

EAA - EMRE AROLAT ARCHITECTURE



RIVERSIDE CENTRAL

Volume I
Design & Access Statement
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This document Contains:

The detailed design proposals for Riverside Central, a residential development located on, 23 Duke Street, Reading, RG1 4SA. This document forms Volume I: Design and Access Statement to support the planning application, this should be read in conjunction with: Volume II: Application Drawings.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 APPLICATION SUMMARY

The Site is located at 23 Duke Street, Reading, RG1 4SA. The site is referred to in this application as Riverside Central, and is comprised of existing commercial buildings (Dukesbridge House and Dukesbridge Chambers) along with a car park to the north of Dukesbridge House and east of Dukesbridge Chambers. The site is bounded by residential and office buildings from the west, east and north sides with the river on the south.

The planning boundary includes Dukesbridge House and part of Dukesbridge Chambers. Dukesbridge House has a consented Permitted Development which was approved in June 2019 (Application No: 190602). Change of use of building from Class B1(a)(offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 77 residential units has been granted.

This planning application is for the side extension to the East & West of Dukesbridge House and a three storey roof extension above.

 Site Boundary
 Area Concerning Planning Application



Ordinance Survey Map showing planning boundary and areas concerning this planning document

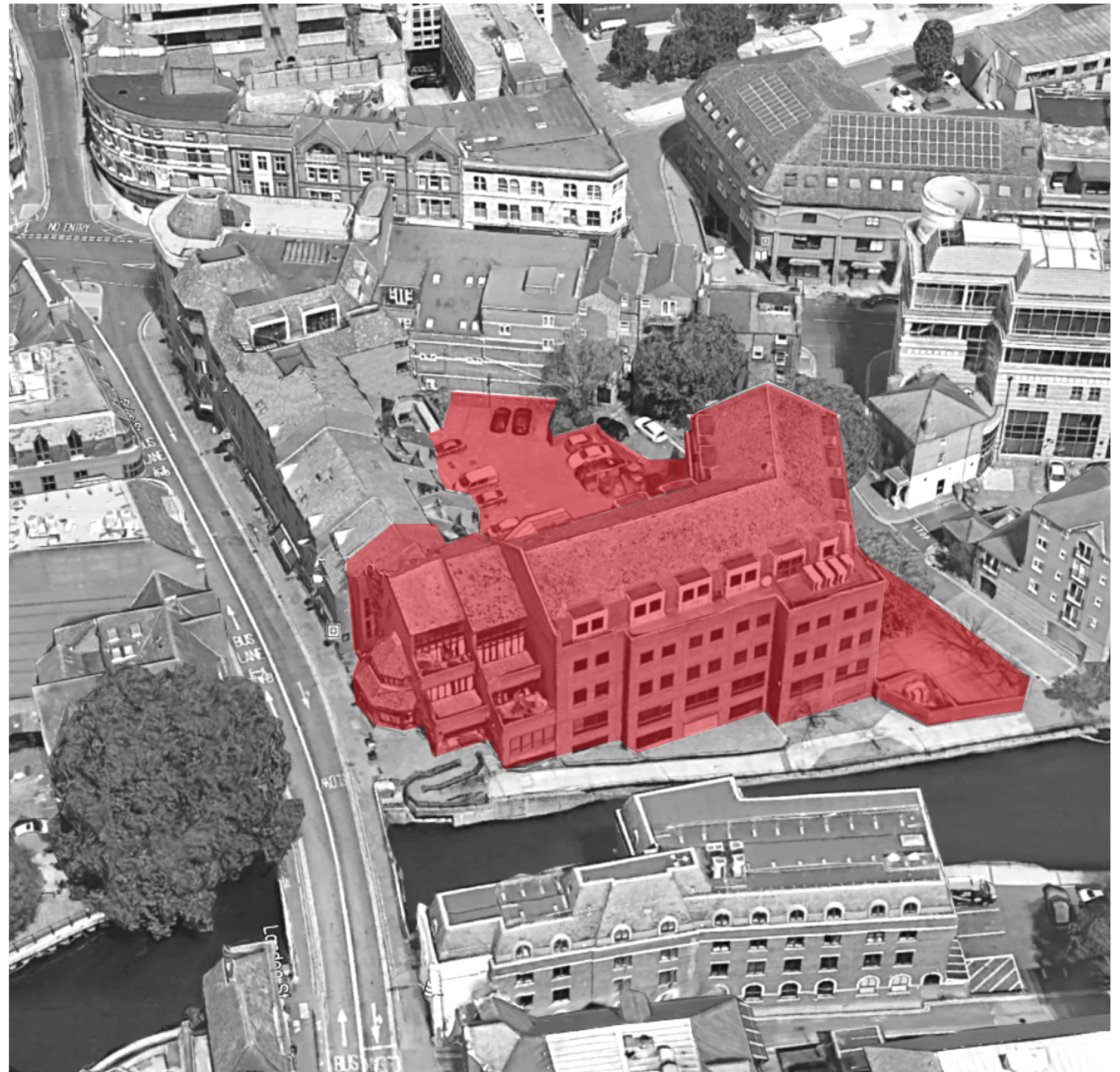
1. INTRODUCTION

1.2 SITE LOCATION

Dukesbridge House
23 Duke Street
Reading
RG1 4SA



Site Location Within Reading



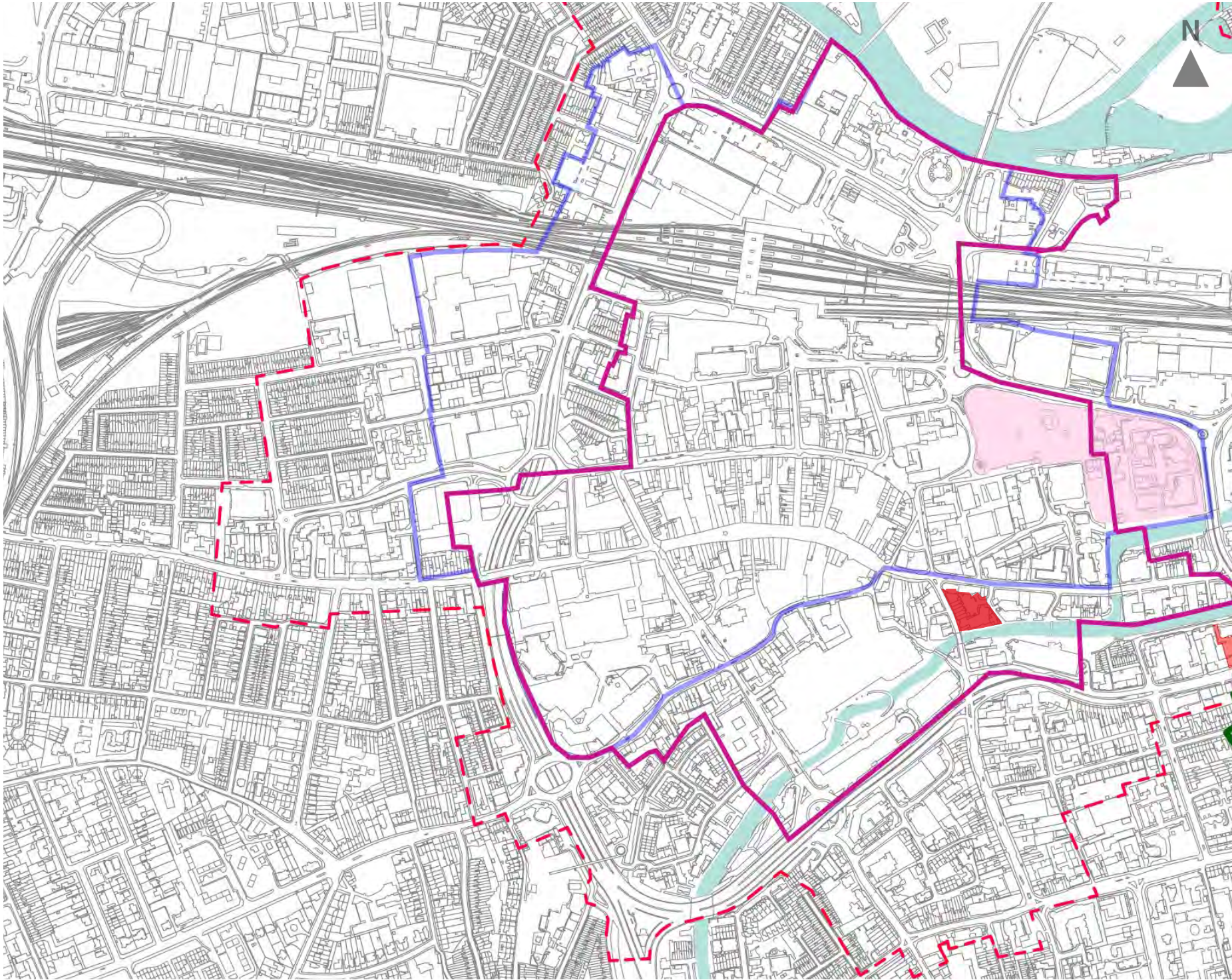
Aerial View of the Site Looking North

2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING AREAS

Dukesbridge House is located within an Urban Block immediately to the north of the River Kennet and within the Central Zone, which is also inside the Inner Distribution Road (IDR Zone 1). The site is located within the London Street Conservation Area.

- Inner Distribution Road (IDR) Zone 1
- Central core
- Office core
- Ancient monument
- Site



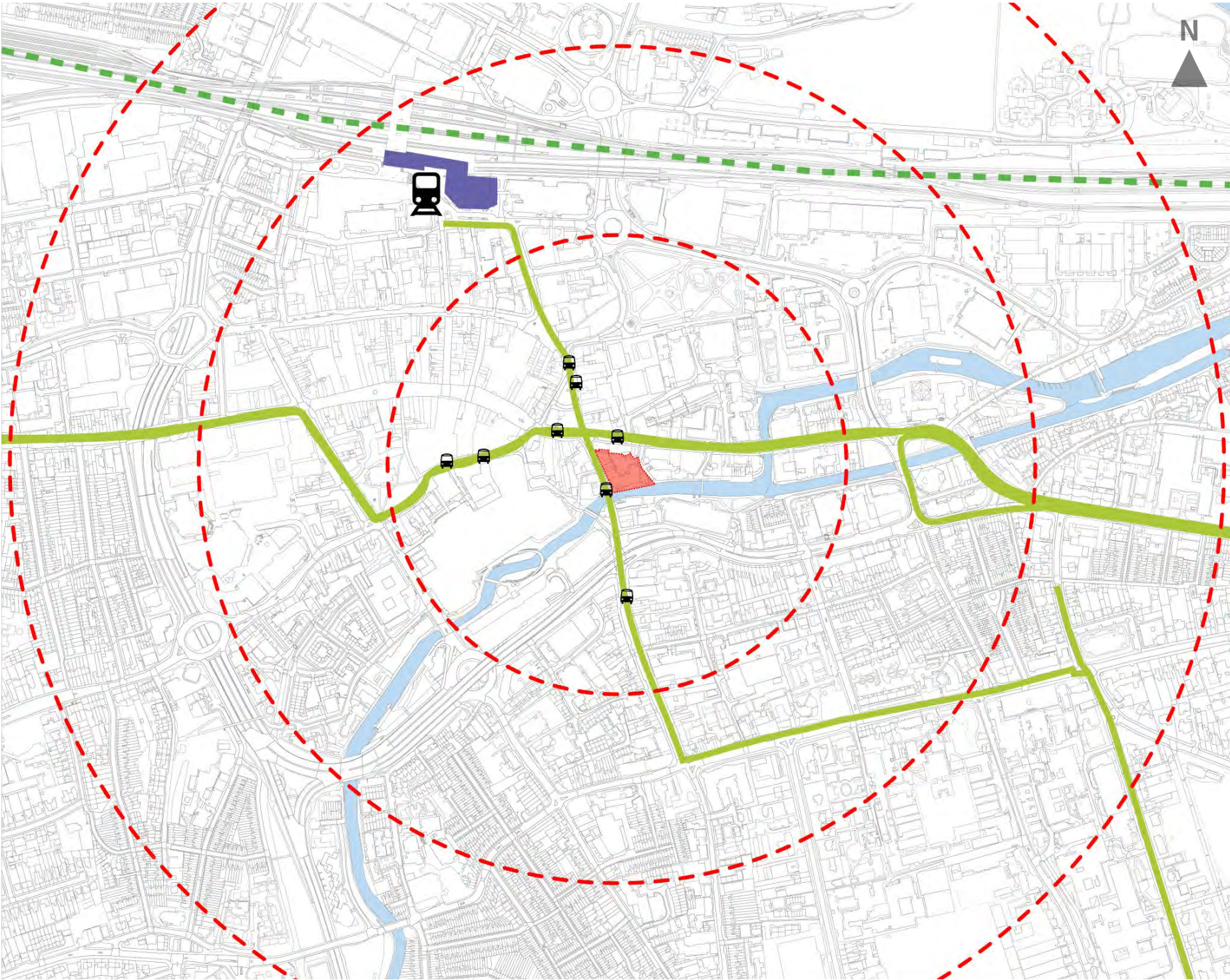
Aerial View of the Site Looking North

2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The site is located within 7 minutes walk from Reading train station through the quiet back-streets along the Kennet River. The site is also well connected by local bus routes which are within 2 and 5 minutes walk and providing transport options in all directions.

- 5, 10, 15min
- Bus route
- Train line
- Bus stop
- Train station
- Site



Public Transport Routes Map

2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.3 ROAD NETWORK

The site is well connected by local and wider road networks, located on London Street which is in close proximity to the A33 and M4 motorway.

The site is well linked with footpaths coming from The Oracle and Broad Street. Also, as its situated directly on the River Kennet it benefits from direct access to the cycle and footpaths along the river.

- Secondary road
- Main Road
- IDR Zone 1
- Train station
- Site



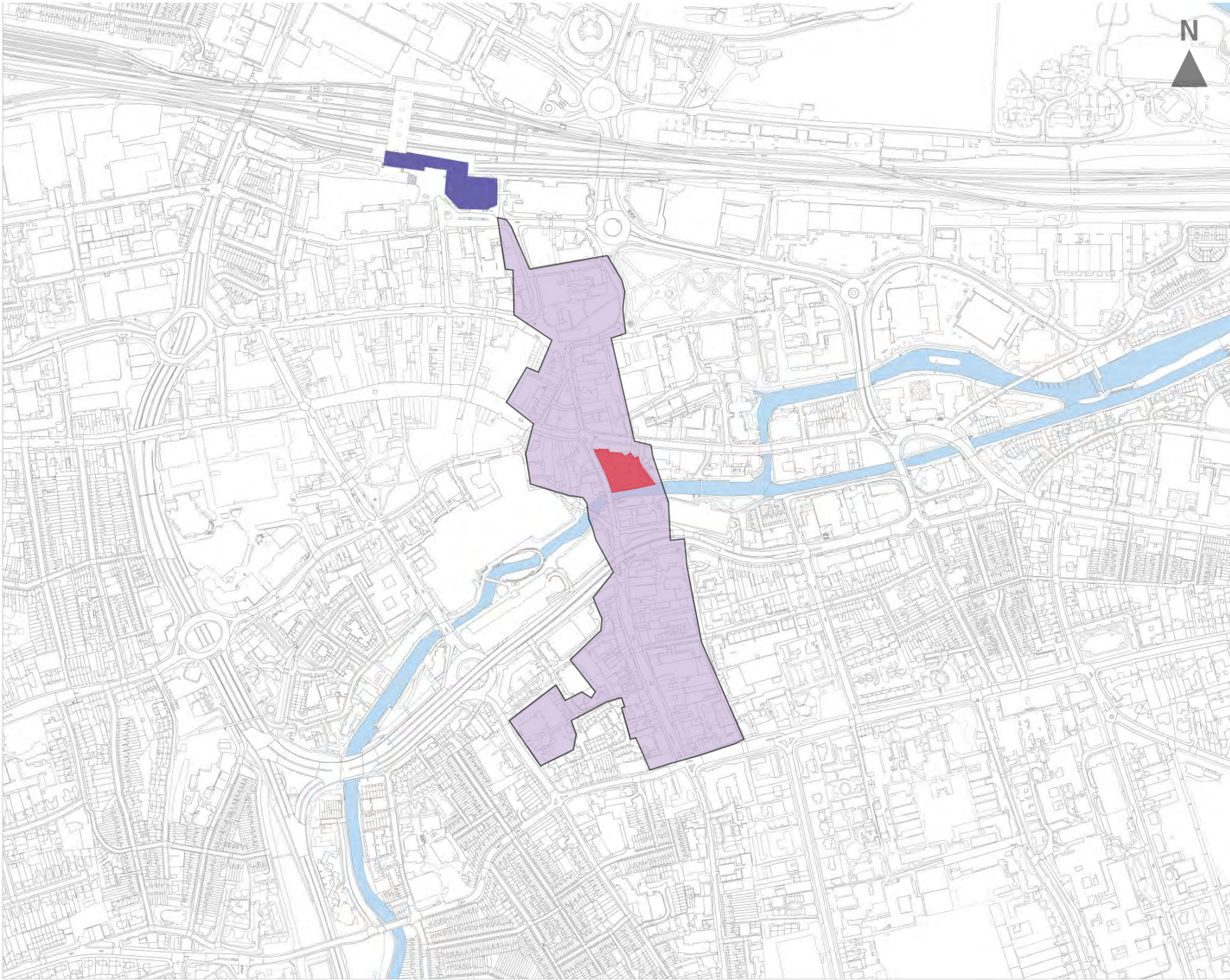
Aerial View of the Site Looking North

2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.4 CONSERVATION AREA

As stated in the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal Report, the site is located within the narrow mid-point of the London Street Conservation Area where the conservation boundary runs along side the Site boundary.

-  Market Place/London Street Conservation Area
-  Train station
-  Site



Aerial View of the Site Looking North

2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.5 BUILDING USES

The surrounding area is predominantly mixed use. The urban block surrounding the site provides residential and offices as well as some open parking space.

- Application Boundary
- Commercial
- Leisure
- Office
- Office + Commercial
- Residential
- Residential + Commercial
- Community
- Parking



2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.6 LOCAL BUILDING HEIGHTS

The area is characterised by a varied roof line in clusters of heights. The immediate surrounding area is predominantly low to mid rise.

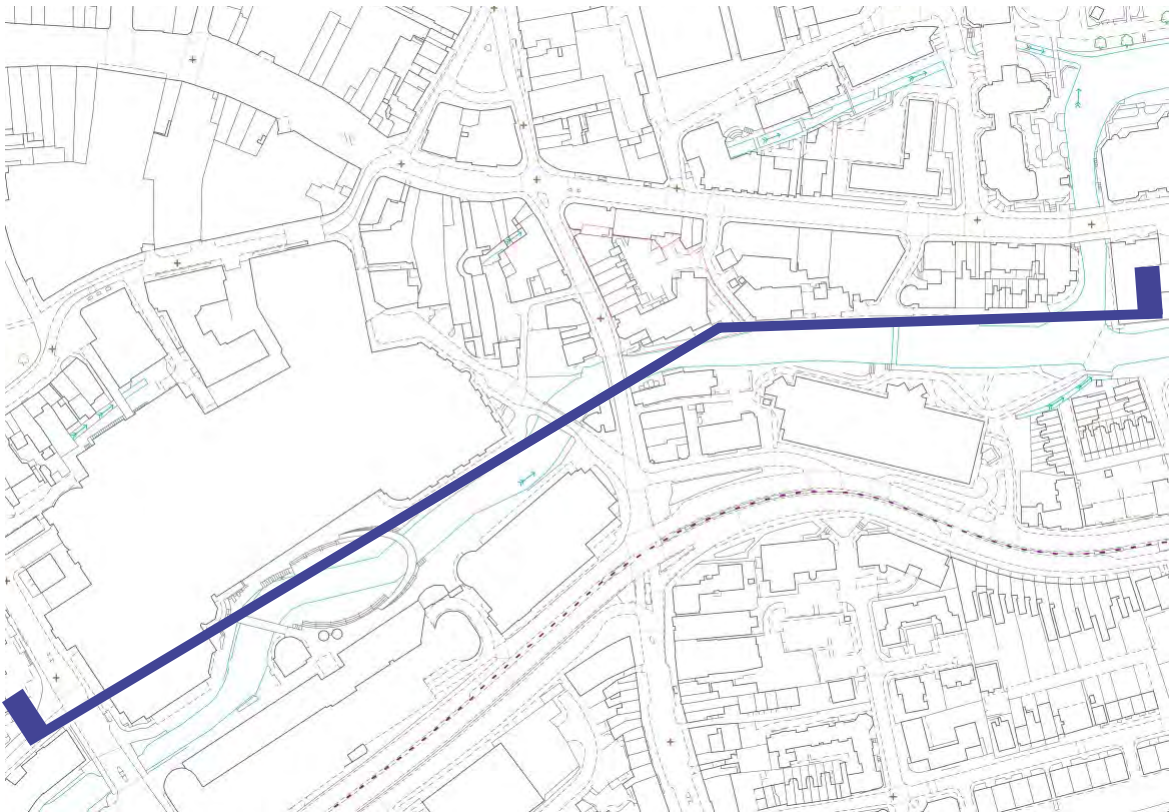
Where the site is located on the River Kennet the height varies between 5 and 10 storeys. East and north east of the development there is The Blade and new 17 storey Kings Point which is located on the same side and path of the river.



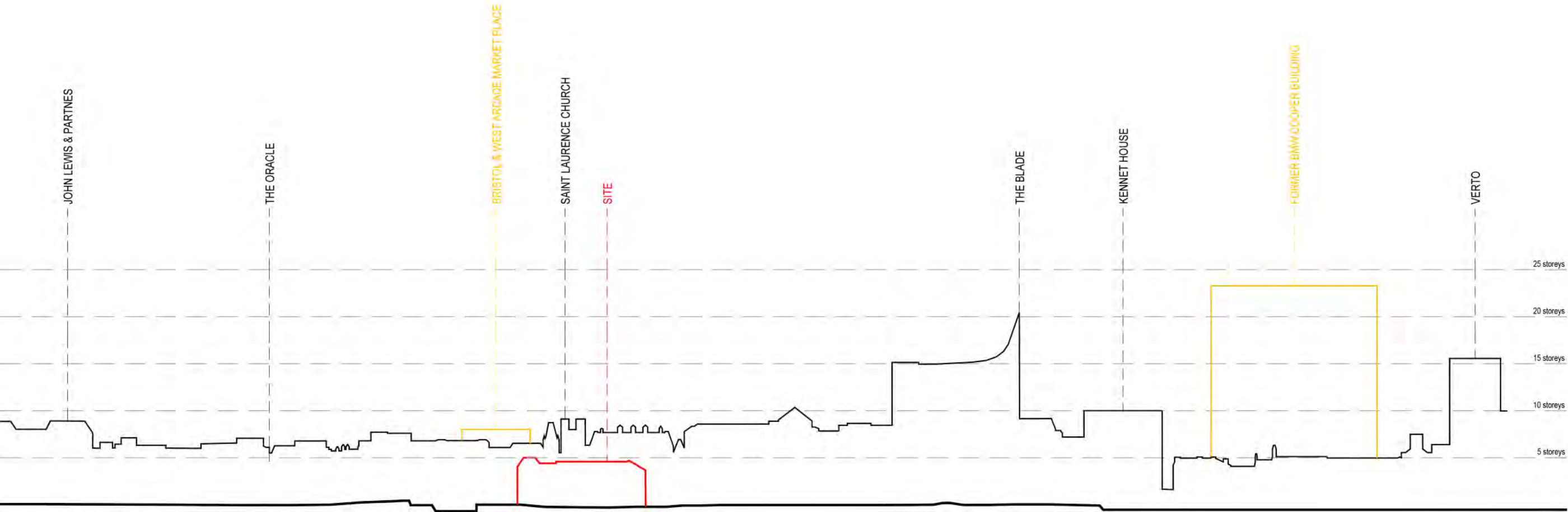
2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.7 EXISTING SITE SECTIONS

The site sections show the wide range of building heights between the Conservation Area and the Central Area. Dukesbridge House, the existing building on the site has been shown in red to identify the site area.



SECTION LOOKING NORTH



2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.8 LOCAL BUILT CONTEXT

BUILDINGS INSIDE THE CONSERVATION AREA

The site is located within the London Street Conservation Area, and includes historic buildings such as St. Laurence Church or new large scale development such as R+ Reading along Blagrove Street. The area is characterised by its use of brick and stone to create textured patterned façades.



St Laurence's Church - Grade 1 listed building



St Laurence's Church Town Council Chamber and Offices with Clock Tower - Grade 2 listed building*



Bristol and West Arcade



R + Reading

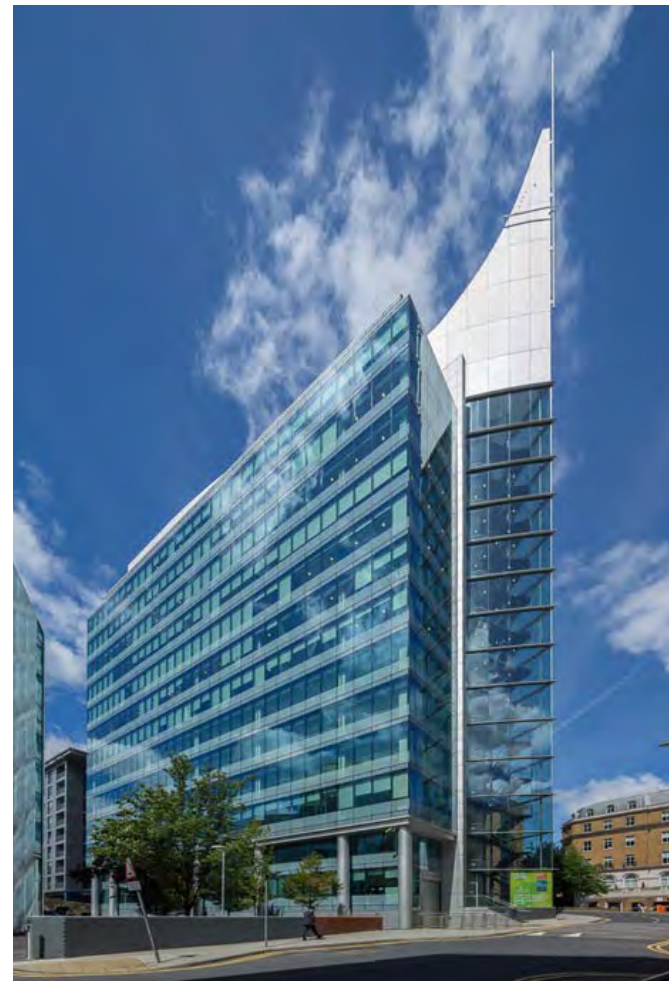
EMERGING SKYLINE OF READING

The Central Area of Reading is in a period of transformation with the emergence of new commercial signature buildings such as The Blade and One Reading Central changing the skyline and creating a more urban character in the central business area. This transformation however, isn't limited to workplaces and commercial buildings but can also be seen in new residential

developments responding to the increasing demands for high quality new housing in Reading. These developments such as Kings Point provide a new kind of mixed tenure housing combining different uses, housing types, scales and densities.



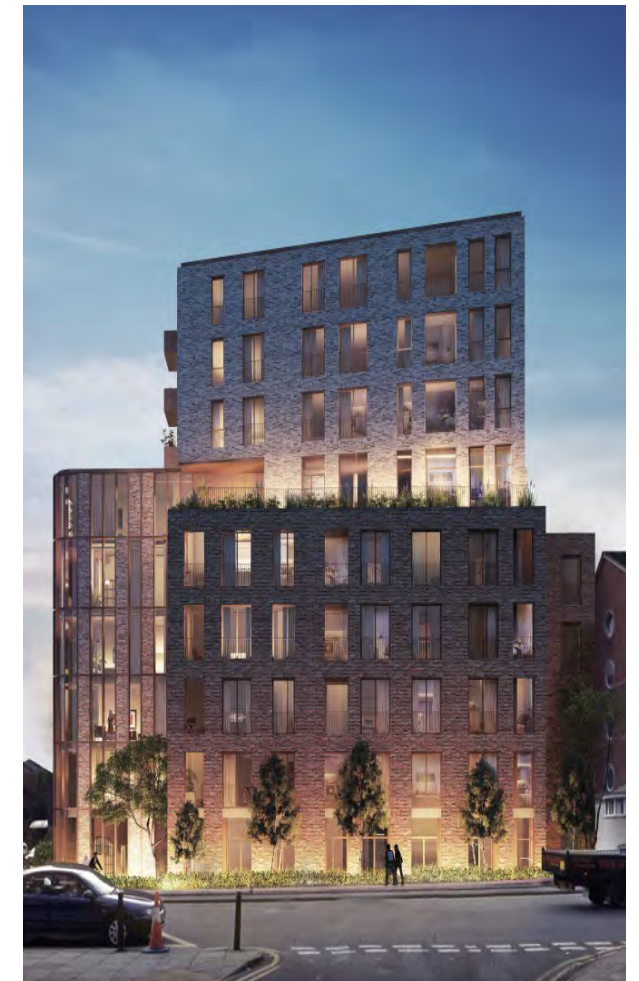
Garrard House



The Blade



120 Kings Road



5975 Royal Heights

2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.8 LOCAL BUILT CONTEXT

SURROUNDING BUILDINGS

Dukesbridge House is one of several buildings that form an urban block between Duke Street, Highbury Wharf and Kennet River. The Conservation Area has buildings that have been designed in a range of styles and variety of materials.



Coroner's Court - Grade 2 listed building



View down Highbury Wharf



View from Highbury Wharf



View down Duke St.

BUILDINGS ALONG THE KENNET RIVER

The route along the River Kennet is located immediately to the north of the site. This alternative riverside walk from the site forms the main desire line for residents towards the shopping centre (Oracle Centre) and riverside restaurants and cafe's.

The shopping area marks the midpoint between the site and Reading train station which is approximately 7 minutes walk from the site.



View East along the Kennet with Kennet House in the background



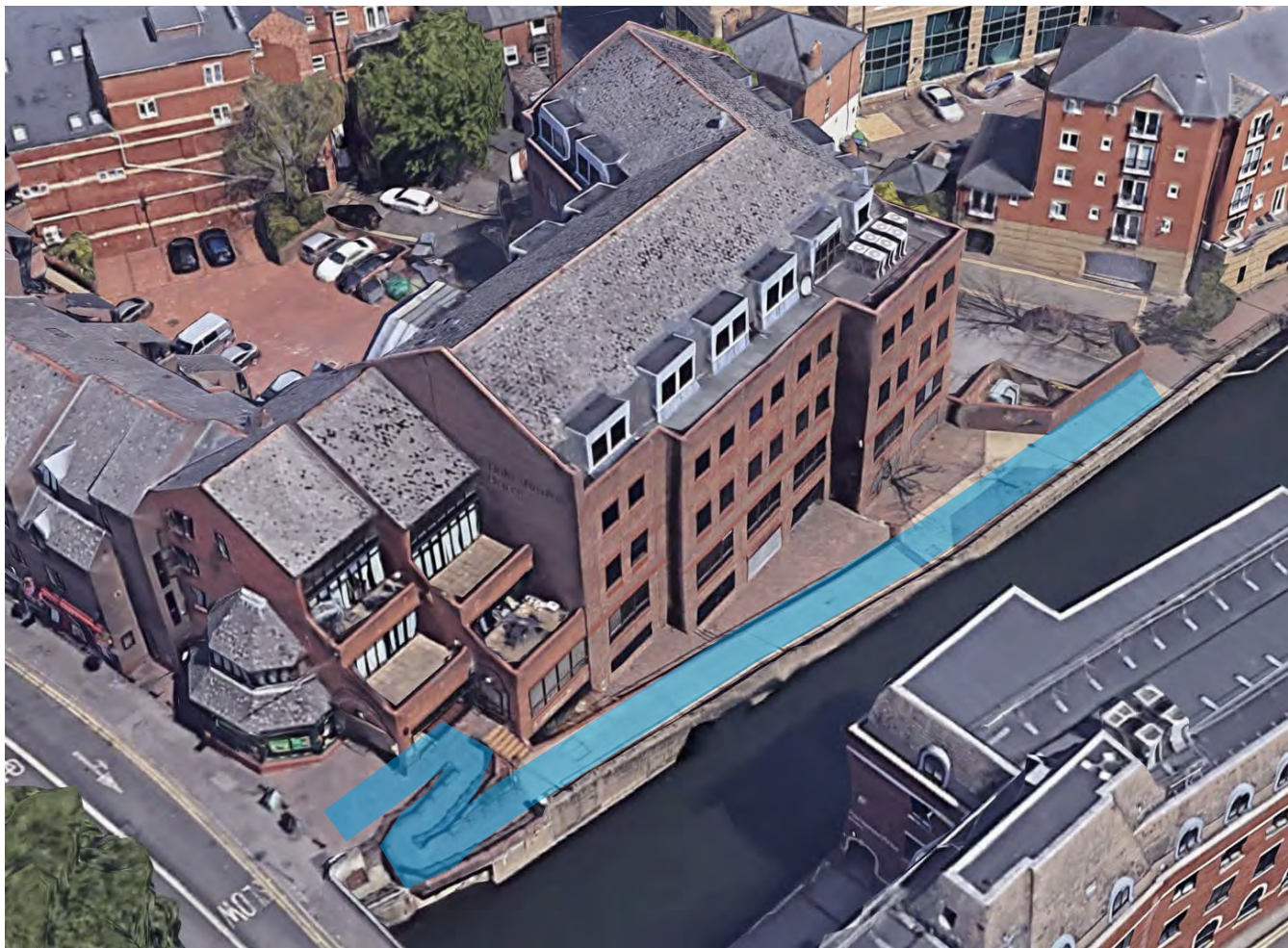
View of Duke Street Bridge along the River Kennet

2. AREA ANALYSIS

2.9 EXISTING RAMP

EXISTING RAMP

The existing ramp is currently outdated and worn-out. Due to its snake like form the turns and level differences create hidden spots that can promote antisocial behaviour and the sense of not being safe. It can be seen that locals tend to skip the ramp and cut through Highbridge Wharf.

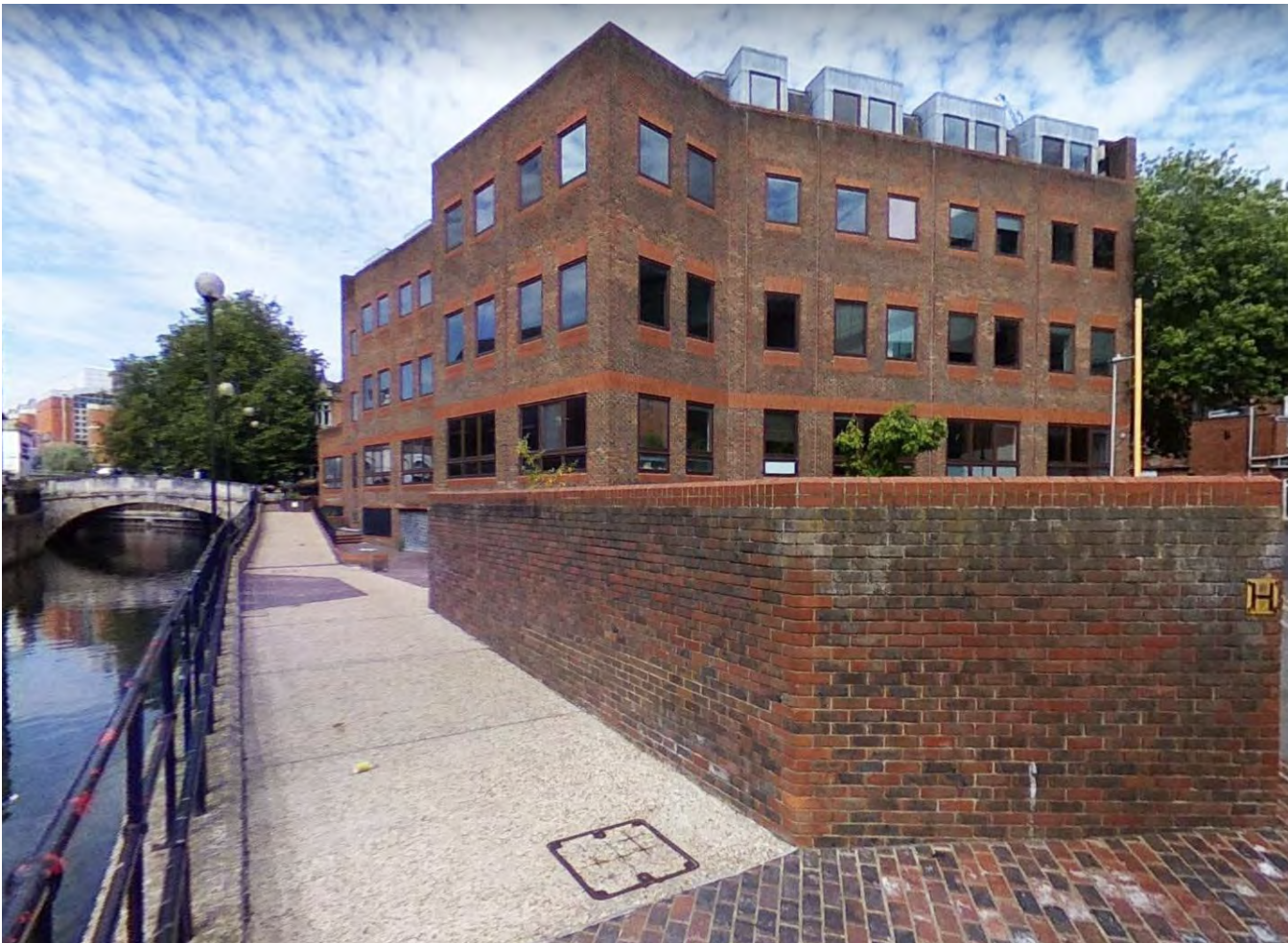


Aerial view of the ramp



View towards the existing ramp

There is a 2m level difference between the River Kennet and Duke Street. Therefore the ramp is seen as one of the key elements in linking the other end of the Kennet River with Oracle Centre and activating the river level. The hidden corners created by the existing ramp will be reduced and where possible greened and activated.



View towards the existing ramp from the substation walls



View looking down the ramp towards the River Kennet

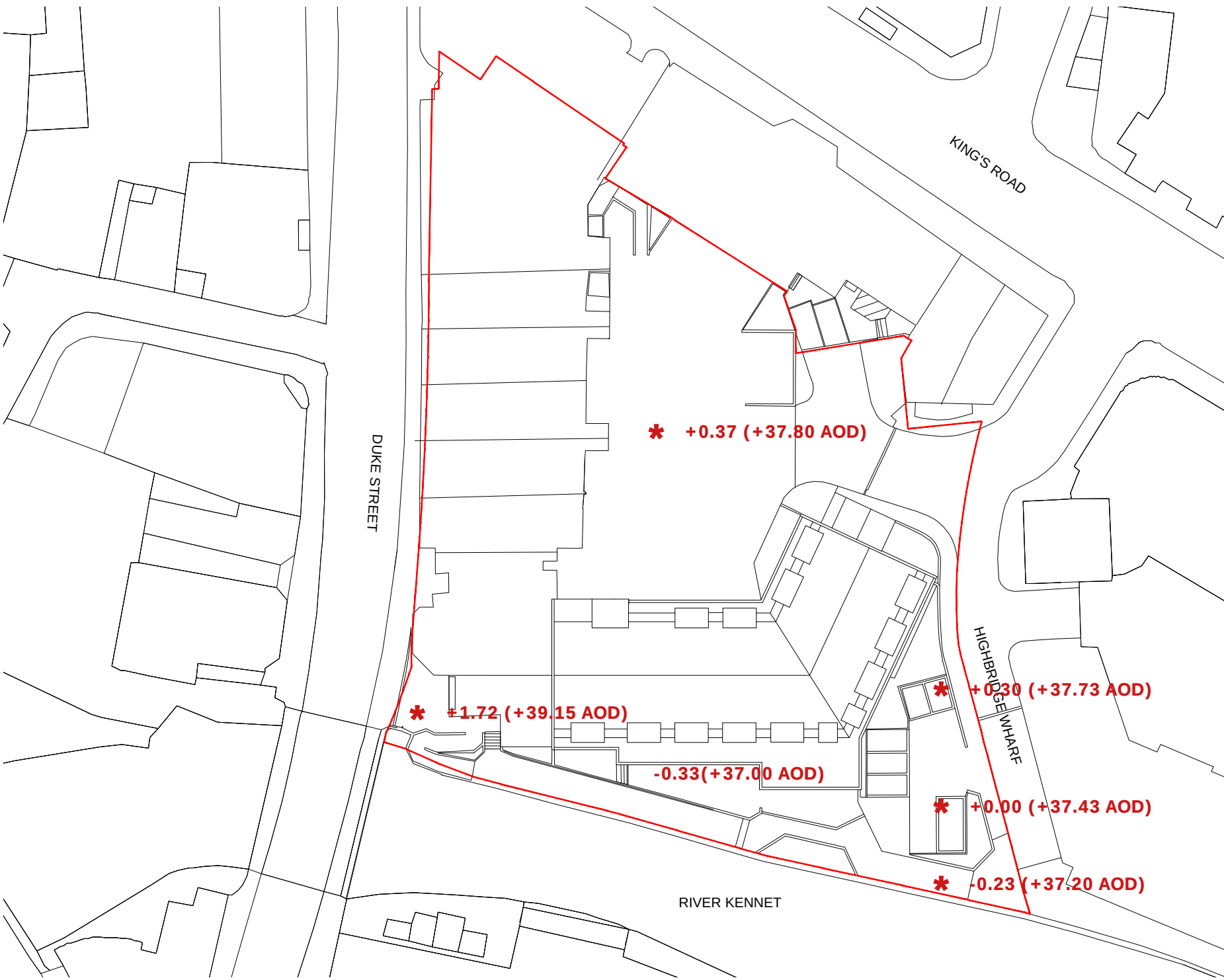
3. THE SITE

3.1 SITE CONSIDERATIONS

SITE LEVELS

The levels vary on all sides of the site, between London Street, Highbridge Wharf and the River Kennet footpath. There is a level change of approximately 2 metres between Duke St and River Kennet.

To the east of the site along Highbridge Wharf the road slopes up along the edge of the site by approximately 50cm. These changes result in a varied level change from each street to the development site of between 0.5 and 2.0 metres.

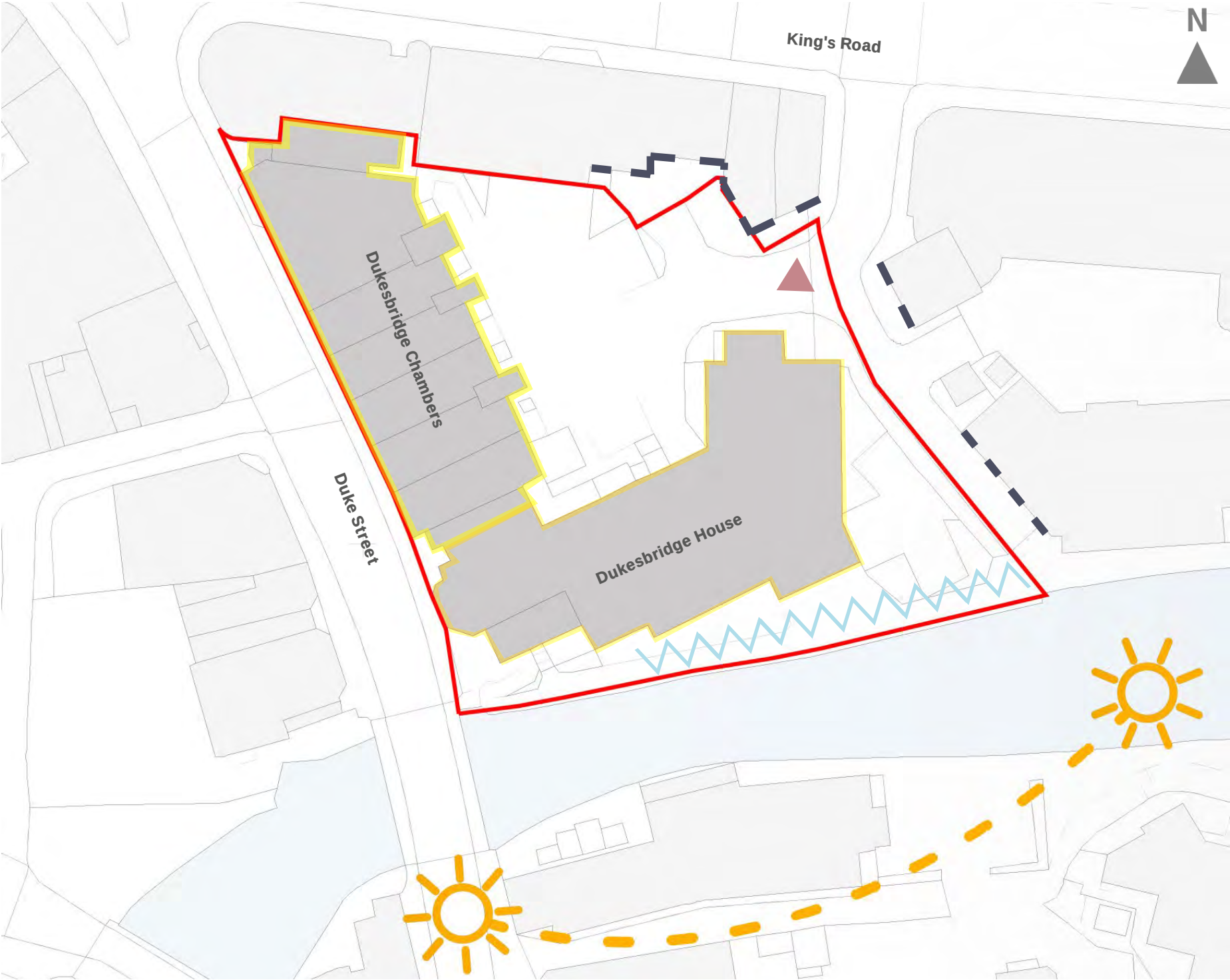


3. THE SITE

3.1 SITE CONSIDERATIONS

Dukesbridge House is located on Duke Street, River Kennet and Highbridge Wharf . The building faces towards the south-east which provides generous exposure to the sun through out the day.

- Site boundary
- Sun path
- Outlook from Neighbouring Buildings
- Flood risk
- Car park entrance



3. THE SITE

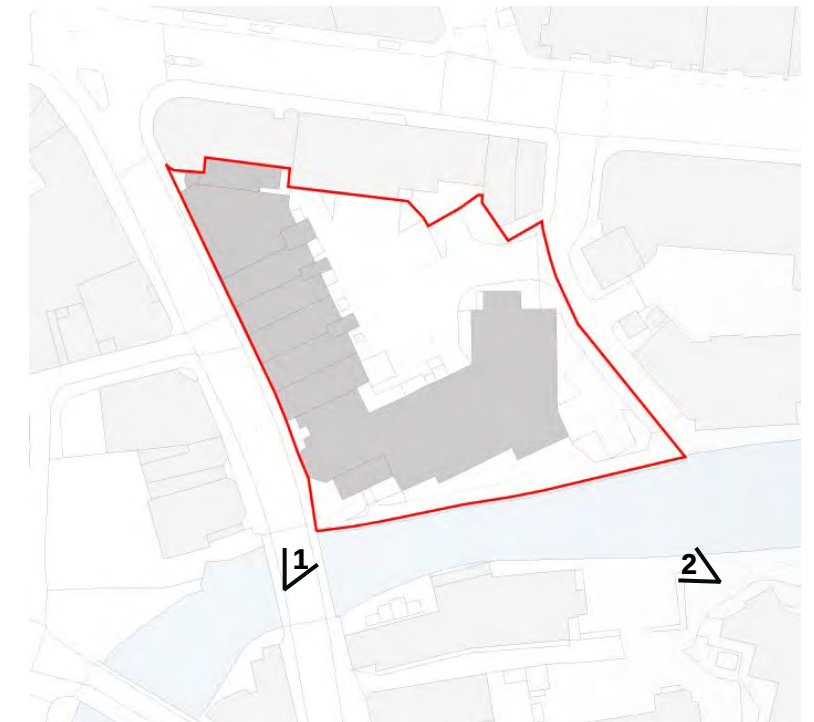
3.2 SITE OPPORTUNITIES



3. THE SITE

3.3 EXISTING BUILDING PHOTOS

The building consist of a burgundy coloured powder coated aluminium windows set within horizontally placed brick band details. The windows are set in-line with the brick facade giving a flat unarticulated appearance. A high continuous wall demarcates the eastern boundary of the site with Highbridge Wharf. This sits forward of the building line creating opportunity for antisocial behaviour.



Key to Views

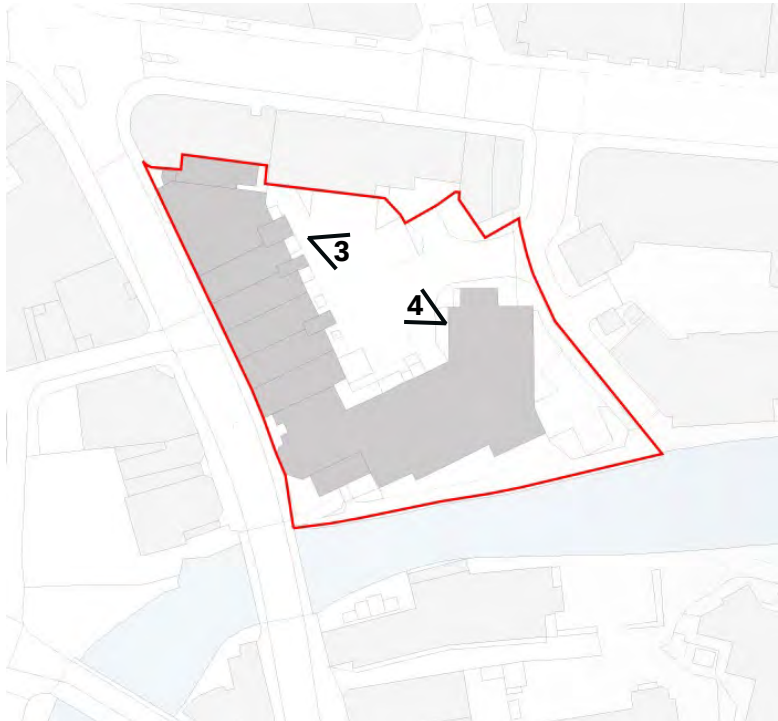


View 1 - Dukesbridge House view from Duke St.



View 2 - Looking towards Dukesbridge House from the other side of the River Kennet

Unlike lower floors Riverside Centrals's roof level has slate with rusted aluminium cladding rather than red brick. The lower ground floor of this building facing River Kennet has aluminium shutters with no outlook on to the public pedestrian path which results in antisocial behaviour, which makes it an unpleasant route to take.



Key to Views



View 3 - Looking towards Dukesbridge House from the courtyard

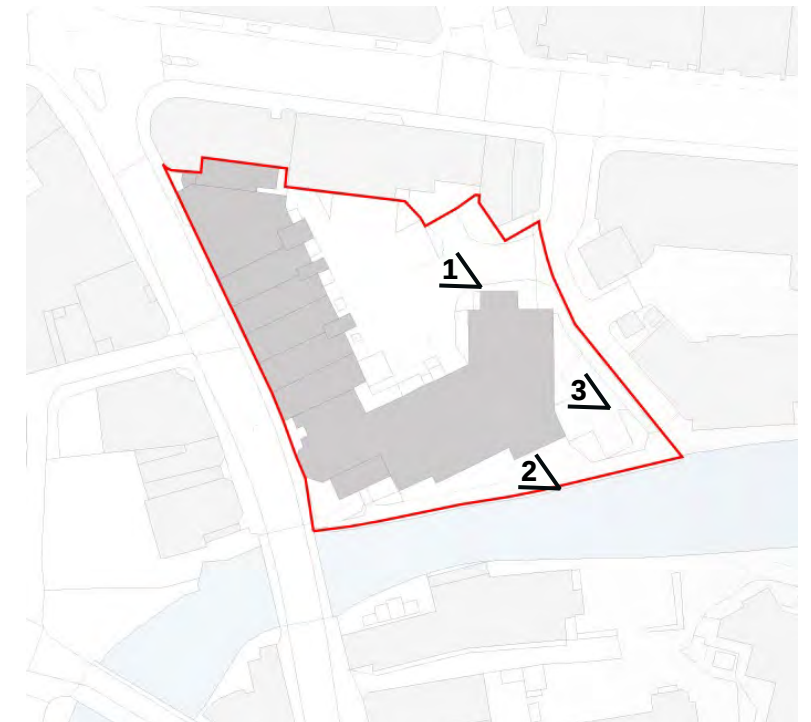


View 4 - Looking towards neighbouring buildings from the courtyard

3. THE SITE

3.4 EXISTING SURROUNDING PHOTOS

The site is uniquely positioned to be benefiting from four different streets and paths which could be something quite special if given the opportunity. Currently each corner has a changing relationship to the public realm, especially on the River Kennet side with the high rise substation wall that reduces outlook which currently encourages anti social behaviour. The back entrance on the courtyard side is currently used as a dumping ground with homeless occupants scattered around.



Key to Views



1. Courtyard entrance on Highbridge Wharf



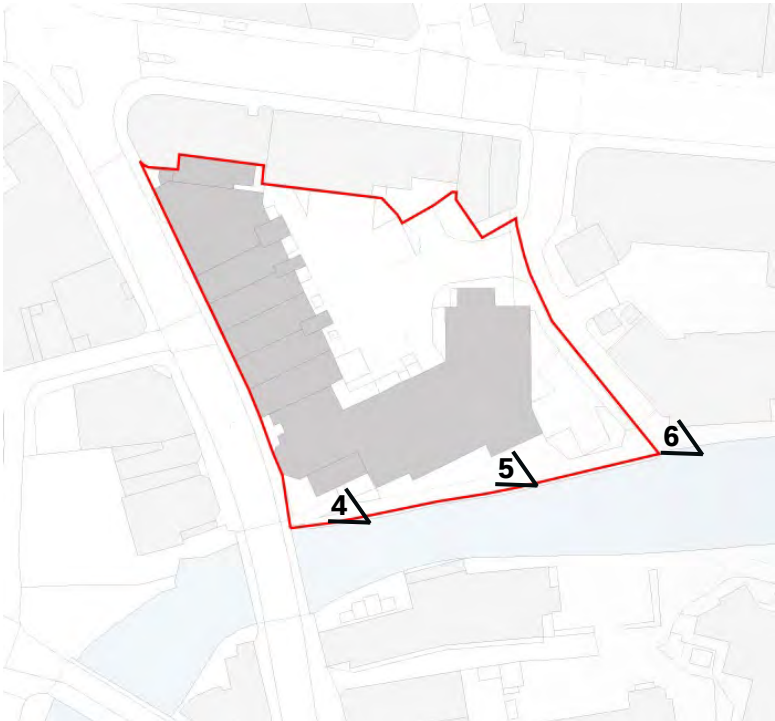
2. Sleeping beds and dumping zone behind substation high walls



3. Graffiti and anti social behaviour spot on River Kennet footpath

The current state is warn out and neglected with minimal overlooking. The immediate area with the substation creates poor outlook for residents.

The site in its current state has no benefit to the Conservation Area, or public realm.



Key to Views



4. View of the existing ramps corner



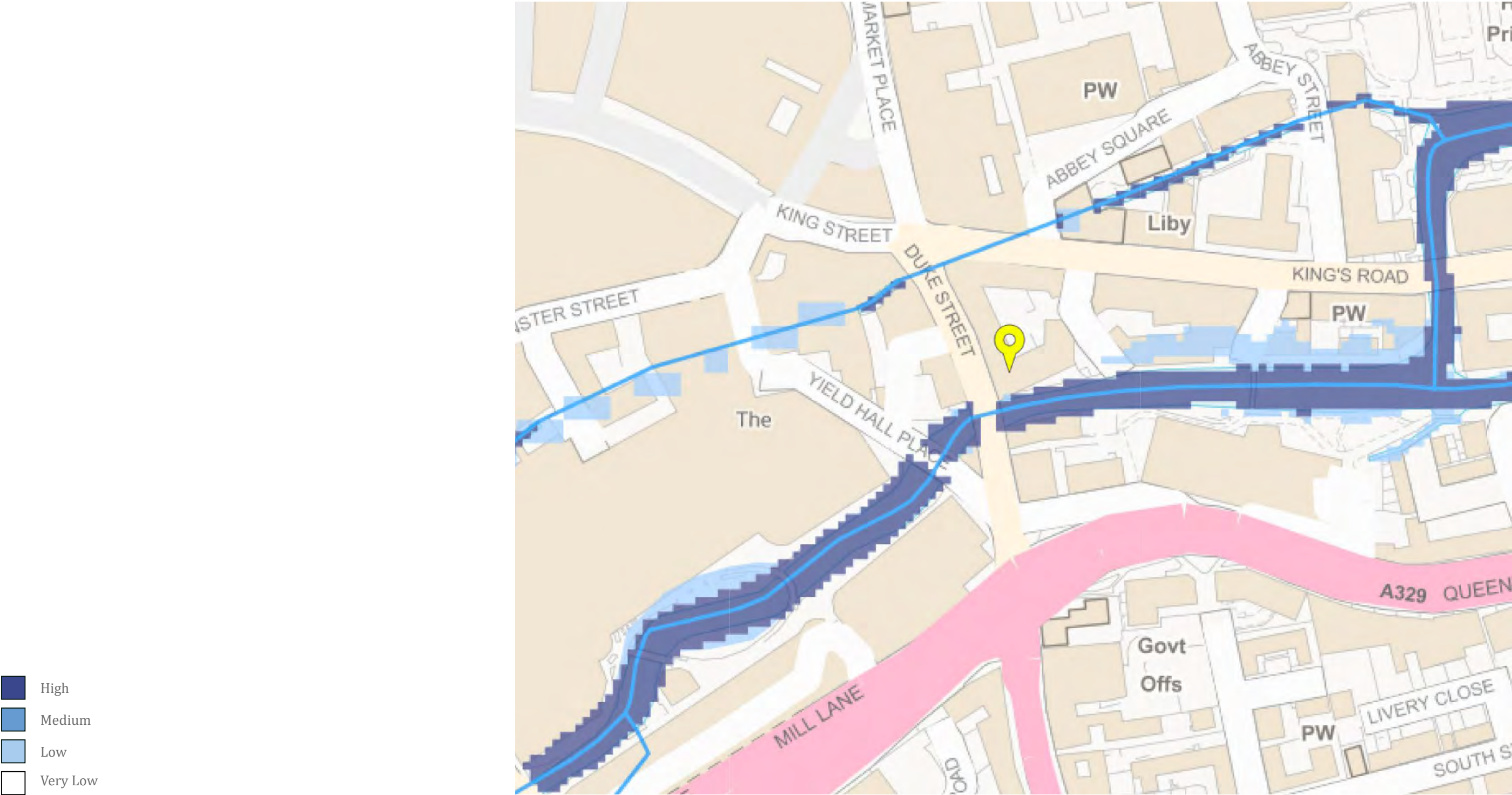
5. View from the ramp showing the poor conditions surrounding it



6. High substation wall providing no outlook and obstructing views from corners

3. SITE ANALYSIS

3.5 FLOOD RISK



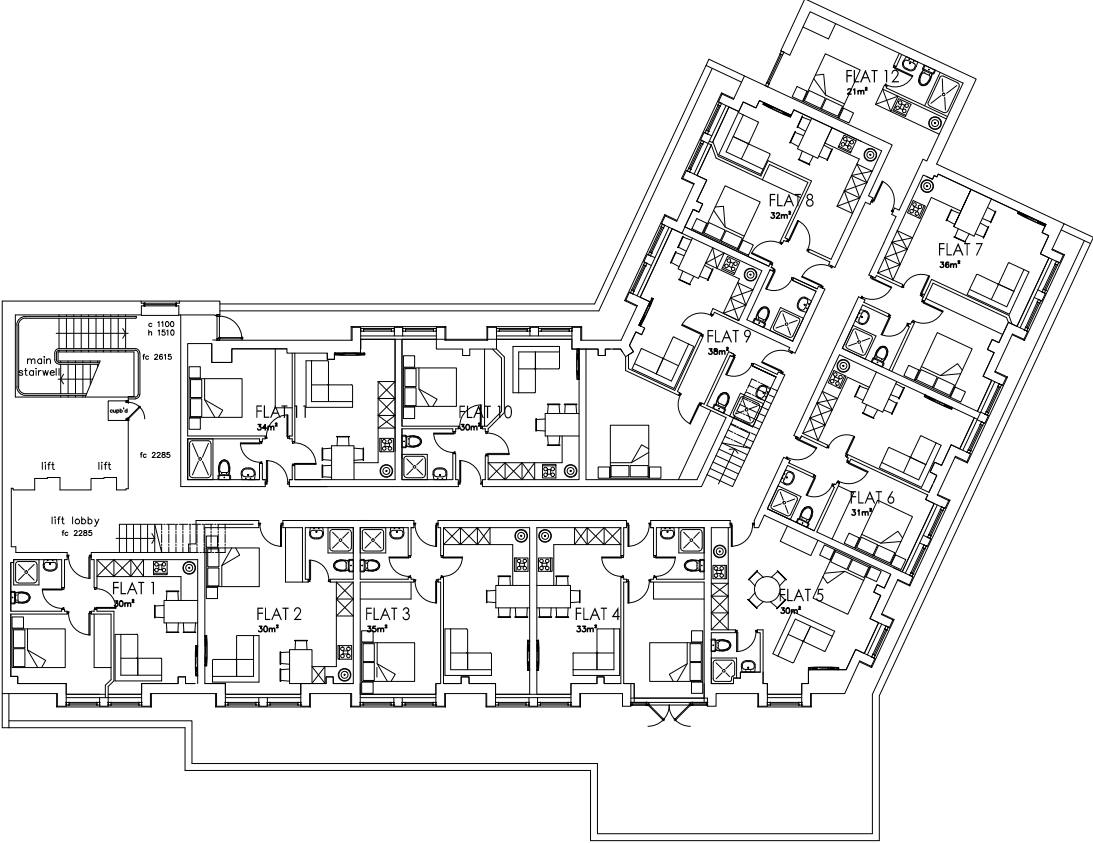
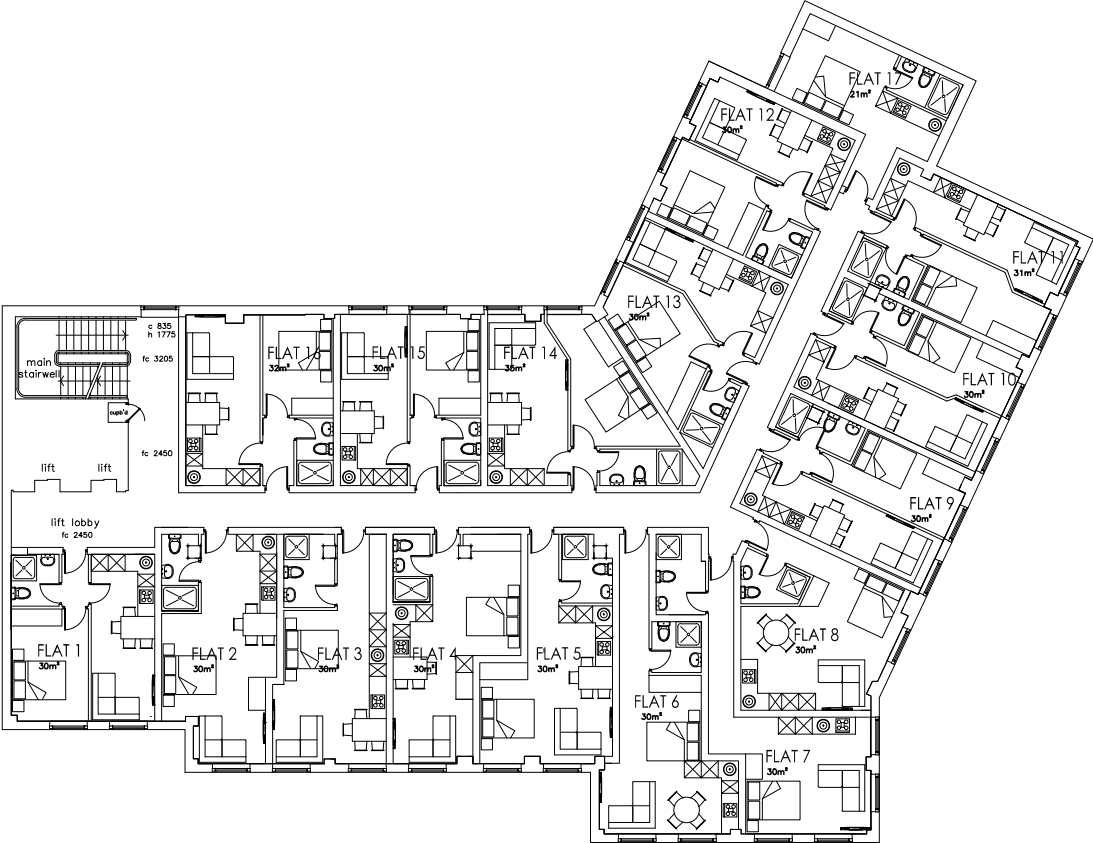
Environment Agency Flood Map

4.0 ASSOCIATED APPLICATIONS

4.1 PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT CONSENT

As mentioned in the introduction, the planning boundary includes Dukesbridge House, substation and the adjacent car park site. Dukesbridge House has a consented Permitted Development which was approved in June 2019 (Application No: 190602). Change of use of building from Class B1(a)(offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 77 residential units has been granted.

In October 2019, following submission of the permitted consent, a detailed planning application was submitted for improvements to the external elevation, the scope of this application is outlined in the following pages.



Typical Plan - Permitted Development Consent

4.0 ASSOCIATED APPLICATIONS

4.2 FENESTRATION APPLICATION

The planning application for fabric changes to Dukesbridge House involved simple but important changes to the facade. Changes included the replacement and redesign of shutters to windows, reconfiguration of the ground floor to include a single entrance to the west on London Street.

The Rendered Elevation to the far right show the main design changes which include new windows.



03 - Existing elevation



03 - Proposed elevation

The adjacent elevation illustrates the scope of amendments, which demonstrate the proposed will be in line with the existing window bays hence improving the external elevation whilst providing a much needed outlook especially on lower ground level.

■ ■ ■ *New proposed changes*

Existing elevation



Proposed elevation



5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

5.1 PROJECT SUMMARY

- › **Planning Application Boundary: 2,617sqm**
- › **Total GEA Development Area: 3,647sqm**
- › **Total Courtyard Area: 798sqm**
- › **New Homes: 36**
- › **Wheelchair adaptable Homes: 11.1%**
- › **Cycle Parking Spaces: 62spaces**
- › **Car Parking Spaces: 6**

Use

The proposal is for a mixed-tenure residential scheme for 36 new homes of different types including penthouse lofts and multi-aspect apartments.

Appearance

The building appearance is robust and composed of rich textured materials relating to the heritage area, along with some new materials such as aluminium cladding.

The proposal pays homage to the history of the area, borrowing materials from the Conservation Area and proposing a contemporary interpretation of these traditional materials. The Conservation area is characterised by contrasting complementary materials used to create decorative façades and rich material textures.

Landscaping

Public realm along the River Kennet has been dramatically improved with greening and new ramp. The dumping and unprotected area to the rear of Dukesbridge House has been gated with proper refuse storage rooms with locked cycle spaces that will improve the outlook of neighbouring buildings significantly.



5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

5.2 EXISTING WINDOWS

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE EXISTING FACADE

- Increasing the window openings for PD units
- Changing the appearance of an outdated building
- Tying in the existing building with the new build using similar materials and proportions for the openings
- Reshuffling PD units on the lower ground floor to accommodate a commercial unit and lobby to activate the river frontage and have a positive impact on the public realm



Existing facade without any treatment



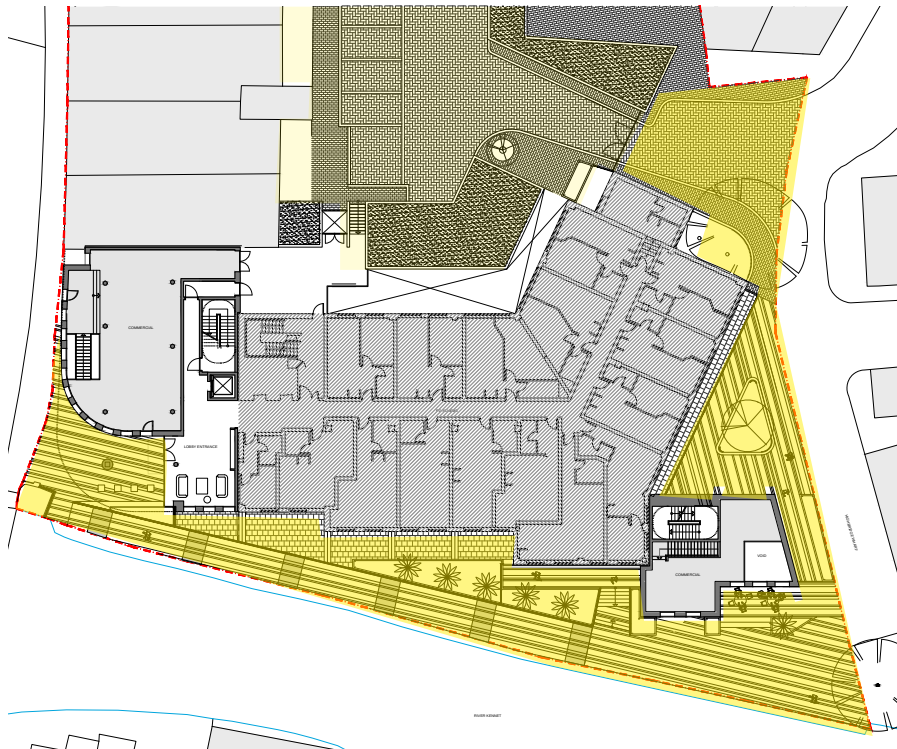
Proposed facade with openings similarly found in the proposed new build

5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

5.3 NEW RAMP

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PUBLIC REALM

- Greening of the surrounding area
- New accessible ramp
- Active frontages with cafés and entrance lobbies along the river facade
- Well lit and newly paved pavements with sitting area for everyone
- High walled substation to be integrated within the design to provide much needed active frontage and overlooking for the area that is currently humdrum and promotes antisocial behaviour

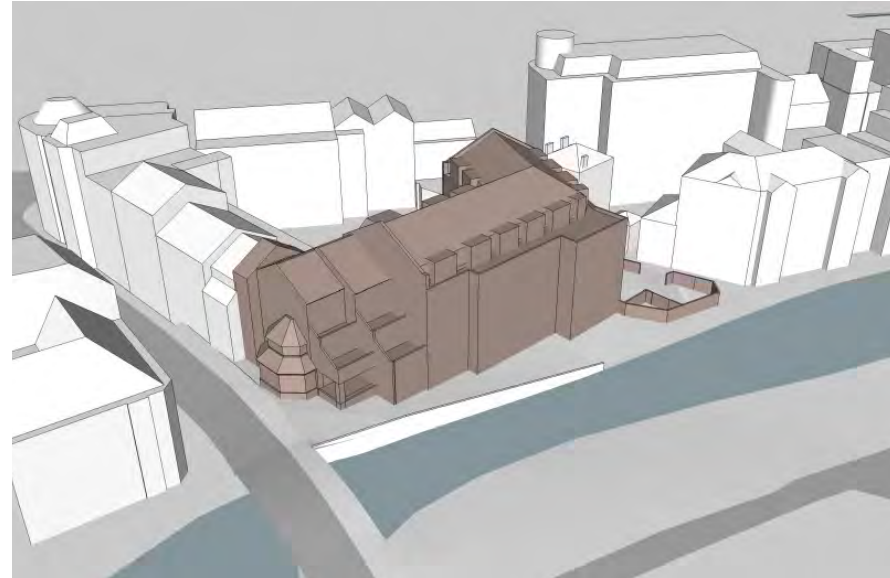


5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

5.4 PROPORTION & MASSING

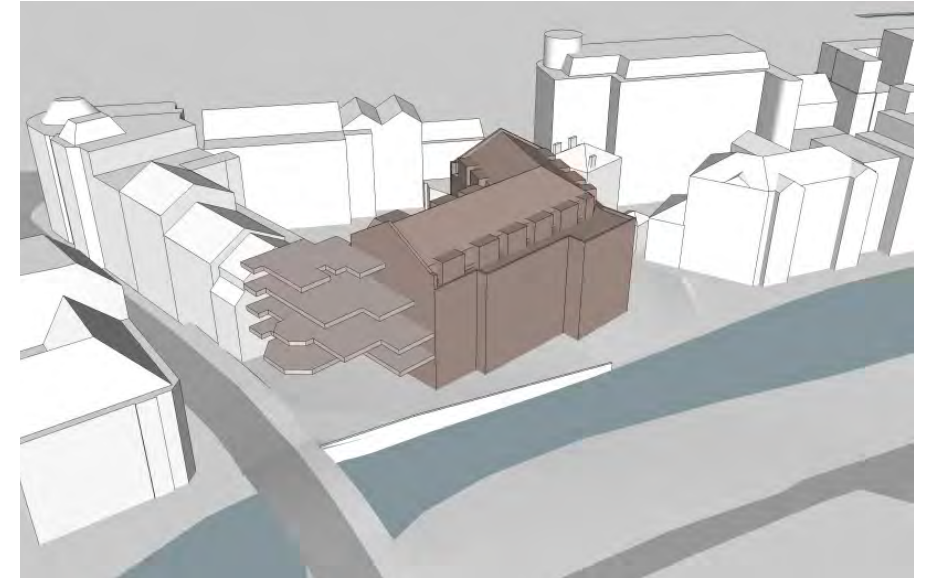
WEST CORNER MASSING STAGES

The study here identifies a variety of site constraints and design drivers that impact on the development footprint. Various factors have been explored including; site boundary, response to heritage assets, proximity to adjacent buildings and maintenance considerations. These have resulted in a development footprint that has formed the basis of the early plot testing and massing studies.



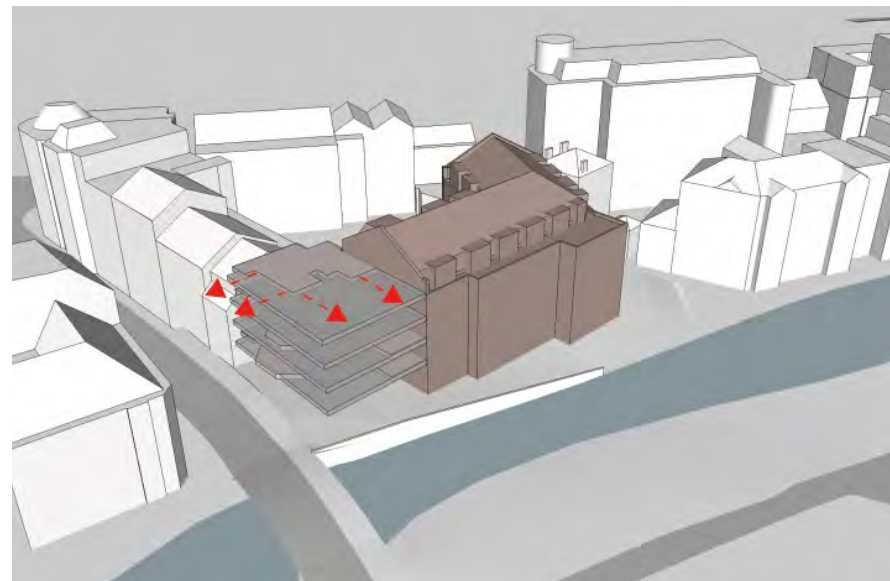
Stage 1

Existing west corner building is currently positioned awkwardly and turns its back to the building line that's coming down from Duke St.



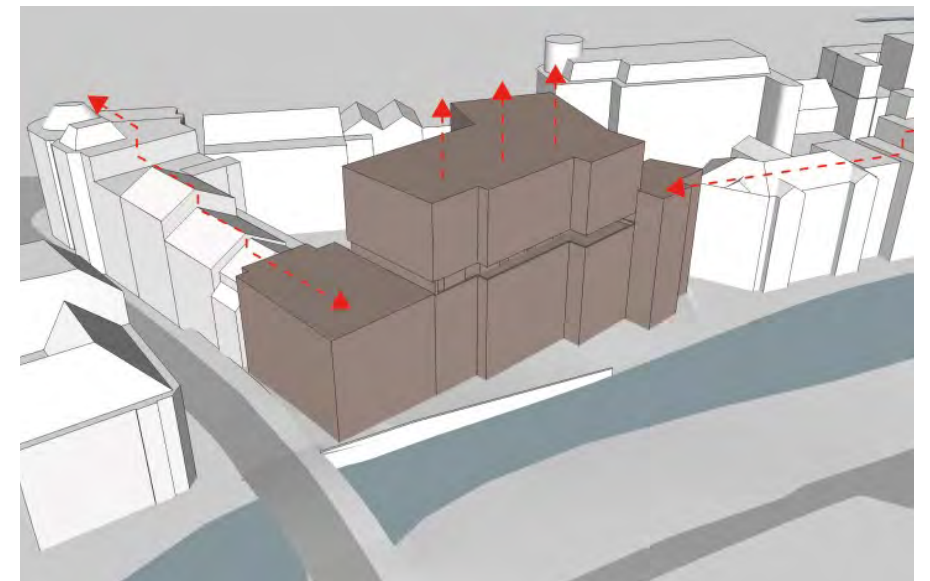
Stage 2

The existing buildings facade is stripped out leaving only the existing slabs



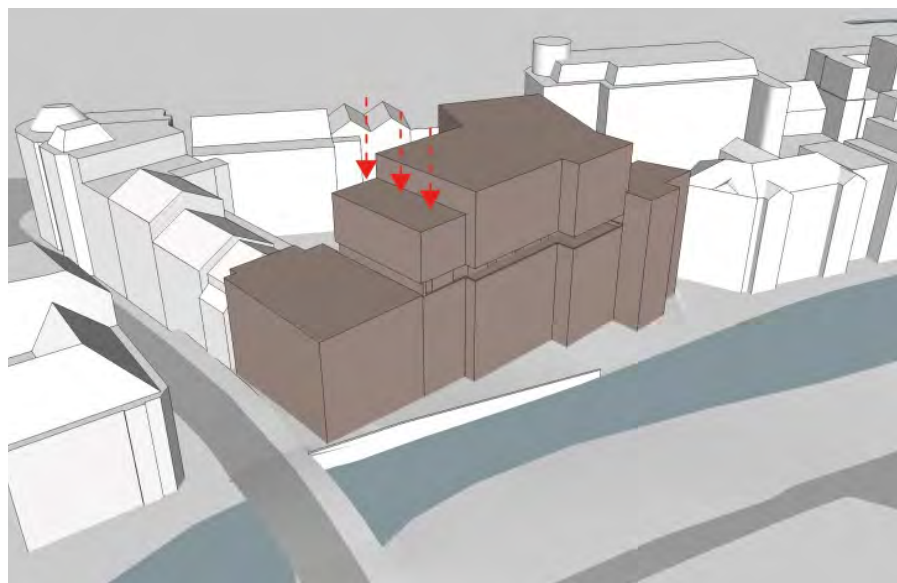
Stage 3

The existing slabs are then extended out for the new build



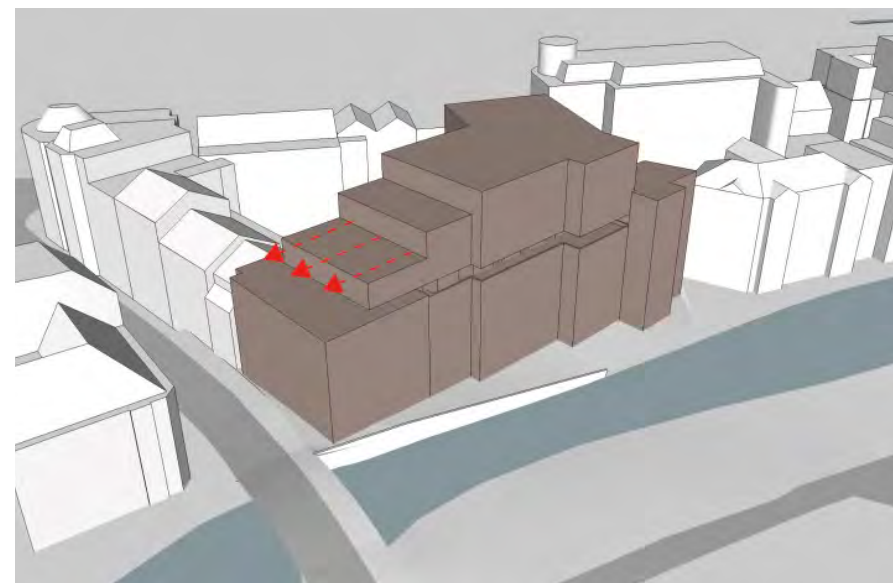
Stage 4

Roof line coming down from Duke St is continued and the existing buildings roof is extended in accordance with its massing



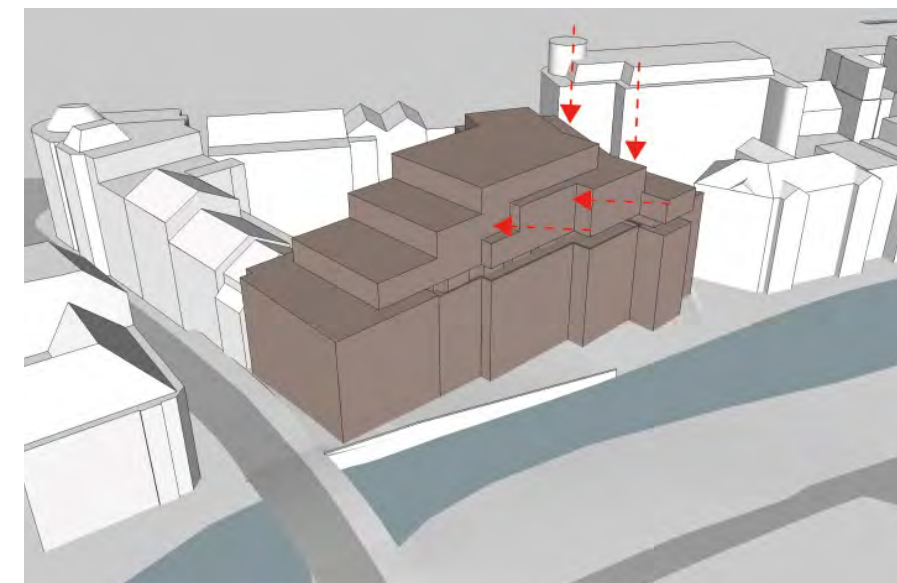
Stage 5

According to comments from the DRP the existing lift core is removed on the last level and stepped down



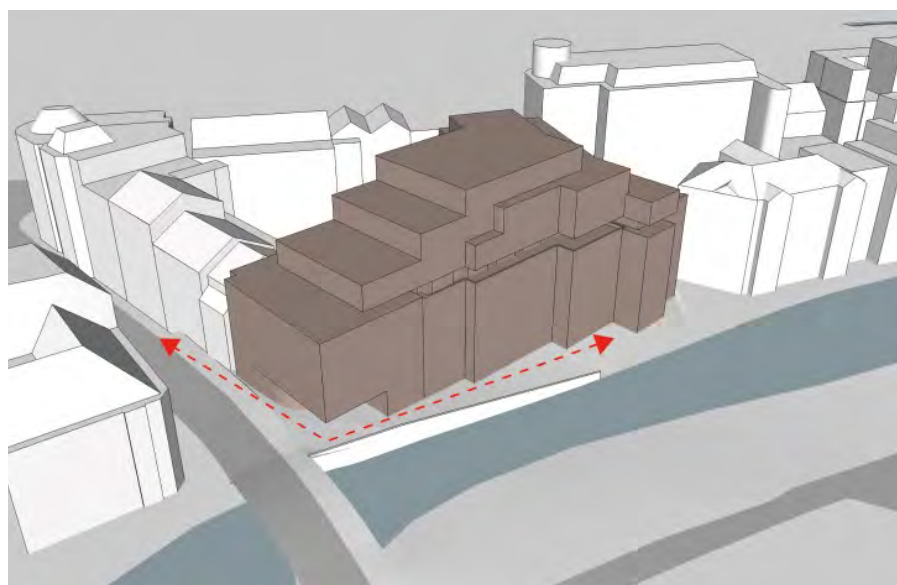
Stage 6

The stepping form is then continued down to Duke St



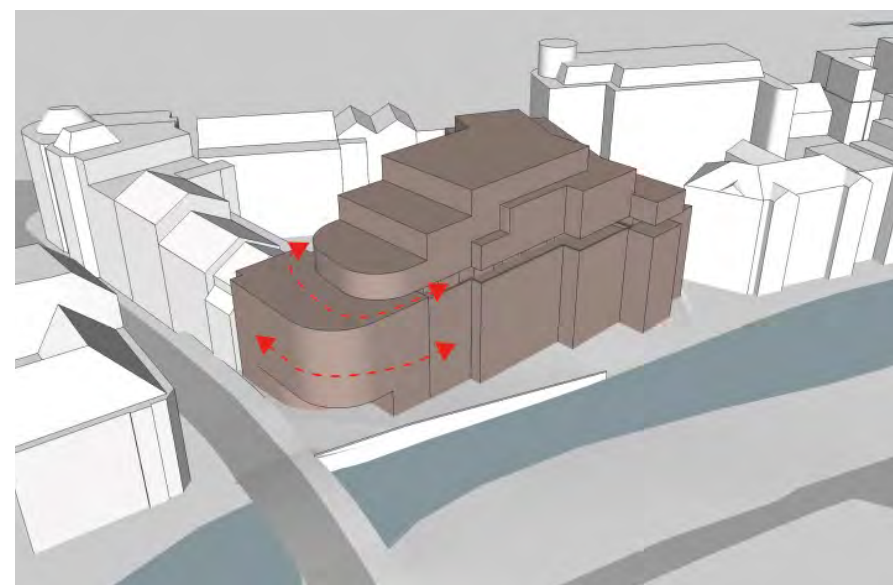
Stage 7

Further steps are introduced using the existing buildings form



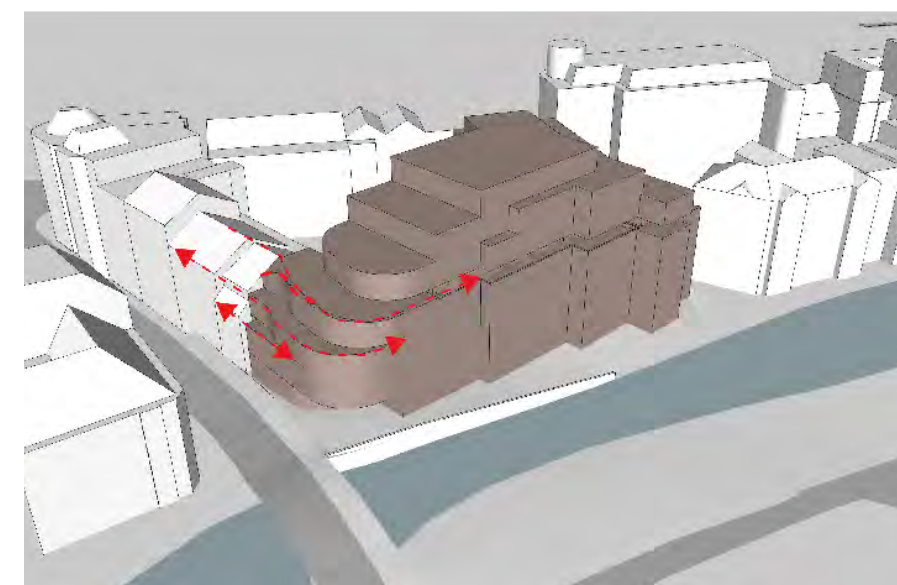
Stage 8

Ground floor corner is removed opening up the corner to the public realm



Stage 9

The corners are rounded to help carry the line coming down Duke St towards the River Kennet. A similar rounded corner can also be found at the other end of Duke St



Stage 10

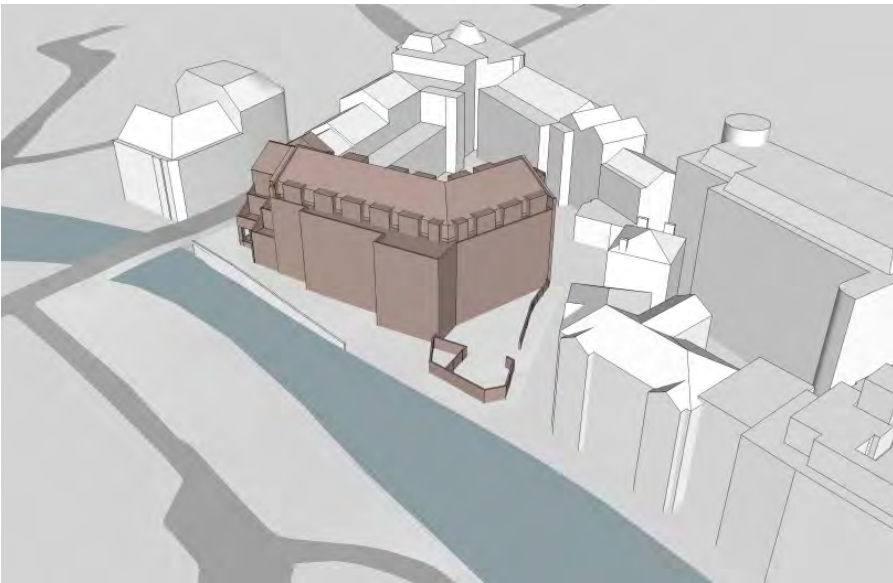
The heights of neighbouring buildings are referenced to create a sensitive stepped form

5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

5.4 PROPORTION & MASSING

EAST CORNER MASSING STAGES

This study highlights key factors that have impacted on the massing coming from the east corner. The removal of the high substation wall and continuing the neighbouring roof line can be seen from the sketches below



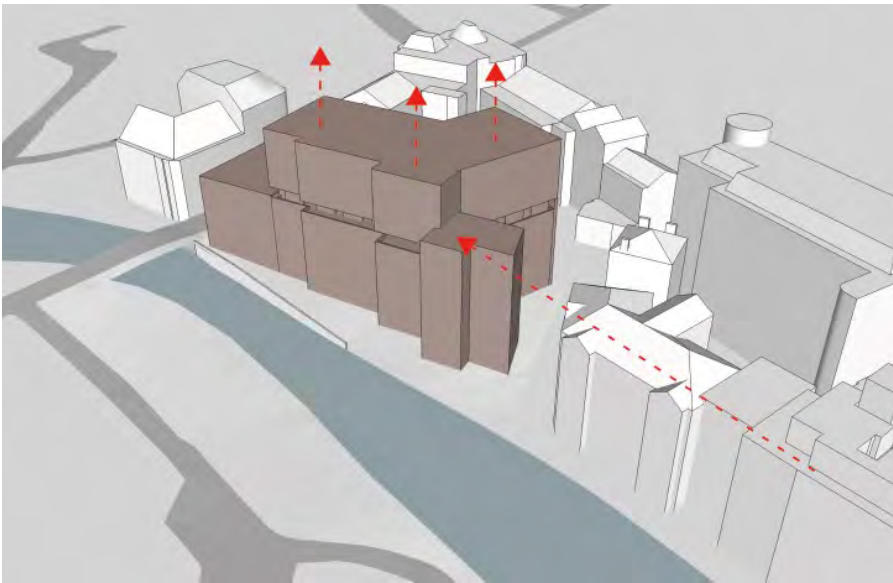
Stage 1

The current state is poor in terms of townscape and environment with low visibility due to the high substation wall



Stage 2

Removing the roof and substation wall from the existing building



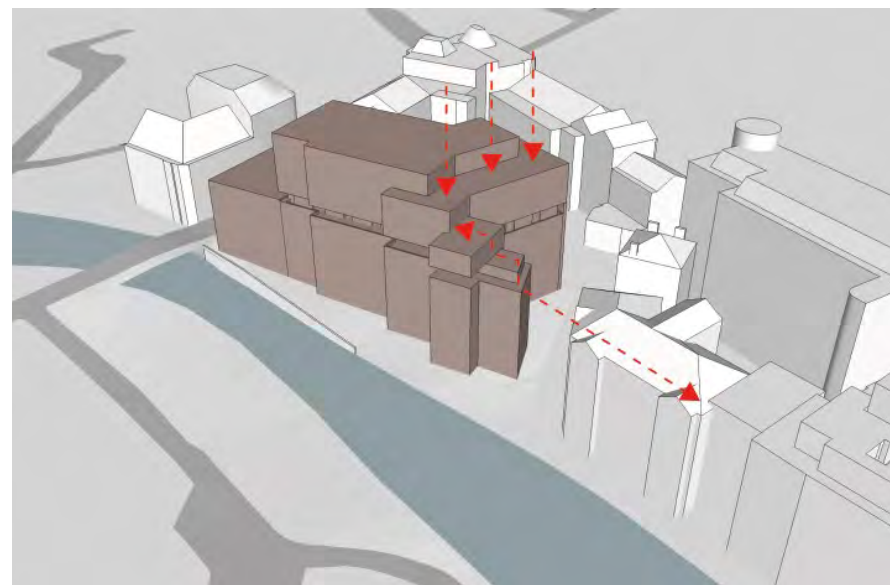
Stage 3

Extruding the east corner to align with the neighbouring buildings and extending the roof of existing Dukesbridge House



Stage 4

As an urban gesture the setback level of the existing building is continued throughout



Stage 5

The corner of the substation is dropped to create an articulated roof line that gradually steps up to the proposed roof extension



Stage 6

A sensitive and well articulated design with active frontages is formed

