limits

Measurement Position	L _{Aeq} Noise Level limit of all operating plant (dB) at 1m from the nearest noise sensitive façade	
	Daytime (07:00 – 23:00)	Night-time (23:00 – 07:00)
Position 1	36	34
Position 2	35	32
Position 3	37	38

These levels apply to the cumulative free-field noise level from all plant and equipment associated with the development, when measured at the nearest NSR and when operating at its maximum.

It will be the responsibility of the future occupier to ensure that any required plant adheres to the noise criteria set out above.

Restaurant & Bar

Operation description

Part of the ground floor level will be used as a bar and restaurant, open to the public as well as hotel guests.

The management team of the future restaurant will be required to take their responsibilities as a neighbour very seriously. Management controls could include:

Extensive employee induction and on-going refresher training, covering the following:

- responsibilities in the local area and towards local residents
- customer care and hospitality
- complaint handling
- food safety
- health and safety
- fire safety
- team working skills and regular team meetings
- Obligations under the Licencing Act 2003.

Operational procedures to mitigate nuisance in the local area including:

- Responsible management of customers in and outside the premises
- Controlled management of the arrival of customers
- No queuing permitted outside and prevention of loitering or any disturbance outside the premises
- Monitoring and supervising customers smoking outdoors;
- Sympathetic servicing of the premises.

The above operational controls would be implemented so that all employees understand their responsibilities and to promote the operators commitment to operate in a professional manner, which will ensure that there will be no adverse effect on local residents or the local environment.

The main kitchen will be located at ground floor level.

Size of premise

The proposed restaurant / bar premises will measure a total of 284.3 sqm (GIA) at ground floor level. The proposed restaurant would accommodate up to 250 covers at full capacity.

Hours

The proposed customer opening hours for the restaurant and bar use will be as follows:

Day / Area	Restaurant	Bar
Monday - Friday	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 23:00
Saturday	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 23:00
Sunday	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 22:00
Bank Holidays	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 23:00
Terrace area / outdoor eating and drinking	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 23:00

It is however proposed to include a 'winding down' period in relation to bar sales and kitchen use to limit the operational period of the kitchen equipment.

The bar area within the ground floor will remain open until 23:00 (Monday - Saturday) as per the UK's licencing laws giving customers a reasonable time to finish their drinks and vacate the premises in an orderly and responsible fashion. The bar area will close earlier on Sundays.

The restaurant's kitchen will close an hour before closing to allow for the winding down of plant, tidying and full closure of the kitchen.

Access

The hotel's restaurant and bar will be open to non-resident guests which will be a significant benefit enabling the public to experience the hotel's hospitality.

Access to the restaurant will be directly from Friar Street at ground floor level. Access to the restaurant will be fully wheelchair accessible and step free.

Servicing

Servicing and delivery arrangements will be made principally using the existing on-street loading opportunity on Market Place, with secondary opportunities on Friar Street and Blagrove Street in the vicinity of the application site.

It is likely that the restaurant will require the following servicing arrangements:

- Bar / Restaurant: 2 – 3 daily servicing movements associated with foods, beverages, cleaning products, laundry and linen.

All deliveries to the premises will be directed to the "Goods-In" door located on Markey Way where a member of staff will greet and receive all arrivals.

Refuse

There are many requirements for the disposal of waste and recycling relating to hospitality premises which need to adhere to the health and safety laws for guests and staff.

A dedicated refuse storage area will be provided at ground floor level which separates the general waste and recycling. Access to this storage area will be for staff only. Refuse will then be transferred by a member of staff to street level prior to a dedicated collection time. Staff will ensure that all waste is bagged up correctly pending collection by the refuse services in line with the Council's normal collection times.

The future occupier of the unit will be required to promote the recycling of waste and will explore ways of increasing staff and visitor awareness of reducing waste.

Any specialist waste will be collected by a specialist waste contractor as required.

All delivery vehicles will be no larger than a 2-axle 18-tonne rigid vehicle. The Council's refuse vehicle (10.4m) can also be accommodated on street as per the existing arrangements.

Noise Control

The premises are located within a mixed-use area, incorporating retail, public houses, restaurants, offices, and residential premises located along Friar Street and Market Place.

The main entry and departure point is located on Friar Street. Customers will be welcomed by a member of staff upon entry of the premises. During busy periods, additional staff will supervise the entry and egress of customers.

Doors will not be held open to prevent the escape of noise. There will be a lobby area where customers are greeted and can wait to be seated.

All customers will be supervised and managed by staff at the front door as they depart. The departure of customers will be managed in accordance with the dispersal policy set out in this document to ensure that all visitors leave in an appropriate fashion.

The accompanying acoustic report confirms that with the incorporation of double glazing, would ensure that the noise emission levels at Friar Street do not exceed the Local Authority requirements. It is expected that the following controls will be implemented:

- Music noise levels will be controlled using automatic noise limiters installed in all areas where amplified music is likely to be played. Levels will be set to ensure noise transfer to neighbouring premises is acceptable and within limits agreed with the Local Authority;
- A comprehensive customer management procedure will be adopted to ensure there is no noise nuisance caused by customers either inside or outside the premises;
- A telephone number can be provided for an appointed member of staff who could be made available to residents and businesses within the vicinity during the operational hours.

Extraction - JH Partners / Southdowns Environmental

The future restaurant kitchen will be provided with kitchen extract ductwork to 1m above the ridge at roof level from Ground Floor, with capped connection provided for future tenant fit out.

All Ventilation Plant and filtration will be supplied and installed by tenant. Provision within the restaurant will need to be made by the tenant for odour control which could include Electrostatic Precipitator filtration or fine filtration followed by carbon filtration or UV Ozone system in the hood to provide high level odour control.

Future comfort cooling systems will be designed and installed by the fit-out contractors.

All uses

Taxi Strategy

Taxi cabs are readily available within the local area and operate frequently along Friar Street, Market Place and Blagrove Street. Customers who are travelling by taxi will be encouraged to quickly make their way to a waiting taxi cab when leaving the premises.

Staff will also be able to assist customers by calling a taxi if requested by a visitor. Whilst customers are waiting for a taxi they will be asked to remain inside the premises. Drivers will be encouraged to wait outside on either Friar Street or Market Place (depending on the local restrictions) away from the nearest residential premises to minimise any noise or disruption.

Other app based private hire vehicles are also available and may be used by customers. Where customers enquire, they will be told the postcode of 173 - 175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1JL and asked to wait inside the premises until their taxi has arrived to ensure a quick and quiet exit.

Staff Accessibility

Staff access to the development will be directly from Friar Street or Market Way. All parts of the development will be fully accessible to staff via stair cores and lifts including the back of house at basement level.

Visitor Accessibility

Access to the development for non-hotel visitors will be to the public areas only directly from Friar Street. Hotel guests will have secure access to the upper floors of the hotel by way of secure key card via the lifts or stairs.

The ground floor will be entirely level access for future visitors to comply fully with the Building Regulations.

Security

The approach to security at this development will be to adopt a layering system whereby a series of detection opportunities are applied at the earliest opportunity to enable an effective response to be initiated. The security strategy will be to identify any external risks such as burglary or anti-social behaviour, internal risks such as criminal damage, theft, or violence.

The security strategy is to ensure that all parts of the building meet Secure by Design standards. Doors will open outward at the perimeter wherever possible; gates will be clear of any climbing aids and will be fitted with the correct delay timers.

Fire exits will not have any hardware on the external face. All fire exits will be easily operated through a push pad or panic bar system and will be monitored through the CCTV system.

CCTV will be installed across the key parts of the building including reception, lifts, bin store and cycle storage areas as well as to the external parts of the building at ground floor including the courtyard area. The main purpose of the CCTV will be used to deter internal crime levels.

The access control strategy comprises of staff key fob access for access however it is envisaged that the building will be appropriately managed by the main reception area for visitors.

The reception area will be the main point at which all people access the site on arrival to the hotel where guests can check in and be provided with their own secure key card for access to the upper floors of the hotel and their booked room.

Smoking Control

Staff will regularly supervise and monitor customer activity within and outside the premises. There will be no smoking allowed within the premises to comply with law.

External seating is proposed to serve the restaurant within the new courtyard area as well as some informal seating in warmer weather to the Friar Street entrance. Within these areas however it will be hotel policy that no smoking is prohibited outdoors immediately adjacent to the premises or within any of the hotel's external seating areas. The remainder of the courtyard will be public space and smoking is likely to be uncontrollable.

Management will ensure that the stretch of pavement outside the premises are maintained clear of cigarette and cigar ends at all times.

Staff will be discouraged by the management team from smoking in the locality of the premises which will be included in employment contracts.

During the hours of operation, the management shall ensure sufficient measures are in place to remove and prevent any litter or waste arising from customers immediately outside the premises and that the area shall be swept, and litter is removed on a regular basis and by the end of the customer opening period.

All customer behaviour that causes public nuisance or crime and disorder is not and will not be tolerated. Customers will be asked to leave immediately by the management.

Other Matters

A final version of this document will contain a detailed management plan explaining how any impacts on neighbouring residential uses will be mitigated. This will be produced with the future occupier prior to their occupation.

The hotel operator will provide residents and businesses with a direct telephone number and contact, in order that any concerns can be communicated quickly and efficiently to the hotel management.

Conclusion

Through adopting and adhering to all of the controls and safeguards that have been outlined within this draft OMP, the proposed development will continue to protect the character and appearance of Friar Street and Market Place as well as the amenity of nearby residents.

It is expected that a series of planning conditions will be imposed by the Council to ensure that the principles within the document are adopted by future occupiers of the development and will therefore operate successfully in Reading.