



READING STATION PARK

Reading Station Shopping Park, Vastern Road, Reading



Outline Planning Application Statement of Community Involvement

Prepared by Barton Willmore on behalf of
Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited



JANUARY 2020

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1.0 — Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Barton Willmore Engagement on behalf of Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited. It demonstrates the applicants' commitment to collaborative working and provides a clear record of the pre-application consultation and engagement for the proposed development carried out between April and January 2020.

This SCI should be read in conjunction with the suite of documentation which forms the applicants' outline planning application to Reading Borough Council ('The Council') for the following proposed development at the site:

Demolition and redevelopment to comprise up to [115,000] sqm GEA in one or more land uses comprising: Residential (Class C3 and including PRS); Offices (Use Class B1(a); development in Use Classes A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away), C1 (hotel), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car parking; provision of new plant and renewable energy equipment; creation of servicing areas and provision of associated services, including waste, refuse, cycle storage, and lighting; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; provision of attenuation infrastructure; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the approved Development Parameters Schedule and Plans.

Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination.



1.1 — Location and current use of the site



- The site has a total area of 1.77 hectares (4.4 acres)
- Currently the site provides 6,969 sq m of Class A1 floorspace
- The site is located in close proximity to Reading Railway Station on the northern side of the railway, benefiting from good transport links to areas of Reading as well as to locations outside Reading
- Major vehicular routes run along the site's west and northern boundaries: Vastern Road and Caversham Road
- Pedestrian access from the Town centre, located south of the railway is enabled by a ground level passage beneath the railway tracks. Two alternative routes are placed east and west, alongside major vehicular routes
- It is surrounded by storage facilities and small retail units on the southern and western border. On the northern boundary the site is separated by Vastern Road from a row of terraced houses. The surrounding uses on the eastern boundary are mostly commercial: office spaces and parking



1.2 — Overview of the development

For reference purposes and to aid understanding of the themes shared and discussed in this document, please see indicative masterplan below.

- 750-950 homes - studio to 3 bed apartments
- Primarily car free, with car parking provision made for blue badge holders
- Resident and visitor cycle parking
- New public realm spaces
- New pedestrian linkage between the Railway Station, underpass and Vastern Road heading towards the River Thames
- New offices, hotel, retail units/ gym/ community facilities





1.3 — Project team

For the purpose of this document, the core team members who have been involved in engaging with the community and may be referenced in this report are:

Site Owner

Ben Littman – Aviva Investors

Project Managers

Phillip Jemmison - WT Partnership

Anthony D'Amico - WT Partnership

Architects

Roy Collado - Collado Collins Partners LLP

Robert Matthews - Collado Collins Partners LLP

Veronica Popescu - Collado Collins Partners LLP

Transport Consultant

Doug Hickman - Cole Easdon Consultants

Landscape Consultant

Paul Cope - Fabrik Ltd

Community Engagement

Kate Greatrix – Barton Willmore

Lucy Yaqub – Barton Willmore

Planning Consultants

Marie Jasper – Barton Willmore

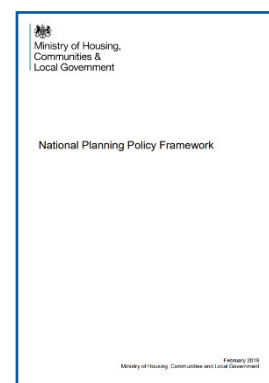
Robin Meakins – Barton Willmore

Amy Clarke – Barton Willmore



2.0 — Planning Policy Context

In order to establish an appropriate engagement strategy for the proposed development, a review of the relevant national and local planning policy guidance has been undertaken, which is set out below.



2.1 — National policy

The Government considers that pre-application engagement prior to the submission of a planning application is paramount to ensuring timely decision making, reducing delays and cost to the applicant while achieving quality outcomes. Paragraphs 39-46 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the NPPF') refer to the role of the pre-application engagement with the community and stakeholders in further detail. In essence, it advises that:

- Early engagement has the significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties, and good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community (paragraph 39).
- Local planning authorities should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.
- The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need
- to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits (paragraph 41).

- The participation of statutory planning consultees with an early pro-active approach will assist local authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs (paragraph 41).
- To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible (paragraph 43).

As this SCI and the accompanying DAS explains, the applicants and their development team have actively engaged with the local community and its key stakeholders throughout the evolution of the outline planning application.

By virtue of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) are required to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to set out their policy on involving their community in preparing local development documents and on consulting on planning applications. The Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) also identifies the steps which LPAs must take in involving the public with planning applications.

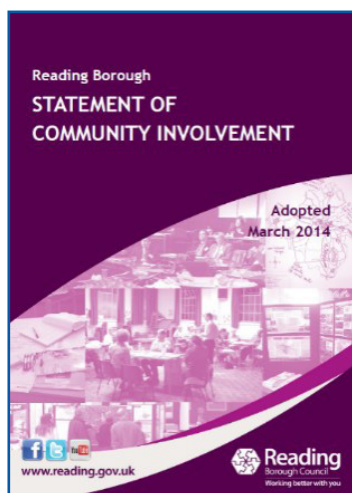
2.2 — Local policy

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). This document sets out how the authority intends to achieve continuous community involvement in the preparation of local development documents in their area. The SCI also covers how people and the community will be engaged in decisions on planning applications for major development that affect the authority's area.

The Council's SCI was adopted in March 2014 and emphasises the importance of pre-application discussions between planning officers and developers, and between applicants and local communities prior to the submission of an application, and states:

The Council agrees with this emphasis on engaging the community from the outset. It can result in an improved scheme which takes the needs of the existing community into account, and a better relationship between the developer and the community that carries through the application process and beyond. This is particularly the case for proposals that are sensitive or of a significant scale.

- Developers should prepare a project plan for pre-application involvement and consultation to be discussed and agreed with the case officer. The case officer will provide assistance in identifying and providing contact information for local representatives, groups and individuals who should be invited by the applicant to become involved in the proposals. This will include local residential and other property, representatives of community groups, including local Councillors, relevant statutory and non-statutory consultees, statutory undertakers and any other bodies or individuals to which such information is deemed relevant by the local planning authority. Where proposals relate to the historic environment, the developer will be required to consult a number of organisations with interests in these matters.
- The developer's project plan should include details of the scope of the community involvement including which stakeholders will be engaged, timescales and milestones, materials that will be made available to the community and stakeholders and the venues proposed for holding interactive events. Website development resources should also be highlighted.

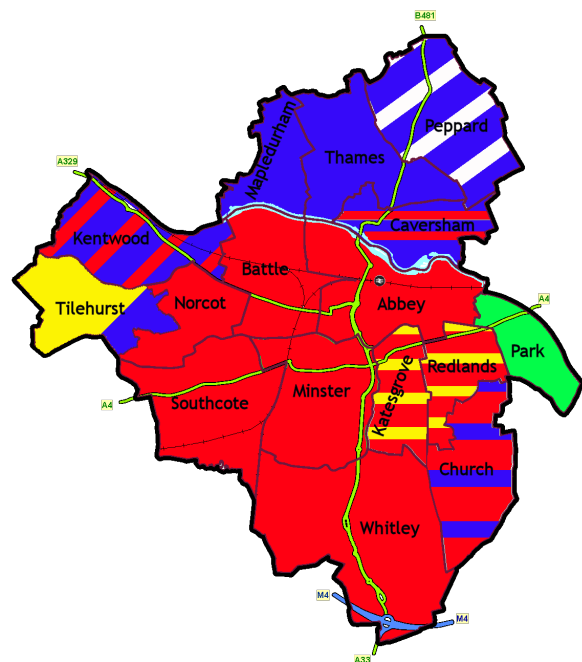


- The project plan should also discuss the need for local authority officer resources as part of the involvement process. Reading Borough Council already faces considerable pressure on planning staff resources. The Council cannot therefore guarantee to make staff resources available to assist involvement exercises or to attend public events. As a minimum, as part of pre-application discussions and correspondence, case officers from the Planning Section will: any such consultation meetings or exhibitions as it can appear that they are lending their support to the proposed development. However, there will be some schemes where the Council is working with a developer and therefore it would be appropriate for planning officers to attend the event. As for Members of the Planning Committee, the Planning Code of Conduct advises that they do not take part in discussions at any stage on any major development.
- The Council currently does not impose any charges for pre-application advice. However, should any such charges be introduced in the future, this would occur only after the publication of a scheme outlining the scale of charges.
- The policies and guidance set out in the NPPF and the Council's SCI are important considerations when engaging with and involving the wider community in the planning process and have been key to forming the applicants' engagement strategy for the proposed development.
- Barton Willmore operates a Good Practice Guide for Community Engagement as produced by Planning Aid England (see appendix 10).
 - Provide information and advice on consultees and stakeholders relevant to involvement in a particular proposal
 - Provide information and advice on potential venues for public interactive events
 - Facilitate involvement with elected members where necessary
 - Appraise and provide comment and advice on a community involvement project plan prepared by the developer/potential applicant
 - Arrange for links or material to be loaded onto the Council's website.

- Case officers will make efforts to attend events and take part in involvement exercises as observers, if time and resources allow. Where officer attendance or assistance in pre-application involvement exercises is specifically requested by a developer/potential applicant, and this is agreed on a “without prejudice” basis by the Planning Manager, any cost to the local authority will be charged to the developer/potential applicant at the Council’s standard rates for officer time and any materials.
- On the most significant or sensitive proposals, where very wide community interest is anticipated, it would be advisable to discuss community involvement arrangements with the community at the initial stage. Council officers can help to identify where this is likely to be required. Such initial approaches to the community and stakeholders should offer a range of involvement approaches and express willingness to meet groups or hold exhibitions/meetings to explore proposals. They should invite suggestions from the community and stakeholders on how involvement should take place to best meet the needs of the community. Prospective applicants should discuss with the community matters such as possible venues for exhibitions, meetings and other events, and the timing of those events to meet the needs of all in the community. This will be particularly important in involving hard to reach and specific groups within the community.
- Developers should prepare circular information on the developer/applicant’s intentions to make a planning application and develop a particular site. Developers should discuss the form and content of the information to be provided with the local planning authority. Such circular information shall be designed to include a means to feedback appropriate responses either by prompted questions or through other written and digital communication.
- Developers should widely distribute such information as may be agreed by the local planning authority by posting to household addresses and other addresses determined in conjunction with and agreed by the local planning authority.
- Developers should arrange and provide at least one interactive involvement event designed to enable all consultees to attend, receive information, participate and feedback information on their area and its community and their views on possible development or other change in the area.
- Such an event might take the form of a place check, enquiry by design event, exhibition and workshop, a planning for real exercise, public meeting or similar facilitated interactive event. The timing and arrangements for the event should be set out in the project plan. It is advisable for developers to discuss the time, location, illustrative materials, facilitation arrangements and event programme with the local planning authority. The local planning authority must be invited to send representatives to observe and, if appropriate, to participate in any event.

- Developers should provide a website of relevant information or provide digital images and information (or a suitable document such as a document in pdf format) that can be put on the planning page of the Reading Borough Council Website.
- Developers or prospective applicants will be expected to prepare a public report of community involvement for submission with a significant or sensitive planning application (as defined in this SCI), detailing the extent of the community involvement exercise carried out, reporting all views and responses and indicating the actions or changes that have been carried out or that it is proposed are carried out in order to meet the views and concerns raised by the community involvement. Where no actions or changes are proposed, the report should explain why this is the case.

In order to meet these requirements, a prospective applicant will need to allow considerable time for carrying out pre-application involvement.



3.0 — Consultation Process

The aim of our community consultation is to engage with local residents, stakeholders and other interested parties; inform them of the investment that is being made in their community, identify any significant local issues or concerns and ensure these are addressed in an inclusive manner.

3.1 — Consultation aims

The objectives throughout the process of consultation with the local community have been to:

- Research and identify all relevant interest groups and parties
- Encourage as much input as possible from the local community, including residents, interest groups, Councillors and businesses
- Provide the community with genuine and well publicised opportunities to provide feedback on the proposed scheme
- Identify and address where possible any issues or concerns highlighted by the community and stakeholders
- Be clear about what can be changed and what cannot, and explain why
- Be inclusive, accessible, transparent and engaging
- Clearly communicate all feedback from the local community to the wider project team

3.2 — Process overview

Engaging with stakeholders and the local community in a timely, appropriate and inclusive manner and seeking their involvement and feedback to the applicant's proposals has been crucial. A key element has been to conduct an open dialogue with stakeholders and local residents.

Public consultation and events on the proposed site and development began in April 2019. The process of public consultation was designed to coincide with, and inform, the key stages of design development and present the evolution of the design in a clear and informative manner that enables the community to contribute and respond in an informed way.

Two principal stages of pre-application consultation were held to discuss the site and the design proposals. The public exhibitions were delivered in September and October 2019.

Stage 1— Stakeholder and Public Consultation

Early meetings were held with Reading Borough Council officers to determine the required level of consultation. The initial stage of public consultation focused on raising awareness of the site, its potential redevelopment, and understanding any local issues or concerns. This was carried out through meetings with local stakeholder groups and a two day public exhibition. Feedback was collected to help understand residents' initial thoughts on the proposals and inform further design development and progression of the scheme.

Stage 2 — Stakeholder and Public Consultation

Following the Stage 1 'raising awareness' consultation, a further two day public exhibition was held. The exhibition comprised of detailed feedback from the community from the first public exhibition and shared the revised proposals in order to seek further feedback ahead of the submission of an outline planning application.

Meetings were also held with local stakeholder groups and Reading Borough Councillors.

Future Engagement

The applicants will continue to engage with stakeholders and neighbours close to the site to further discuss any specific issues and maintain an ongoing dialogue.



3.3 — Consultation tools

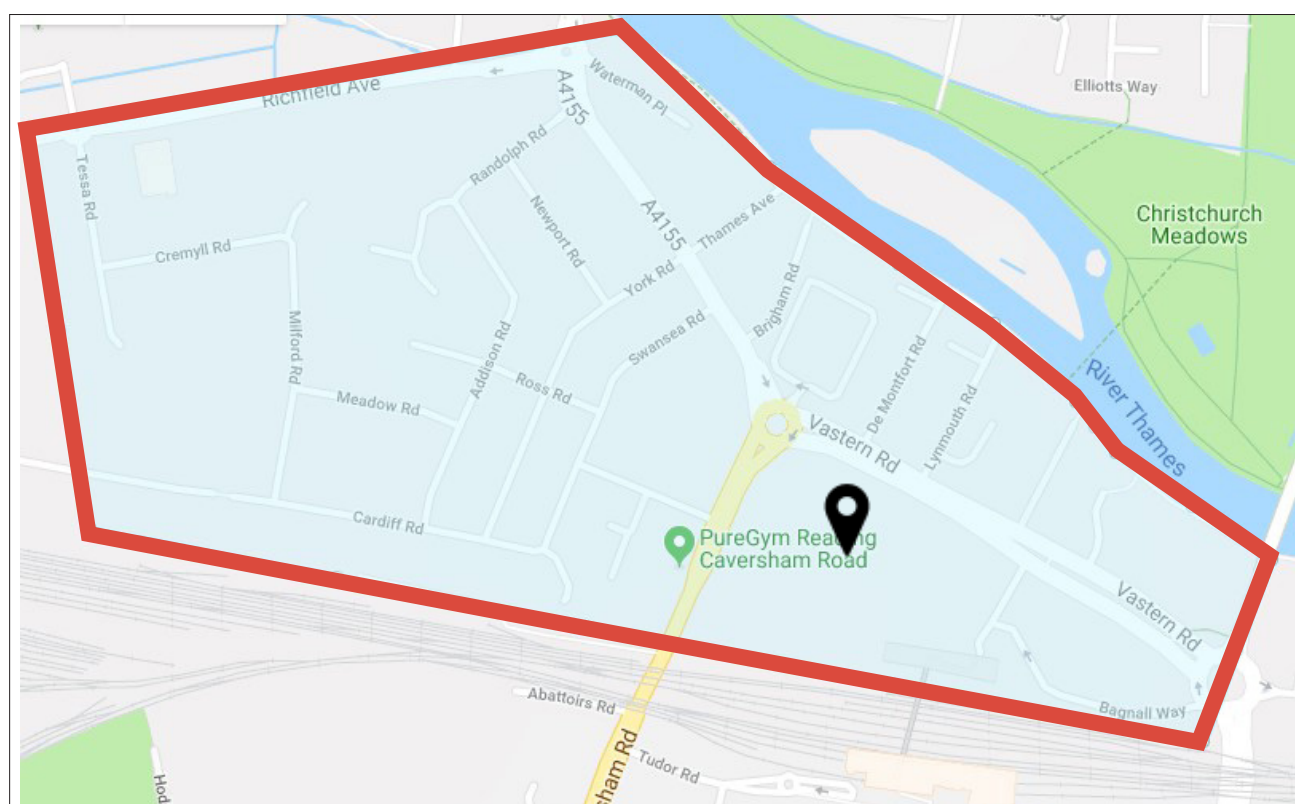
Numerous methods and tools were used to raise awareness of the project and the public exhibitions in the local area.

Consultation boundary

A consultation boundary was established in the early stages of the project. The consultation boundary comprised of 1,168 residents and businesses and was used as a basic distribution area for the consultation material.

The main streets within the boundary are listed below:

Vastern Road
Lynmouth Road
DeMontfort Road
Brigham Road
Thames Ave
Waterman Place
Randolph Road
Newport Road
York Road
Swansea Road
Ross Road
Addison Road
Cardiff Road
Meadow Road
Richfield Ave
Milford Road
Cremyll Road



Consultation boundary

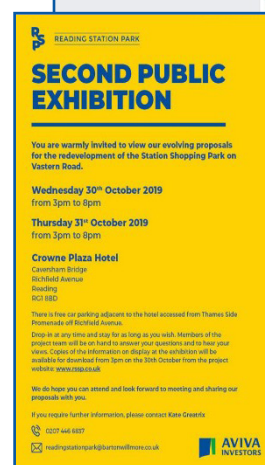
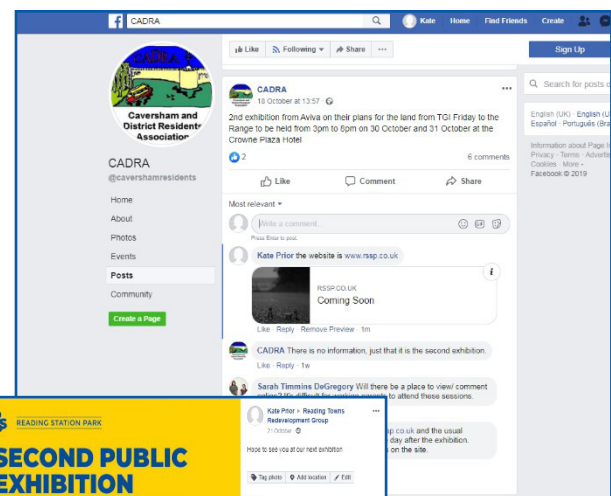


This is Reading
Facebook –
posted 20/9/19

Publicity

The following methods were used to publicise the public exhibitions:

- Invitations and flyers distributed to homes and businesses within the consultation boundary
- Exhibition dates published on the dedicated project website
- Email invitations to the project contact database
- Newspaper advertisements in the Slough Express and Slough Observer
- Local community group social media channels
- Get Reading Press Coverage



Website

In July 2019, a project website was launched, dedicated to the consultation and engagement process. The website was updated with key information on the proposals, notice of exhibitions and how to give feedback. Feedback forms were available to be completed online with a section also provided where PDF documents of all consultation material and exhibition boards could be downloaded. The website can be accessed at: www.rssp.co.uk

Email updates

Email updates have been sent to residents who signed up to be kept up to date, informing them of the progress of the project and updating them on the consultation process, to ensure anyone interested is kept fully informed of matters relating to the project.



Email

A dedicated email address RSP@bartonwillmore.co.uk was set up at the beginning of the project to provide a direct contact point for queries throughout the process.

Project phone number

A telephone number (0207 466 6837) and out of hours number (07766 086738) were set up for all queries regarding the consultation and wider project. This was staffed and managed by the applicants' community engagement team.

Project database

The project database was used to keep a record of people who expressed an interest in remaining involved or informed about the project.

The database was built up using the following methods:

- People who directly contacted the applicants' community engagement team via the project email and phone line
- Records of attendees at exhibitions who requested to be kept informed about the project
- People who completed feedback forms requesting to be kept informed on the proposals
- Representatives of local groups and associations contacted directly

The database was used to send invitations and updates regarding the project.

We take data protection seriously. Personal details were supplied to the Barton Willmore community engagement team for the purpose of research in connection with this project and in order to update people on the database on the progress of the project. Personal details will be treated as confidential and will not be shared, passed on to or used by any third parties and they will only be retained until the end of the planning process for the project, after which time they will be deleted.



READING STATION PARK

PUBLIC EXHIBITION

You are warmly invited to our first public exhibition to view our emerging proposals to redevelop the Station Shopping Park on Vastern Road.

Wednesday 25th September 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Thursday 26th September 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8BD

There is free car parking adjacent to the hotel accessed from Thames Side Promenade off Richfield Avenue. Your car and contents are left at your own risk. We do hope you can attend and look forward to meeting and sharing our plans with you. If you require further information, please contact **Kate Grealix** or **Lucy Yaqub**

0207 446 6837 or 0207 446 6834 www.rssp.co.uk
readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk



READING STATION PARK **AVIVA INVESTORS**

SECOND PUBLIC EXHIBITION

You are warmly invited to view our evolving proposals for the redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park on Vastern Road.

Wednesday 30th October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

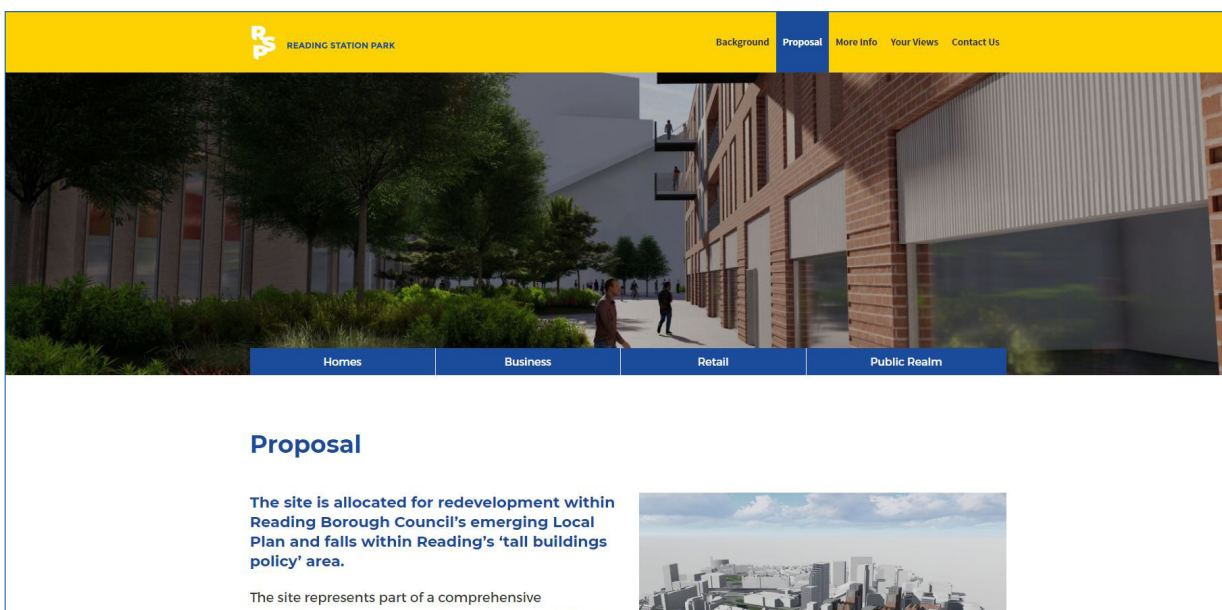
Thursday 31st October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8BD

There is free car parking adjacent to the hotel accessed from Thames Side Promenade off Richfield Avenue. Drop-in at any time and stay for as long as you wish. Members of the project team will be on hand to answer your questions and to hear your views. Copies of the information on display at the exhibition will be available for download from 3pm on the 30th October from the project website: www.rssp.co.uk. We do hope you can attend and look forward to meeting and sharing our proposals with you.

If you require further information, please contact **Kate Grealix**

0207 446 6837 readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk



READING STATION PARK Background Proposal More Info Your Views Contact Us

Homes Business Retail Public Realm

Proposal

The site is allocated for redevelopment within Reading Borough Council's emerging Local Plan and falls within Reading's 'tall buildings policy' area.

The site represents part of a comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the Station Area and of

3.4 — Consultation tools

Stakeholder meetings

Meetings were offered to key local stakeholder groups at relevant stages of the project to keep them informed of the progress of the project. These discussions helped the project team to understand more about local views and priorities for the area. Representatives of the following key local stakeholder groups, groups and media were contacted by the development team to discuss the proposed development during the consultation process:

- Cllr Karen Rowland (Abbey Ward, Lead Councillor for Culture, Heritage and Recreation)
- Cllr Tony Page (Abbey Ward, Lead Councillor for Strategic Planning, Environment and Transport)
- Cllr Mohammed Ayub (Abbey Ward)
- Representatives from Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)
- Representatives from Bell Tower Community Association
- Representatives from Lynmouth Road Residents Association
- Representatives from Caversham Globe (GLOBE)

- Representatives from Reading Civic Society
- Representatives from Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA)
- Peter Robinson (author of blog www.readingonthames.com)
- Hugh Ford (Get Reading)
- Alan Bunce (Thames Tap)

Public exhibitions

Two public exhibitions were held as part of the consultation process. Both exhibitions were held at The Crowne Plaza, Caversham Bridge which was chosen due to its close proximity to the site.

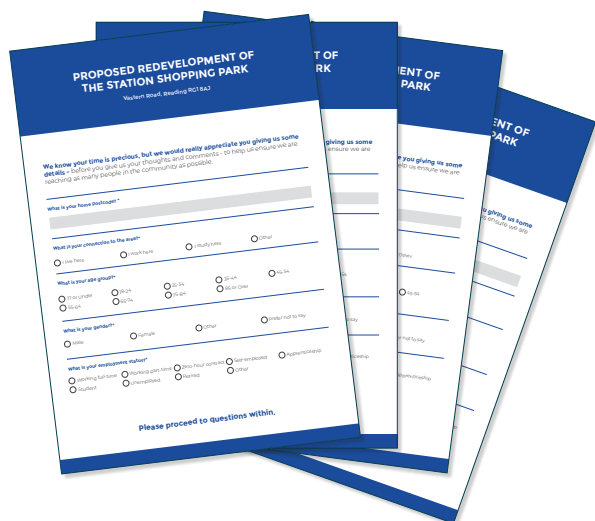
Both exhibitions were staffed by the applicants' community engagement and wider project team. Exhibition banners were used to describe the proposals.

The primary consultation tool at both the public exhibitions was a feedback form; this varied in detail for each exhibition and was used to seek feedback on specific aspects of the proposals that the project team sort input on at each stage and offered open areas for people to record their views. More detail on the exact content of the public exhibitions can be found in the chapters related to each consultation stage in this report.

Collecting feedback

An important part of the consultation process is to analyse and report back on the findings from both public exhibitions and stakeholder meetings in order for the findings to feed into the design process and keep the development team updated on any topics or issues which arise.

Feedback collected through consultation events was analysed by the community engagement team and reported back to the project development team.



Welcome



Thank you for taking the time to visit our public exhibition on the potential redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park.

This exhibition gives you the chance to view and comment on our emerging plans to redevelop the Station Shopping Park.

You can help shape our emerging scheme by providing us with your feedback. All of your comments and suggestions will be taken into consideration as we progress towards submitting our outline planning application later in the year.

We are committed to working with the local community, associations, businesses, Councillors and Reading Borough Council.

**LET US
KNOW WHAT
YOU THINK...**

After looking through the material on display, please complete a feedback form to let us know what you think of our emerging proposals shown here today.

Members of our team are here to answer any questions you may have.



All pictures shown today are indicative examples only




Have Your Say



We hope you have found this public exhibition useful and informative.

Please do talk to us and ask us any questions - we are here to help and would very much like to hear your views.

Please leave your comments on our emerging proposals by completing our feedback form and posting it in the box provided. If you would prefer to take one away with you, please ask a member of the team for a stamped addressed envelope.

In order for us to consider all the feedback, we need to set a deadline for your form to be returned to us by **Monday 7th October 2019**.

Over the coming weeks, we will analyse and discuss, as a team, all the feedback we receive from the community. We will share our final plans with you, prior to submitting our outline planning application, at our next exhibition at the end of October/early November.



Thank you for attending today, your views really do make a difference.

If you require further information, please contact Kate or Lucy:

☎ 0207 446 6837 or 0207 446 6834

✉ readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk

🌐 www.rssp.co.uk




Examples of banners used at first public exhibition

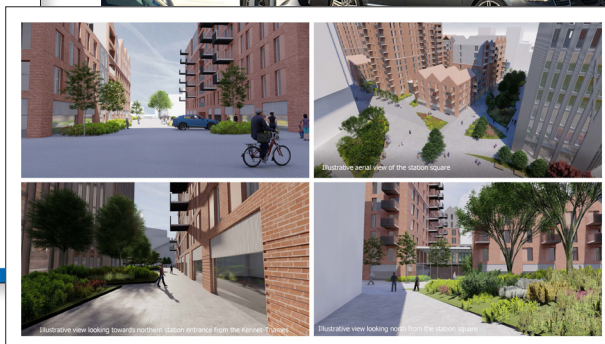
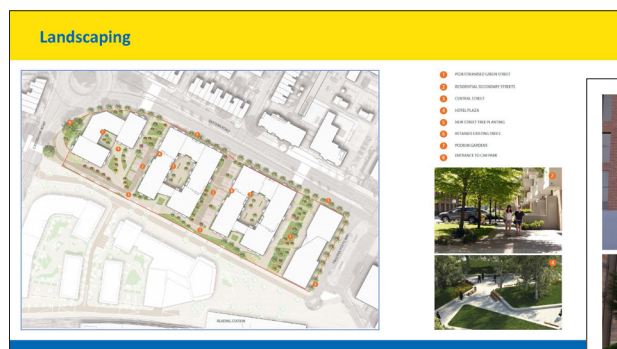
24

3.5 — Consultation meetings and exhibitions

The following table highlights the stakeholder meetings and public exhibitions held during the consultation period.

Consultation	Date
Pre-application meeting with case officer	31st May 2019
Meeting with Cllr T Page (Lead Councillor for Strategic Planning, Environment and Transport, Ward Councillor) and Cllr K Rowland (Lead Councillor for Culture, Heritage and Recreation)	10th September 2019
Pre-application meeting with case officer	12th September 2019
First Public Exhibition	25th and 26th September 2019
Meeting with Lynmouth Road Residents Association	17th October 2019
Second Public Exhibition	30th and 31st October 2019
Meeting with Reading Civic Society, CADRA and the Conservation Area Advisory Committee	21st January 2020

It should be noted that an individual meeting was offered to the Bell Tower Community Association, but this was not taken up. However, the project team did engage with members of the Association during both public exhibitions and via email.



Example of presentation used at stakeholder meetings

4.0 — Stage 1 Consultation

Initial consultation and engagement focused on informing the community and identified stakeholders of our intentions to redevelop the site, gain an understanding of any issues or concerns, and answer any questions local people and stakeholders might have regarding the proposed redevelopment and emerging proposals.

The analysis of this feedback and early meetings led to the design and layout proposals for the site, which was first presented at a public exhibition held on 25th and 26th September 2019.

Stage 1 consultation included the following activities:

- Meeting with case officer to agree required stakeholder and community engagement and consultation process
- Raising awareness of the planned redevelopment of the site whilst sharing consultation process and next steps
- Approaching key stakeholders to develop a database of organisations, associations and individuals with an interest in the project and site
- First public exhibition
- Collecting feedback on the initial design proposals to further inform design and progression of the scheme

READING STATION PARK

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE STATION SHOPPING PARK

Vastern Road, Reading RG1 8AJ

We know your time is precious, but we would really appreciate you giving us some details - before you give us your thoughts and comments - to help us ensure we are reaching as many people in the community as possible.

Date:

Postcode:

What is your connection to the area?*

☐ I live here ☐ I work here ☐ I study here ☐ Other

What is your age group?*

☐ 17 or Under ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54

☐ 55-64 ☐ 65-74 ☐ 75-84 ☐ 85 or Over

What is your gender?*

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your employment status?*

☐ Working full-time ☐ Working part-time ☐ Self-employed ☐ Apprenticeship

☐ Student ☐ Unemployed ☐ Retired ☐ Other

At this stage, would you support a plan?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Please proceed to questions within.

READING STATION PARK

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We do hope you can attend and look forward to meeting and sharing our plans with you. If you require further information, please contact **Kate Grestie** or **Lucy Yeagub**.

0207 446 6837 or 0207 446 6834 www.rssp.co.uk

readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk

4.1— Public exhibition stage 1

In order to ensure the wider community and not just those within the site's immediate vicinity were notified, the applicants invited over 1,168 households and businesses to attend the public exhibition. A copy of the invitation, distributed 10 days prior to the exhibition, is reproduced on page 25. Details of the exhibition dates and location were also provided on the applicants' website – www.rssp.co.uk

Exhibition location:

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading RG1 8BD

The venue was chosen for its recognition locally and for being accessible on foot, by car, bus or train.

Dates and times:

Wednesday 25th September from 3pm to 8pm
Thursday 26th September from 3pm to 8pm

Total number of visitors:

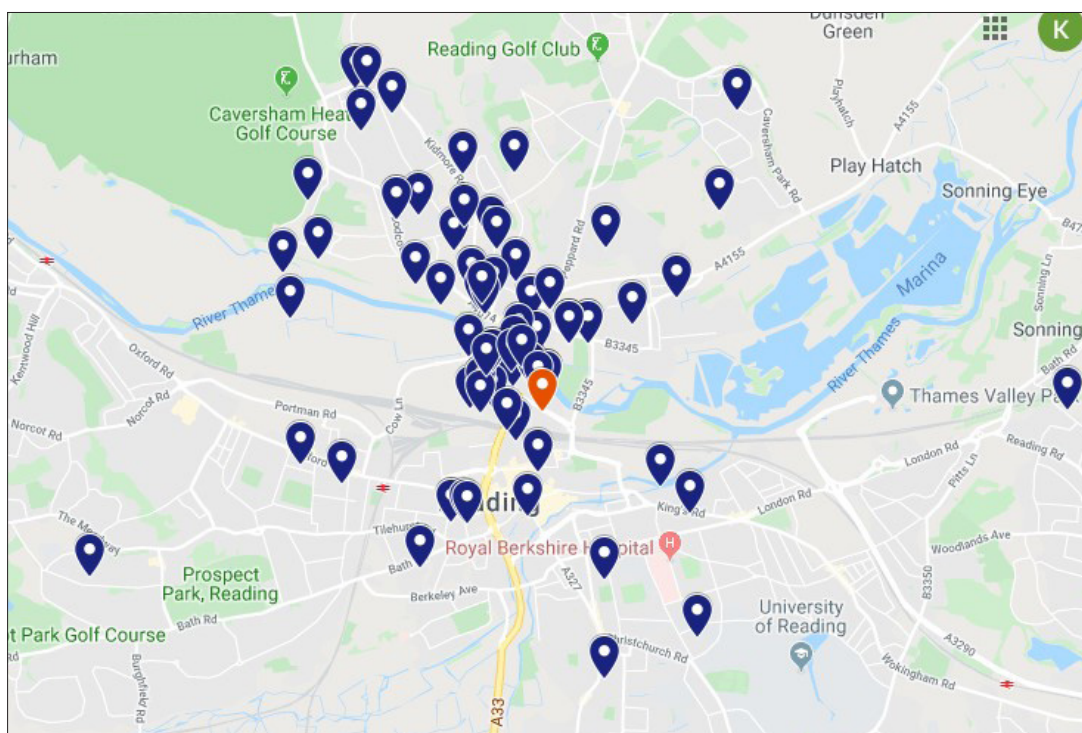
The public exhibition had over 118 visitors over the 2 days.

93 people signed in at the exhibition with postcodes giving an indication of geographical attendance.

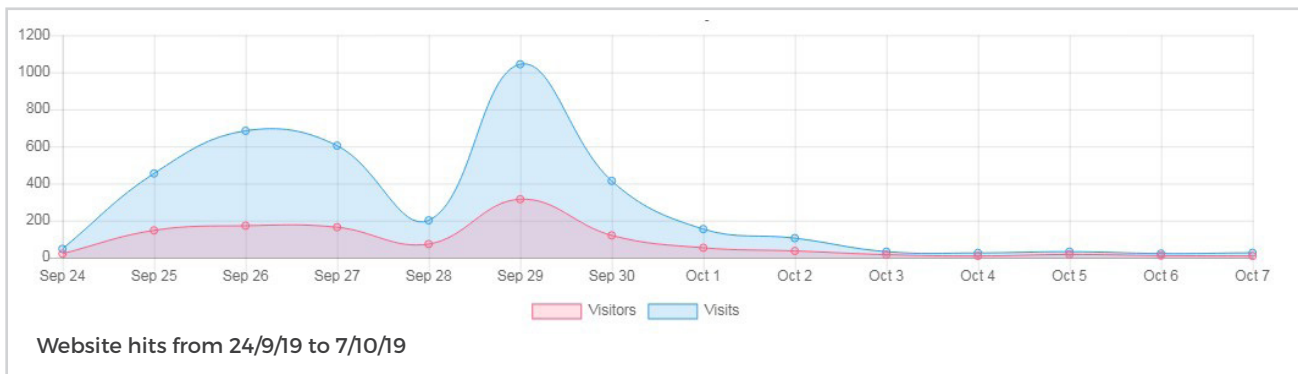
The exhibition also provided visitors with the opportunity to pose questions directly to the project team, and to provide feedback on the emerging masterplan via comment forms made available on both days.

Stamped addressed envelopes were also provided for visitors wishing to provide feedback at a later date. The deadline for postal forms to be returned was advised as Monday 7th October 2019. Feedback forms were available to be completed online along with copies of the exhibition banners, enabling an increased contribution from the community.

A summary of feedback received can be found on the following pages (a copy of the feedback form can be found in Appendix 3).



Indication of attendance at Public Exhibition.



The exhibition provided visitors with the opportunity to understand the rationale behind the proposals and the emerging masterplan.

12 exhibition banners were presented, covering the following information:

- Welcome
- Background
- Planning Policy Context
- Emerging Context for Station Area
- Emerging Masterplan
- Illustrative Images
- Access and Parking
- Landscape and Public Space
- Height of Proposed Development
- Benefits
- Timeline
- Have your say

A complete copy of the exhibition banners displayed during the public exhibition can be found in Appendix 2.



Access & Parking



Pedestrian access

Vehicle access



will be pri
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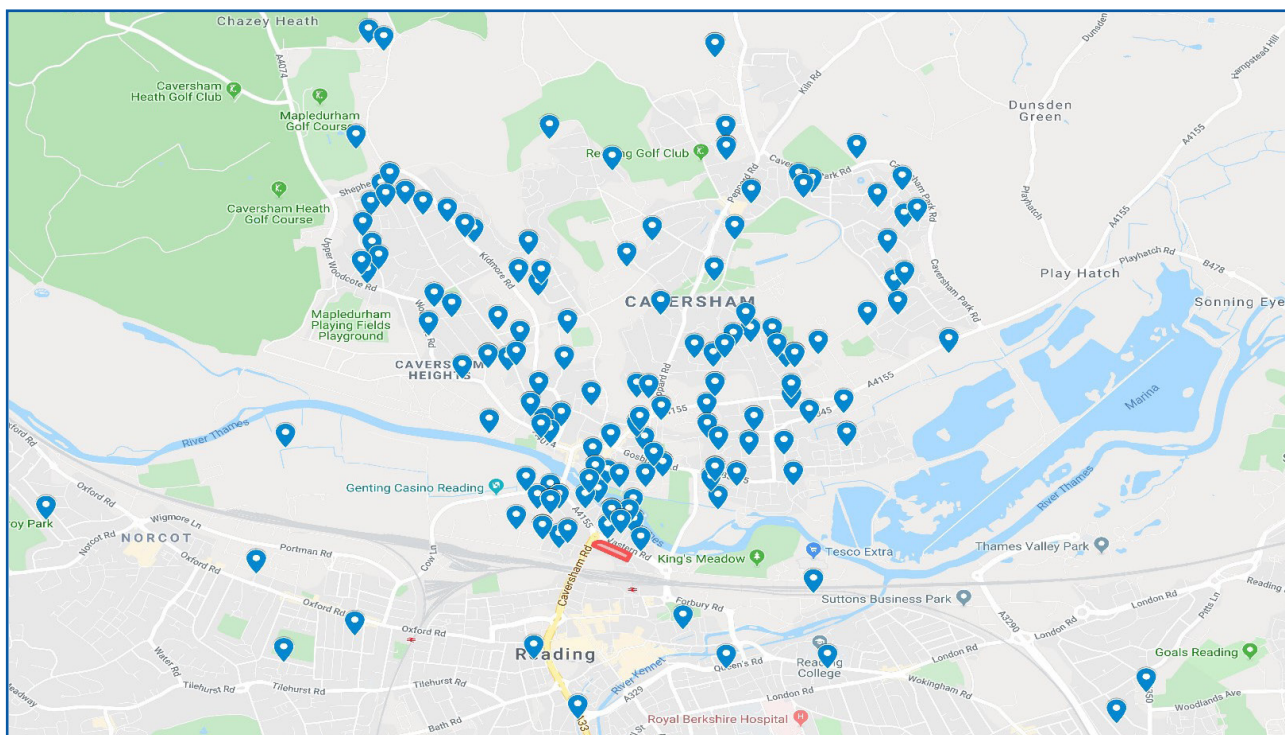
4.2 — Response to public exhibition

Attendees were asked to complete a comment form on the proposals to record their level of agreement or otherwise on the key aspects of the scheme, in order to obtain structured feedback. The forms also allowed space for more detailed comments and feedback.

Summary of feedback

A total of 220 comment forms were received with 62 completed at the public exhibition attended by 118 people over the 2 days. The majority of forms were completed online with a small amount being received in the post. A deadline of Monday 7th October 2019 was advised.

It should be noted that the majority of the feedback has come from residents living in Caversham - many of whom did not attend the public exhibition - with only a few residents commenting from the area immediately surrounding the site and in Abbey Ward. The results to our questions, are therefore heavily weighted to residents North of the River Thames.



Map showing distribution of responses to comment form



The following is a high-level summary of feedback received from the comment forms. Key recurring topics and comments noted, in no particular order, are as follows:

Positive comments:

- Walkways/pedestrian & cycle access linking the Railway Station to Vastern Road, the River Thames and around the site.
- Green spaces/trees/public space
- Good use of the site for mixed-use redevelopment
- Improvement to the area
- Retail space: Shops/restaurants
- Predominately car free development
- Design: mix of high/low rise and high quality
- Landscaping
- Provision of more housing

Concerns:

- No need for any more office space - lots already empty
- Design - boring/no wow factor/ugly/soulless
- Too many flats - don't need more housing
- Traffic congestion
- Height of main buildings
- Lack of/Impact/strain on local services e.g. GP surgery, schools
- Lack of parking
- Loss of retail stores especially ALDI

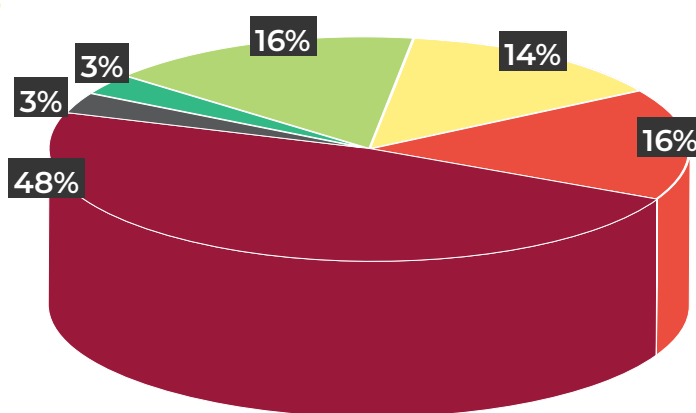
4.3 — Detailed feedback from comment forms

The following is a detailed analysis drawn from the 220 comment forms completed. The community were asked to answer a total of eight questions. Questions 1-5 were direct response questions and questions 6-8 were open-ended questions to allow residents to provide more comments and suggestions enabling both positive and negative feedback.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

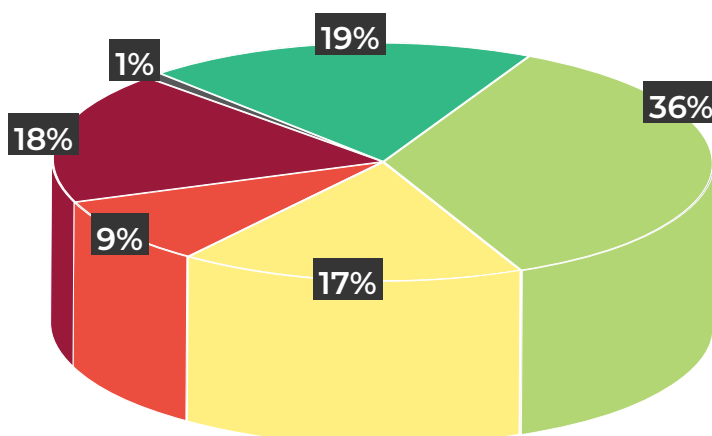
Q1. Our aspiration for the site is to deliver high-quality housing and office space to help make the new station quarter an enjoyable place to work, live in and to visit. Do you agree with the overall approach to this scheme?

19% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the site could deliver high-quality housing and office space to help make the new station quarter an enjoyable place to work, live in and visit. 64% disagree or strongly disagree. 14% were neutral and 3% did not comment.



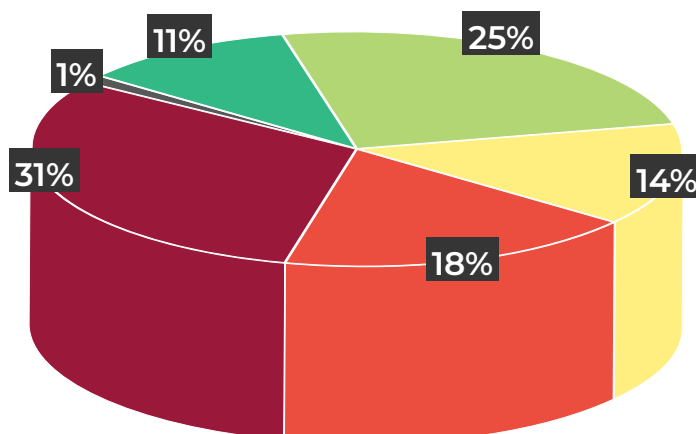
Q2. New pedestrian routes through the site will extend public access from the town centre, through the site to the riverfront and beyond. Do you think this is a good idea?

Just over a half of respondents (55%) agreed or strongly agreed that it was a good idea to have new pedestrian routes through the site that will extend public access from the town centre, through the site to the riverfront and beyond. 27% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. 17% were neutral with only 1% of respondents choosing not to comment.



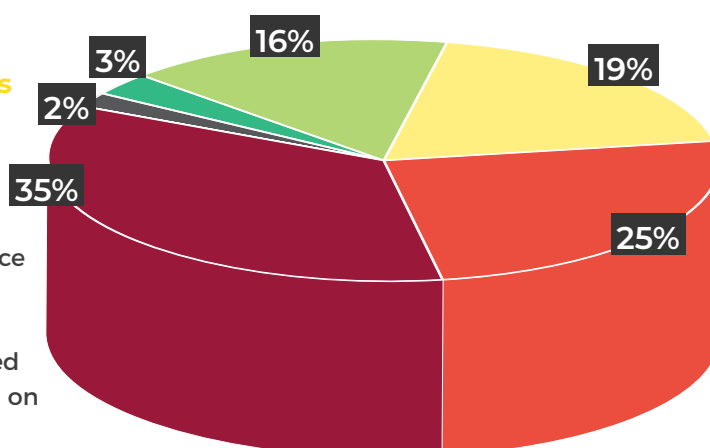
Q3. The provision of open space, landscaping, cafes, restaurants and retail is important for new and existing residents. Do you think this will be an improvement to local amenity provision?

36% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the provision of open space, landscaping, cafes, restaurants would be an improvement to local amenity provision, with 14% remaining neutral. However, 49% disagreed or strongly disagreed, with 1% choosing not to comment on this question.



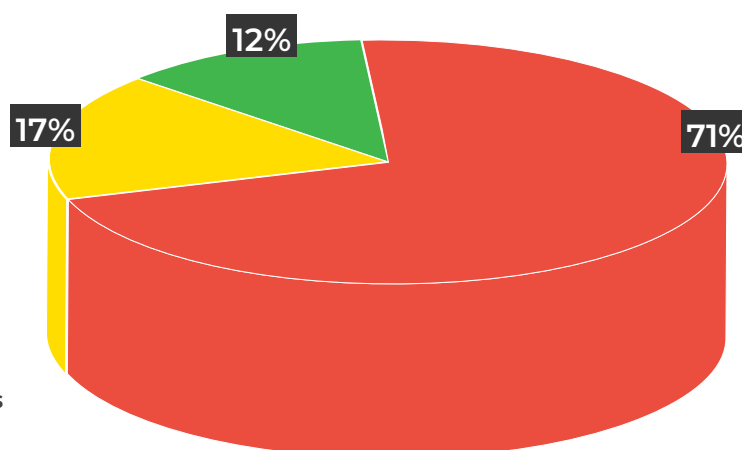
Q4. New premium office space will make a significant contribution towards Reading's established position as the 'Capital of the Thames Valley.'

The majority of respondents (60%) strongly disagreed or disagreed that new premium office space would make a significant contribution towards Reading's established position as the 'Capital of the Thames Valley'. 19% either agreed or strongly agreed with 19% remaining neutral on this question. 2% chose not to comment.



Q5. At this stage, would you support a planning application for the proposed development?

71% of respondents stated they would not support a planning application at this stage. It should be noted that the majority of responses to this question came from residents living in Caversham - many of whom did not attend the public exhibition but chose to comment online following a social media campaign to oppose the proposed development. The results are therefore heavily skewed to residents living North of the River Thames.



KEY

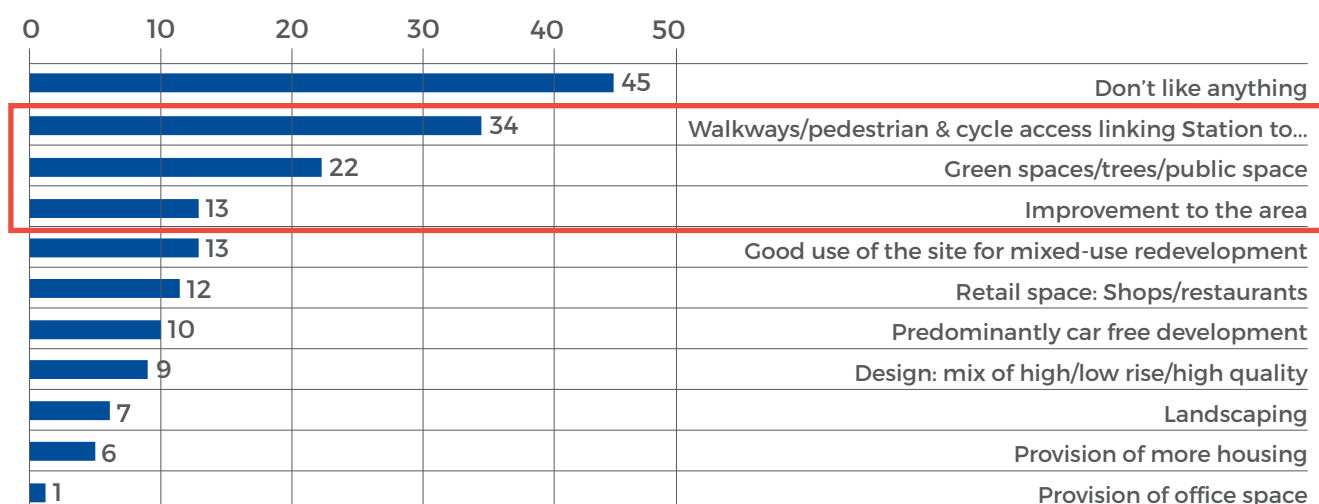
Yes

No

Undecided

Q6. What aspect of the proposals to you particularly like:

Sample size: 201 people with 172 responses.



Whilst the highest response of 45 people stated they didn't like anything about the proposals to redevelop the Shopping Park the following were particularly liked by respondents:

- Walkways/pedestrian & cycle access linking Railway Station to Vastern Road, the River Thames and around the site
- Green spaces/trees/public space
- Good use of the site for mixed-use redevelopment
- Improvement to the area
- Retail space: Shops/restaurants

To a lesser extent but still liked is:

- Predominately car free development
- Design: mix of high/low rise and high quality.
- Landscaping
- Provision of more housing

Some positive comments provided:

"The area could do with a facelift and greater areas for pedestrians would be beneficial."

"I like the increase in density of the site."

"New housing on a brownfield site."

"It is good to redevelop the area."

"Open spaces and pedestrian access to the station...love New York like skyline..."living."

"The regeneration of an old and poorly maintained area of the town."

"Provision of additional central Reading housing accommodation."

"Tall landmark buildings help attract businesses, putting Reading on the map, provide a sense of ambition, and provide employment opportunity as alternatives to commuting to London."

"Absence of car parking is appropriate in this central location."

"The current use is a terribly inefficient use for a site this close to the town centre and railway station, and the proposals represent a much better use. Although I would be sad to see Aldi lost, I only go there because it's convenient so, if it wasn't there, I'd go somewhere else instead."

"Re-development of an area of little architectural merit is an opportunity to improve the built environment in Reading."

"Connecting the town centre with the river with paths is a nice idea."

"I like the height of the office building, although I think it could be even taller (30+ storeys)."

"Will depend on architecture but the whole area has been a mess for decades and isn't a good advert for Reading - a high quality development is needed."

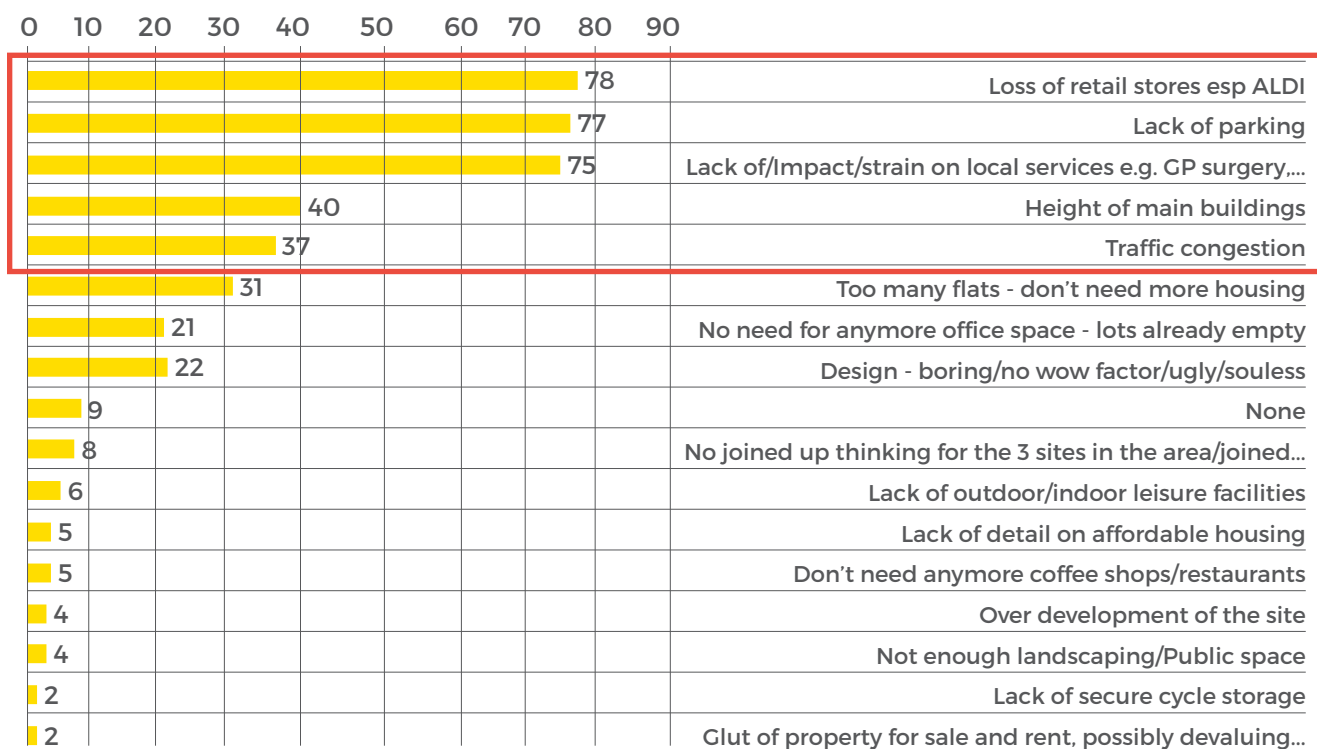
"It will provide more housing."

"The aspiration for car-free living."

"Better pedestrian access to the station."

Q7. Do you have any reservations about the proposals?

Sample size: 201 people with 430 responses



The top reservations about the proposals are:

- Loss of existing retail stores, Aldi being the most mentioned.
- Lack of car parking on site
- Impact and strain on local services e.g. GP surgery

Followed by:

- Height of main building
- Traffic congestion

Many residents have questioned the need for more housing, especially the need for more flats and the need for more office space as it is felt that there are many empty office units in the Town.

Some comments provided expressing concerns and reservations:

"To lose a food supermarket as well used as Aldi is a major step back for the immediate area."

"Too many flats going into town, with not enough provision for family housing, car spaces, private gardens, doctors surgeries, sports facilities, schools etc."

"There are already plenty of flat developments. Small houses would be more suitable as there is a lack of these for families."

"No more flats please."

"READING DOES NOT NEED MORE EMPTY FLATS OR OFFICES! PLEASE DON'T TAKE AWAY THIS IMPORTANT COMMUNITY RETAIL RESOURCE- ALL THE OTHER RETAIL OUTLETS ARE THE OTHER SIDE OF READING."

"I think the buildings of 20 and 17 storeys are far too high, as they will cut out light, create wind tunnels and lead to far too great a population density for a limited area."

"I think the design looks a bit naff, boring and by the numbers. It could be any building anywhere. The station looks so modern and the Royal Mail plans look a lot more contemporary."

"Nothing screams Reading, and nothing says prime location."

"I really don't see why more office space is needed when there are empty offices."

"Keep the precious retail park. There's plenty of other office and residential options."

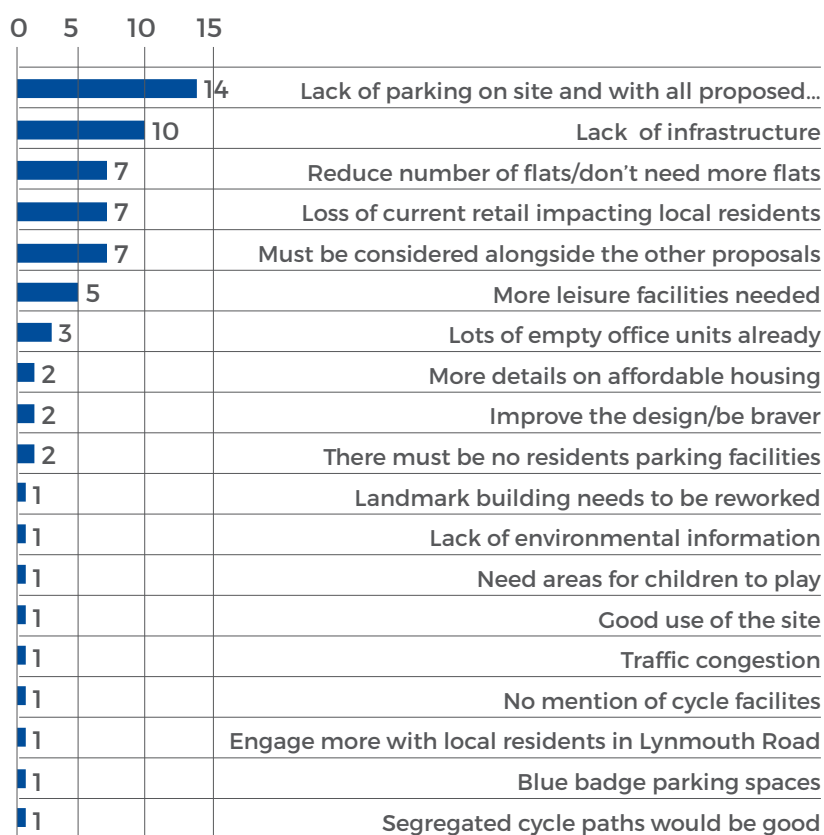
"Reading is being turned into flat central."

"Soon enough, people will not want to live here as it will be full of empty offices, empty buildings and no facilities, education space or health advice."

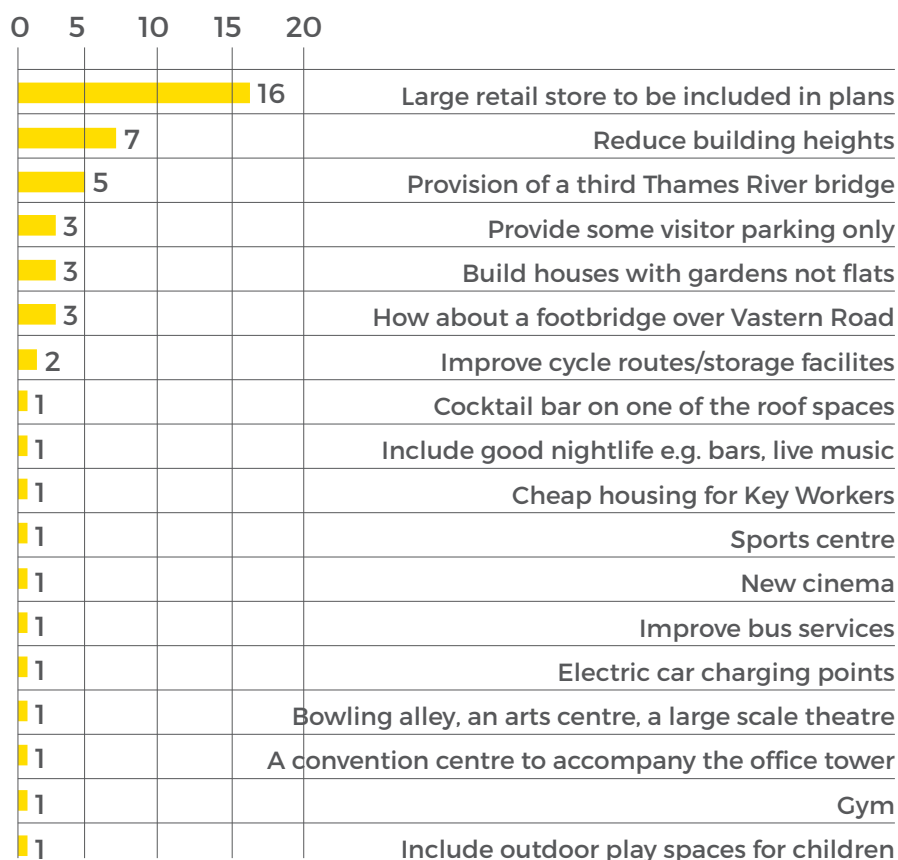


Q8 - Do you have any other comments

Sample size: 165 people with 68 comments and 50 suggestions



Do you have any suggestions?



4.4 — Questions raised at the public exhibition

Questions	Response
What type of planning application are you planning to submit?	We will be submitting an outline application, which deals with the broad principles of the development, such as what the site will be used for. This allows us to later agree with the Council and local community a more detailed future proposal, called a Reserved Matters application. This will allow us to finalise aspects such as the design of the development, housing numbers, parking spaces and landscaping.
How many of the flats will be affordable? Is there social housing or reduced rent accommodation?	We are uncertain how many flats will be affordable as we will agree a level with the Council. At this stage social housing providers have not been approached about taking part of the development as it is too early in the process. At present it is not Aviva's intention to rent out the accommodation, but this may be reviewed nearer the completion of the development.
Why do we need more office space, when there are lots of empty locations already in Reading?	We do not know the reason for vacant office space. It could be that it is not providing the specification that occupiers seek, or it might have a tenant who is not occupying the space. We are advised by Savills, our investment agent, that in the future there will be demand for office space. What's more, providing multiple uses enables the space to be more sustainable, with people around at all times.
Where will visiting family and friends of the new residents park?	Many visitors will use the train or bus services, however anyone using a car can park in the adjacent multi-storey car park. There are also over 4 other public car parks within walking distance of the site.
Where is the parking for the residents?	There will be parking facilities for blue badge holders. The current Government policy is that inner town/city developments, with good transport links should not be provided with parking for all.
What is the plan for the existing shops already in situ?	To deliver the development all the existing shops will need to be demolished. In the new development, most of the ground floors will offer space for shops, restaurants, offices and other non-residential uses, which means the existing retailers could be accommodated.

Where are residents expected to shop for groceries and access amenities like schools and leisure facilities without putting more strain on local transport infrastructure?	We would like a shop selling groceries to be one of the shop occupiers. In relation to schools, we will be required to pay a Community Infrastructure Levy to the Council when the works start so that they have the money to provide school places. As for leisure, we see this as a good addition to the completed project and will have space for a gym or similar facility if sought.
What provision for dentist/ health services will there be?	We will provide space for community uses which could include dentist or health uses if sought. During the consultation with the Local Planning Authority, the need for new health services will be identified through their consultation with Berkshire West Primary Care Trust.
Will mature trees actually be planted not young trees?	We will seek to provide a variety of landscaping. We will have to agree with the Council on the types of trees to be planted, and those selected need to be sustainable. We will consider the provision of suitable mature trees in the development.
What limitations are there/will there be for public access to the green spaces within the site?	Green spaces for public access will where possible be incorporated into the ground level external areas of the buildings.
Does Reading have a plan for encouraging independently run businesses to open and flourish in the secondary and tertiary areas of the town?	We are unaware of a plan that specifically focuses on independent businesses in secondary and tertiary areas of the town. However, the current Reading Economic Development Plan (2016-2020) www.livingreading.co.uk/doingbusiness/economic-developmentstrategy was written by Reading UK CIC in collaboration with Reading Borough Council and mentions maximising investment through promotion, business engagement and in micro start-ups and workplace provision.



5.0 — Stage 2 Consultation

The second stage of consultation on the proposed development presented further details on the scheme including, how the proposals had progressed in response to feedback and further design considerations.

Stage 2 consultation activities included:

- Ongoing communication with local stakeholders to discuss the proposals
- Assessment of Stage 1 feedback
- Updating the community on the evolution of the proposals to continue to gather feedback through a public exhibition
- Responding to questions and emails from the public
- Attending residents committee meetings

Some of the issues considered at this stage were:

- Heights of buildings
- Parking – both on-site and off-site
- Landscaping
- Traffic congestion
- Retail space especially for a small supermarket
- Community facilities/hub

Following the first stage of consultation, the project team reviewed the key topics raised by local people in order to clarify certain queries and see where the proposals could respond to some of the feedback. This round of consultation focused on areas where it was considered more information could be provided to clarify areas of the scheme, as well as areas where changes had been made to the proposals.



5.1 — Stakeholder engagement

Following the first stage of consultation, the community engagement team continued to engage with local residents, the wider community and stakeholders to keep everyone up to date on progress and continue to gain feedback and understand any ongoing or new issues or concerns.

Local key stakeholders were again invited to a private preview at the second exhibition with the project team to view the evolving scheme.

At this final stage a meeting was held with the Lynmouth Road Residents Association. Many questions were raised and answered about heights of buildings, car parking, community facilities, communication with SSE and Hermes site (former Royal Mail sorting office) and retail units including more information on the potential size of a small supermarket.


READING STATION PARK


SECOND PUBLIC EXHIBITION

You are warmly invited to view our evolving proposals for the redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park on Vastern Road.

Wednesday 30th October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Thursday 31st October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8BD

There is free car parking adjacent to the hotel accessed from Thames Side Promenade off Richfield Avenue.

Drop-in at any time and stay for as long as you wish. Members of the project team will be on hand to answer your questions and to hear your views. Copies of the information on display at the exhibition will be available for download from 3pm on the 30th October from the project website: www.rssp.co.uk

We do hope you can attend and look forward to meeting and sharing our proposals with you.

If you require further information, please contact **Kate Greatrix**

☎ 0207 446 6837 ✉ readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk


READING STATION PARK

SECOND PRIVATE EXHIBITION

You are warmly invited to our private preview to view our evolving proposals for the redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park, Vastern Road.

Wednesday 30th October 2019
from 2pm to 3pm

FOLLOWED BY THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION ON:

Wednesday 30th October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Thursday 31st October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8BD

There is free car parking adjacent to the hotel accessed from Thames Side Promenade off Richfield Avenue.

We do hope you can attend and look forward to meeting and sharing our proposals with you.

If you require further information, please contact **Kate Greatrix**

☎ 0207 446 6837 www.rssp.co.uk ✉ readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk



5.2 — Second public exhibition

The second and final pre-planning public exhibition was held on the 30th and 31st October 2019. This exhibition presented feedback from the first exhibition and changes to the scheme following stakeholder and community feedback. The exhibition was attended by members of the project team to help answer any questions visitors had.

Exhibition location:

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Caversham Bridge, Richfield Avenue, Reading, RG1 8BD

The venue was chosen for its recognition locally and for being accessible on foot, by car, bus or train.

Dates and times:

Wednesday 30th October from 3pm to 8pm

Thursday 31st October from 3pm to 8pm

Total number of visitors:

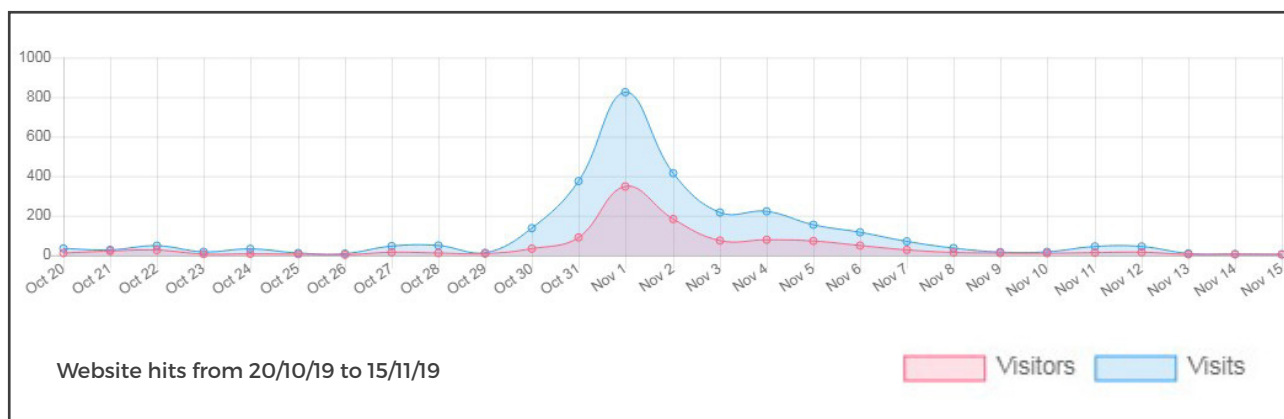
The public exhibition had 79 visitors over the 2 days. 60 people signed in at the exhibition with post codes giving an indication of geographical attendance in relation to the site.

The exhibition provided visitors with the opportunity to pose questions directly to the project development team and provide feedback on the amended masterplan via comment forms – also available online – made available on both days. Stamped addressed envelopes were also provided for visitors wishing to provide feedback at a later date. However, a deadline of Friday 8th November was advised.

It was encouraging to see more people living close to the site attend the second exhibition.



Indication of attendees at Public Exhibition held on the 30th and 31st October 2019



A summary of feedback received can be found on the following pages (a copy of the feedback form can be found in Appendix 7).

14 exhibition banners were presented covering the following information:

- Welcome
- Planning Policy Context
- Emerging Context for Station Area
- Summary of feedback from our first exhibition
- Detailed Feedback from our first exhibition (x2)
- Questions Raised
- Emerging Masterplan
- Understanding the Planning Process
- Access Circulation and Parking
- Landscape and Public Open Space
- Daylight/Sunlight
- Benefits
- Have your say

A complete copy of the exhibition banners displayed during the public exhibition can be found in Appendix 6.

All exhibition materials from Stages 1 and 2 were available to download from the project website at: <http://www.rssp.co.uk/more-information/>



Feedback from our first exhibition



Feedback from our first exhibition

It should be noted that the majority of the feedback we have received has been from residents living in the immediate surrounding area. The results to date are preliminary and will be weighted to reflect the views of the wider community.



Summary of feedback from our first exhibition

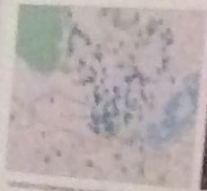
The following is a high-level summary of the feedback received from our first public exhibition. Key recurring topics and comments in no particular order, are as follows:

100+

People attended over 2 days

220

Comments received




Location of the site in relation to the station

Positive Comments:

- Well presented and easy to read
- Clear layout and good use of space
- Good use of the site for mixed use development
- Good use of the site for mixed use development
- Good use of the site for mixed use development
- Good use of the site for mixed use development
- Good use of the site for mixed use development
- Good use of the site for mixed use development
- Good use of the site for mixed use development
- Good use of the site for mixed use development

Concerns:

- Need for more office space
- Design: Some of the design is not appealing
- Too many flats - don't need more housing
- Traffic congestion
- Height of some buildings
- Loss of impact on the area around the site
- Loss of impact on the area around the site
- Loss of impact on the area around the site
- Loss of impact on the area around the site
- Loss of impact on the area around the site

RSP

AVIVA INVESTORS

5.3 — Response to feedback

Attendees at the exhibition were asked to complete a feedback form on the revised proposals to record their level of agreement or otherwise on the key aspects of the scheme, in order to obtain structured feedback. The forms also allowed space for more detailed comments and feedback.

Summary of feedback

A total of 208 comment forms were received. 32 forms were completed at the exhibition, but the majority of forms were submitted online with some being sent via post. A deadline of Friday 8th November 2019 was advised.

Area of responses to site:

This time far fewer Caversham residents attended the public exhibition but still completed comment forms online with mainly negative responses.



The following is a high-level summary of feedback received from the comment forms. Key recurring topics and comments noted, in no particular order, are as follows:

Positive comments:

- Walkways/pedestrian & cycle access linking Railway Station to Vastern Road and River Thames and around the site
- Green spaces/trees/public space/landscaping
- Reduction in height of buildings
- Overall design and layout of the development
- Improved cycle routes
- Redeveloping site for something other than car park/ideal for inner city living
- Car free development
- Car club facilities
- Provision of new homes and retail space

Concerns and reservations:

The key concerns remain almost identical to the first exhibition responses and are most commonly about:

- Strain on local facilities/services – especially GP surgery
- Losing ALDI but this time additional comments on losing the retail space and free car parking as a whole
- Increased traffic congestion in the area and Reading as a whole due to the amount of housing being proposed in general in the area
- Lack of parking provision on site for both residents/visitors/workers – concerns from local residents that people will park on their streets

Of lesser concern but still important are:

- No need for more flats – many comments about no more space for new residents, no need for flats need family housing with gardens
- Height of building(s) – the main comments were on the Block D rather than the height of all the buildings

We would very much like to hear your views on our evolving development proposals we have shared with you today. We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to answer the following questions. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of the project team.

Q1 What do you think are important facilities to be included in this development?

Facility	Yes	No	Facility	Yes	No
Gym	☐	☐	Retail (non-food)	☐	☐
Small Supermarket	☐	☐	Business start up space	☐	☐
GP Surgery/healthcare	☐	☐	Community hub	☐	☐
Cafe/restaurant	☐	☐	Pub/venue bar	☐	☐

Q2 A number of residents felt the height of the proposed office building was too high. In response to these comments, we have reduced the height of the building to 16 stories from 20 stories. Do you welcome this change?

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNDECIDED

Q3 Which ONE of the following do you consider should be a priority for this development?

Public open space	☐	Safe routes along/adjacent to river	☐	Planting new trees	☐
Dedicated cycle routes	☐	Landscaping	☐	Link to Station & Bus	☐
Water features	☐	Disabled parking	☐	Resident car parking	☐
Children's play area	☐				

Q4 Following your feedback, at least 2 car club spaces are proposed for residents to use, helping to reduce the need for individual car ownership. Do you welcome this?

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNDECIDED

Q5 Following our amendments to the proposals, what aspect of the proposal do you particularly like?

Q6 Following our amendments to the proposals, do you have any further concerns about the proposal?

Q7 Do you have any other comments and suggestions?

Please place your completed form in the boxes provided or if you would prefer to complete the form at your leisure, please ask us for a SAG. We would appreciate receipt of your comments by Friday 8th November 2019.

Thank you

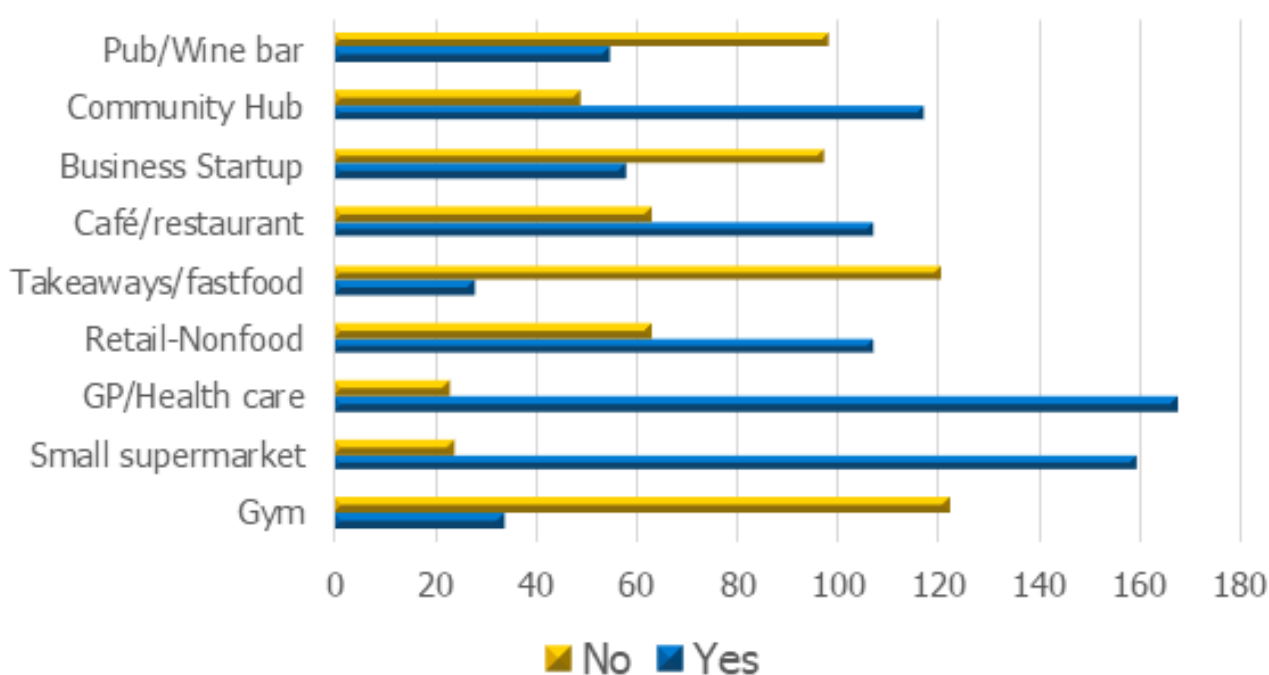


5.4 — Detailed feedback from comment forms

The following is a detailed analysis drawn from the 208 comment forms completed both at the public exhibition and online. People were asked to answer a total of seven questions. Questions 1-4 were direct response questions and questions 5-7 were open-ended questions to allow people to provide more comments and suggestions enabling both positive and negative feedback.

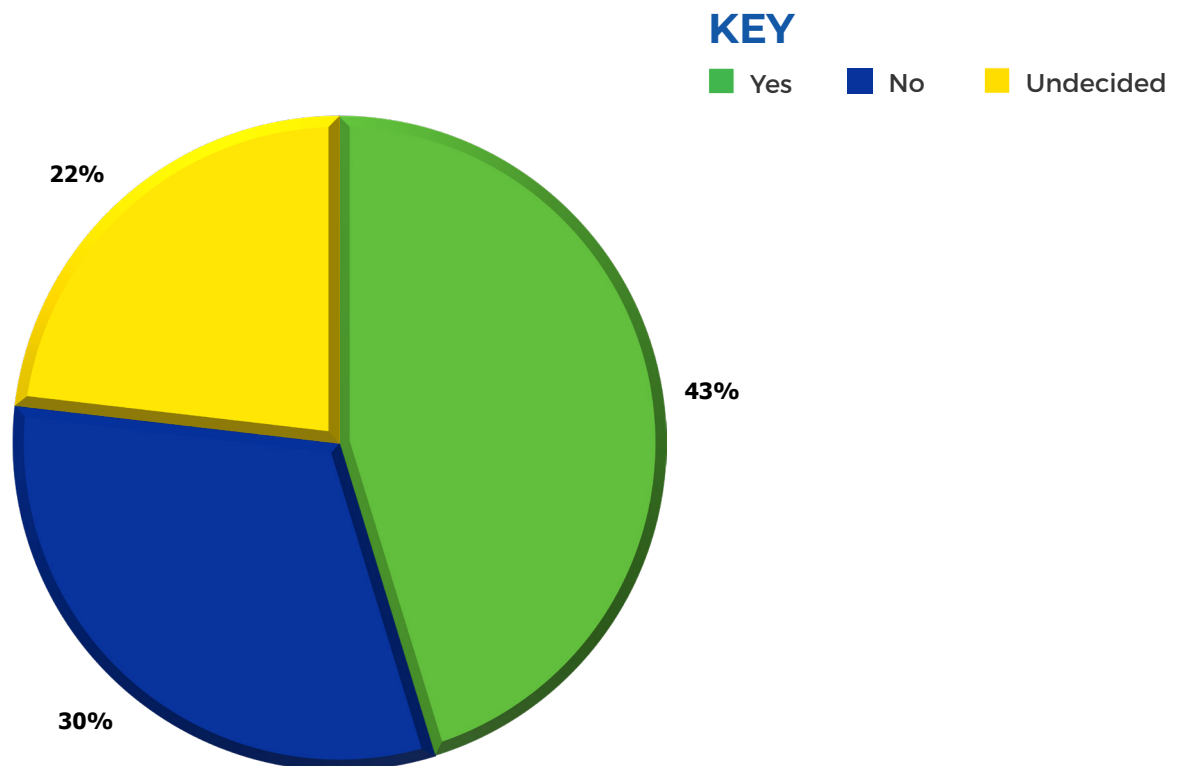
Q1. What do you think are important facilities to be included in this development?

Residents consider the provision of GP/Healthcare, small supermarket (it should be noted that many respondents crossed out small and wrote large) and a Community Hub to be the most important facilities to be provided. Least important is the provision of a Gym and Takeaway/fast food establishments.



Q2. A number of residents felt the height of the proposed office building was too high. In response to these concerns, we have reduced the height of the building to 18 storeys from 20 storeys. Do you welcome this change?

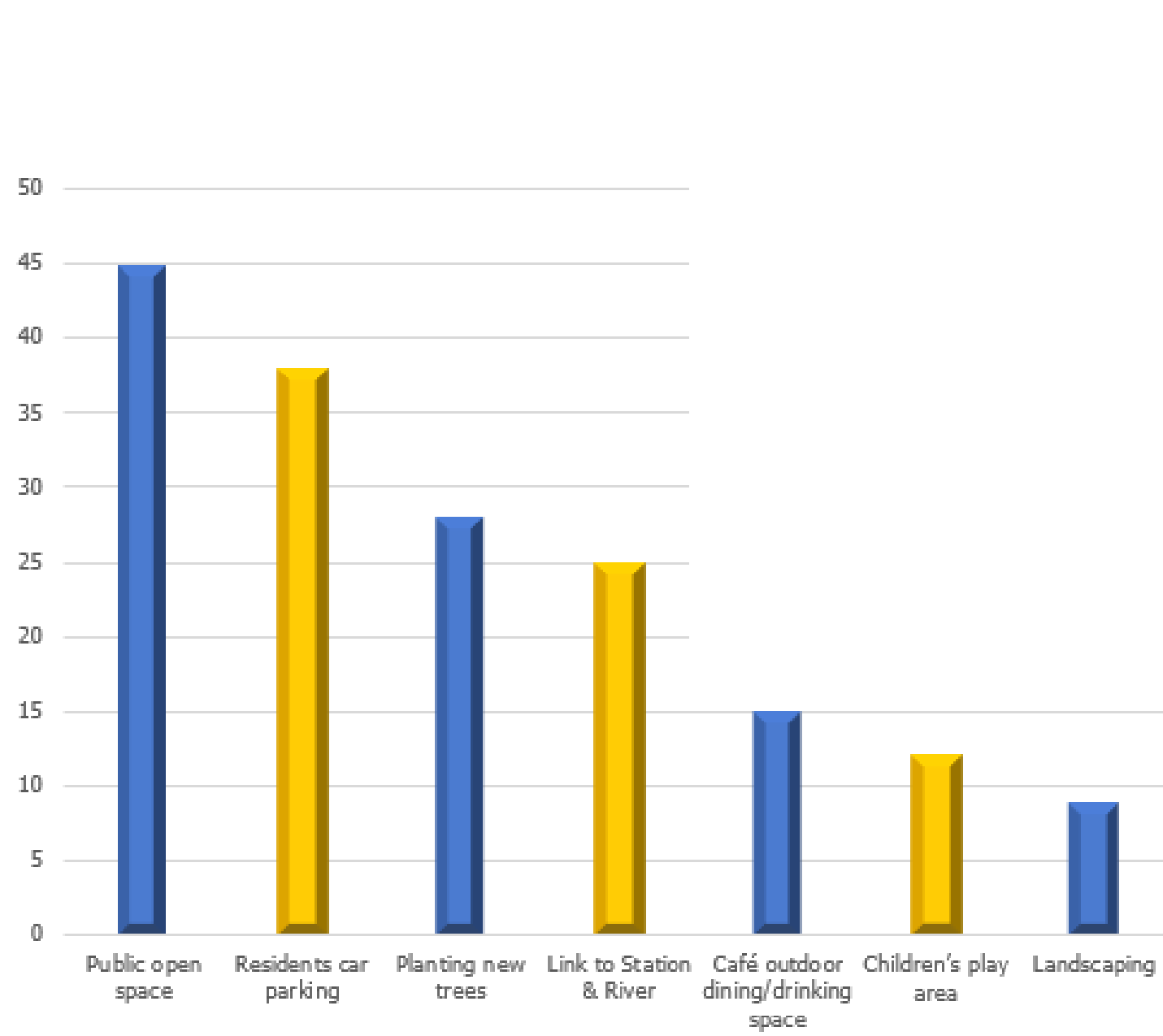
It should be noted that many respondents acknowledged the reduction in height but commented that reducing the height by 2 storeys was not enough.



Sample Size: 198

Q3. Which ONE of the following do you consider should be a priority for this development?

Clear priorities from respondents is the provision of public open space and car parking for residents. This has also been highlighted by other community and residents groups.

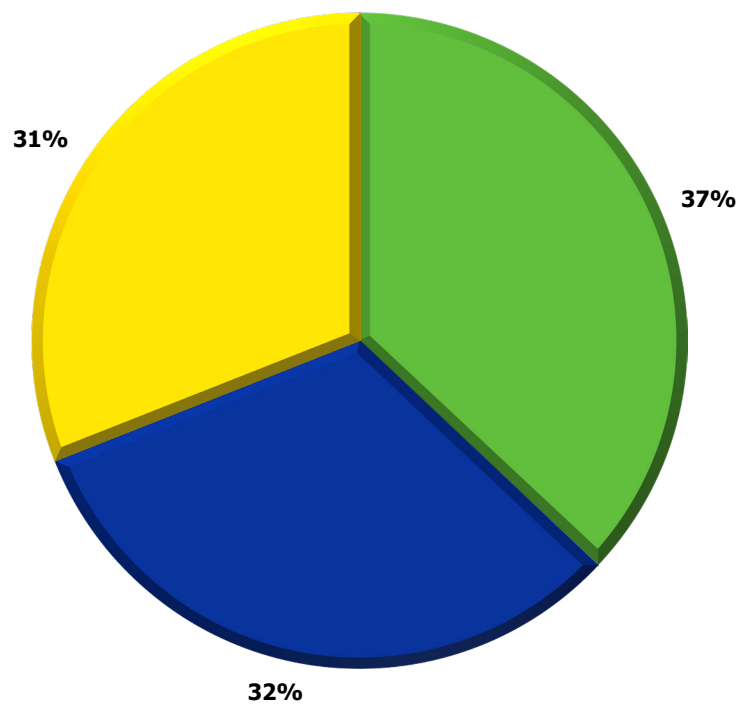


Q4. Following your feedback, at least 2 car club spaces are proposed for residents' to use, helping to reduce the need for individual car ownership. Do you welcome this?

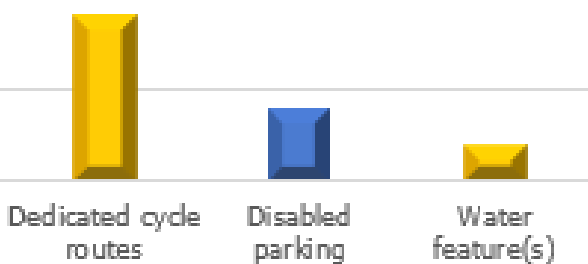
Many respondents who welcomed the addition of 2 car club spaces also wrote that there could be more provided.

KEY

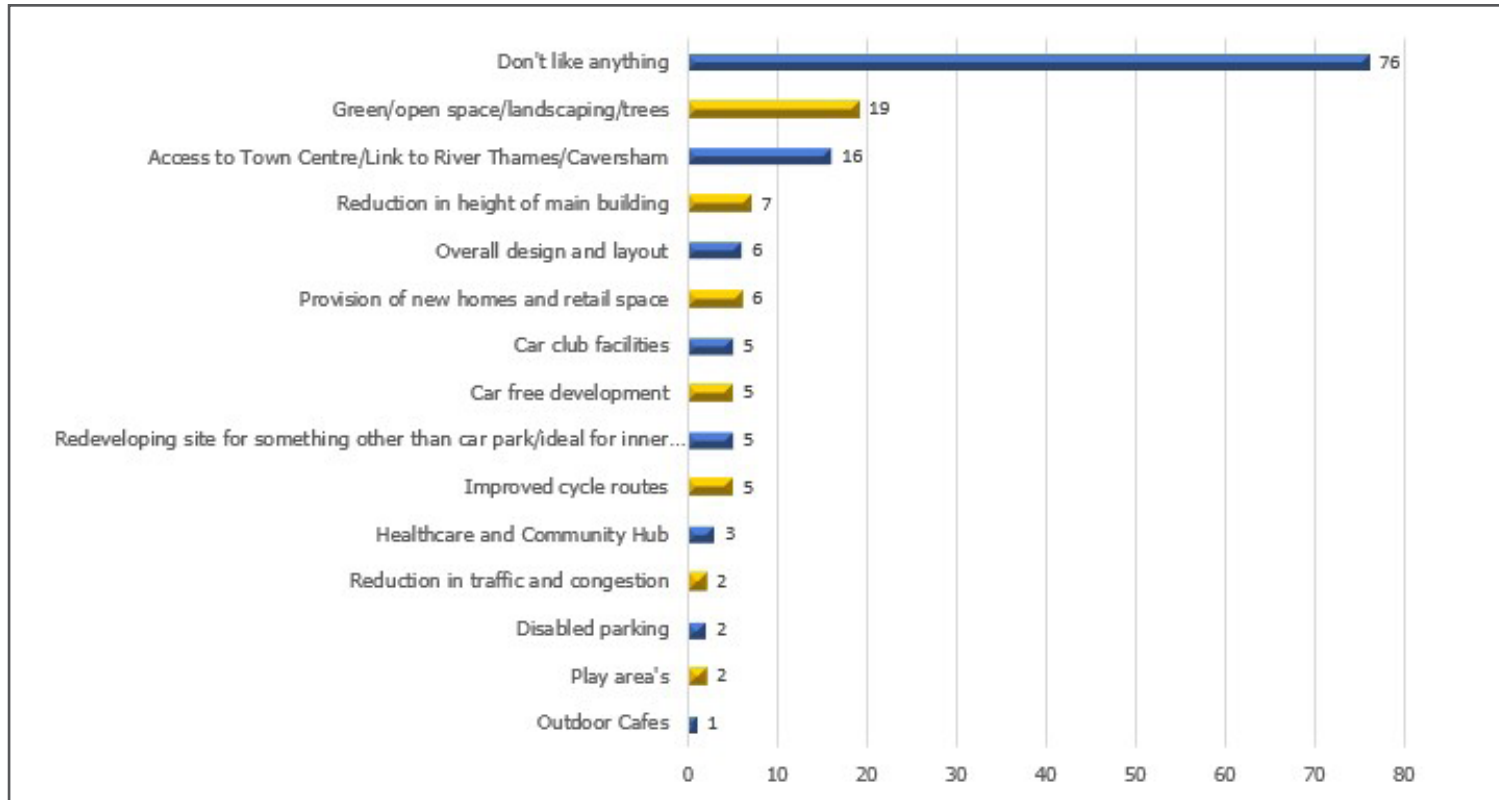
■ Yes ■ No ■ Undecided



Sample Size: 194



Q5. Following our amendments to the proposals, what aspects of the proposals do you particularly like?



Sample size: 163

Although 163 people responded to this question 76 people chose to state they didn't like anything about the proposal, so their concerns have been moved to Q6.

Of the remaining 84 responses the following aspects were particularly liked:

- Walkways/pedestrian & cycle access linking the Railway Station to Vastern Road and River Thames and around the site
- Green spaces/trees/public space/ landscaping
- Reduction in height of building
- Overall design and layout of the development

To a lesser extent but still liked is:

- Improved cycle routes
- Redeveloping site for something other than car park/ideal for inner city living
- Car free development
- Car club facilities
- Provision of new homes and retail space

"Please increase the height of the office building significantly, to make better use of the land and also to create a landmark feature for this development. It is in the perfect position for such a building (opposite the new station)."

"The design is a good flow. Prefer to greenfield building."

"The overall design looks pretty reasonable although I still feel it's on the large size. The landscaping/ outside areas appear nice and it does appear considerable thought has been put into the design."

"I am pleased there will be fewer floors."

"I have no objection to tall buildings."

"I think a development which will accommodate and be a focal point for the local community will be great. Any spaces available within the development which allows growth and connect member of the community will be beneficial."

"Provides much needed new homes."

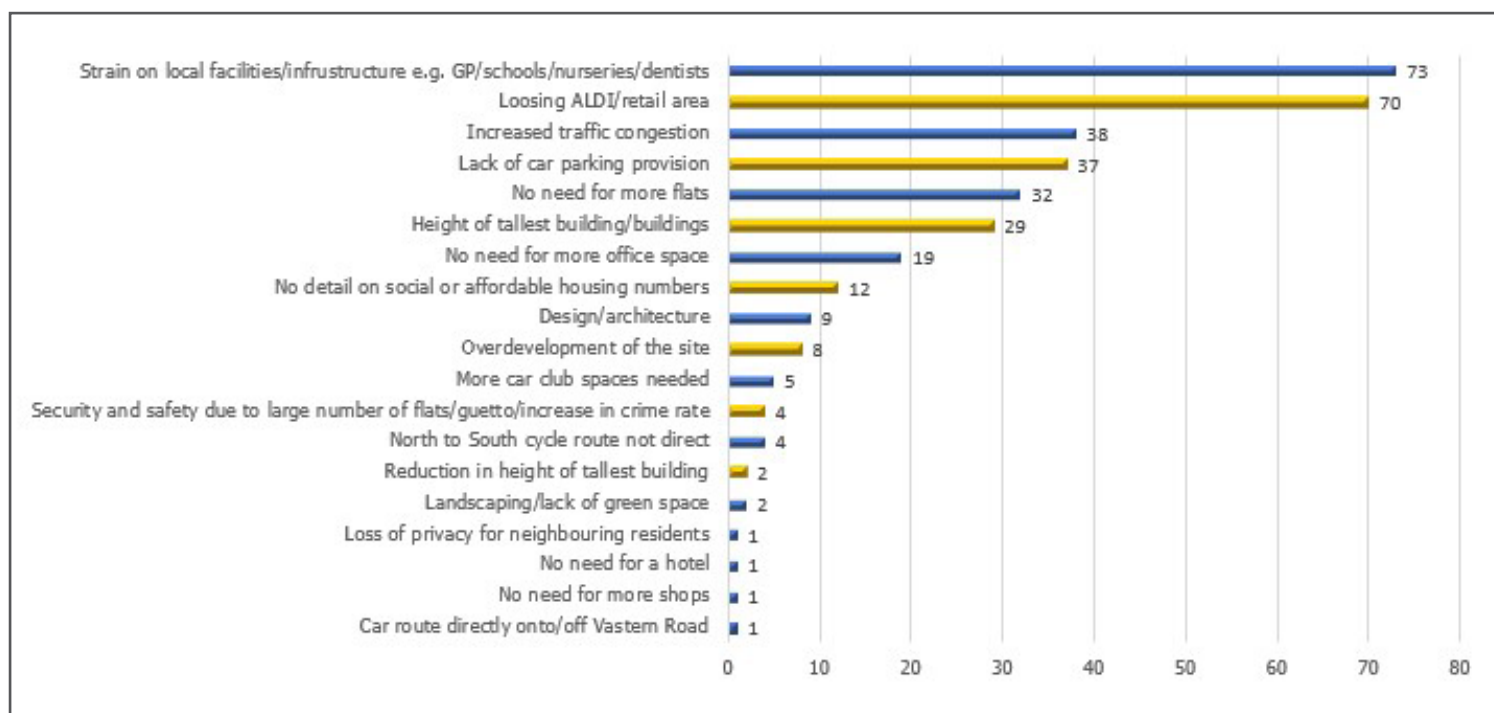
"I welcome that you are trying to make the area around the station open and welcoming and safe and integrate the river and station area into the town."

"Reducing the height of the office building to similar to some of the residential buildings loses the emphasis and opportunity to create a quality landmark of the development. Given the location this seems a missed opportunity to showcase the development."

"The office block could possibly have some more height to make it a real landmark building, but I'd need to be sure it won't have a negative impact on light into existing residential roads (Lynmouth Road especially)."

"I'm not fussed about the height - honestly having a few more floors adds a lot more flats and is better than building outwards. Yes -I'm from Caversham side - but we don't all live in the "Heights" ..."

Q6. Do you have any reservations about the proposals?



Sample size: 196

Although 196 people responded to this question 76 people chose to state they didn't like anything about the proposal in Q5 so many of their comments have been moved to this question.

As previously mentioned far fewer Caversham residents attended the exhibition but still completed comment forms online with mainly negative responses.

The key concerns which remain almost identical to our first exhibition findings are:

- Strain on local facilities/services – especially GP surgery
- Losing ALDI but this time additional comments on losing the retail space and free car parking as a whole
- Increased traffic congestion in the area and Reading as a whole due to the amount of housing being proposed in general in the area
- Lack of parking provision on site for both residents/visitors/workers – concerns from local residents that people will park on their streets

Of lesser concern but still important are:

- No need for more flats – many comments about no more space for new residents, no need for flats need family housing with gardens
- Height of building(s) – the main comments were on the Block D rather than the height of all the buildings
- No need for more office space – as before people do not accept there is a need for any more office space in the centre of Reading

Interestingly people have not really commented at this exhibition on the design/architecture, landscaping, open space or cycle routes. This is reflective on where respondents are living. It appears that Caversham residents are more concerned about the possible impact on their services, specifically the Doctors surgery's and traffic congestion yet some people commented that they drive to Aldi 3 to 4 times a week.

"Traffic in area is crazy already, schools and GPs oversubscribed. Caversham is being turned into a concrete jungle and amenities being removed from current residents."

"It shocking that you are knocking down well used shopping facilities for more housing without providing general support for school and healthcare."

"I strongly disagree with the reduction in the building height of the office building. This site is within the tall building zone of Reading town centre. I believe the previous proposal for a taller building was more suitable, because its height-to-width ratio was more elegant when viewed from the east-west aspects."

"Reading does not need more flats this is an absolute joke."

"Need more schools and doctors."

"I don't like the proposal! I want it left as it is with Aldi, Range etc..."

"Too much office space - not needed as there are a high number of office buildings empty now. No need for hotel."

"Still too high, it's like Canary Wharf but in Reading."

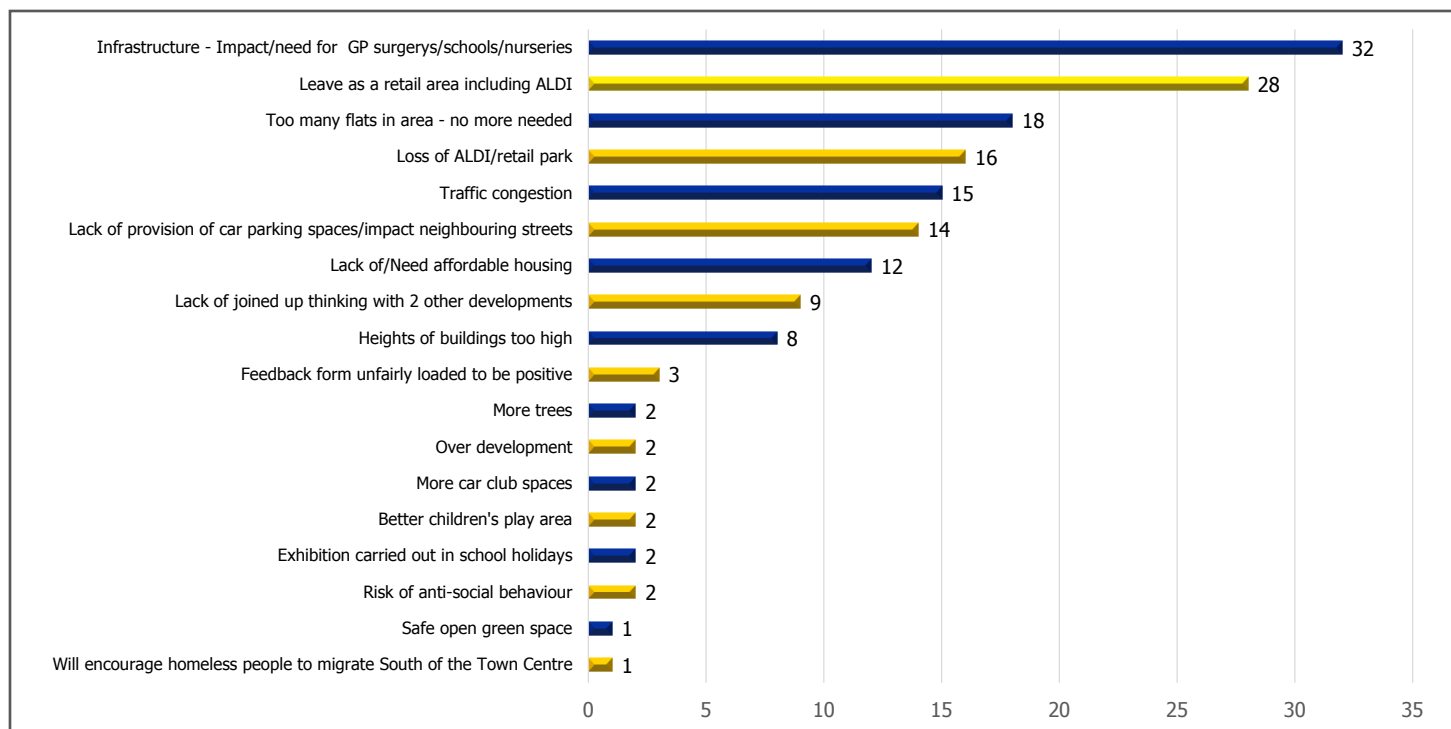
"Yes, I think it will devalue the area, and pubs, takeaways or community hubs will just attract undesirables. Don't we have enough of these already?"

"We have no space for more residences; schools and GP's are oversubscribed already! Parking is impossible as it is!!!"

"Reading roads are always busy and it's insane to have more houses right in the town."

"Traffic is awful as it is, we do not have enough doctors and school places."

Q7 - Do you have any other comments?



Sample size: 155

Overall the comments are fairly consistent with concerns raised in Q6, namely impact on infrastructure with the need for a GP surgery most frequently raised and unsurprisingly many respondents commented that they want the retail park left as it is, specifically naming ALDI.

The key areas are around traffic congestion, no need for more flats and lack of car parking on the site which many feel will make new residents park in the surrounding streets and even in Caversham.

A few comments were raised about holding the exhibition in the school holidays. Whilst this was not ideal it is not considered bad practice during half term holidays, only exhibitions held during the school summer holidays are considered bad practice.

"I am gutted that we'll be losing Aldi as it's become a very handy corner shop for us! But I appreciate this land has a higher value as residential, rather than retail. However, the ground floor development is absolutely key."

"Leave that area as it is . It is used by so many."

"Stop trying to turn Reading into a mini London."

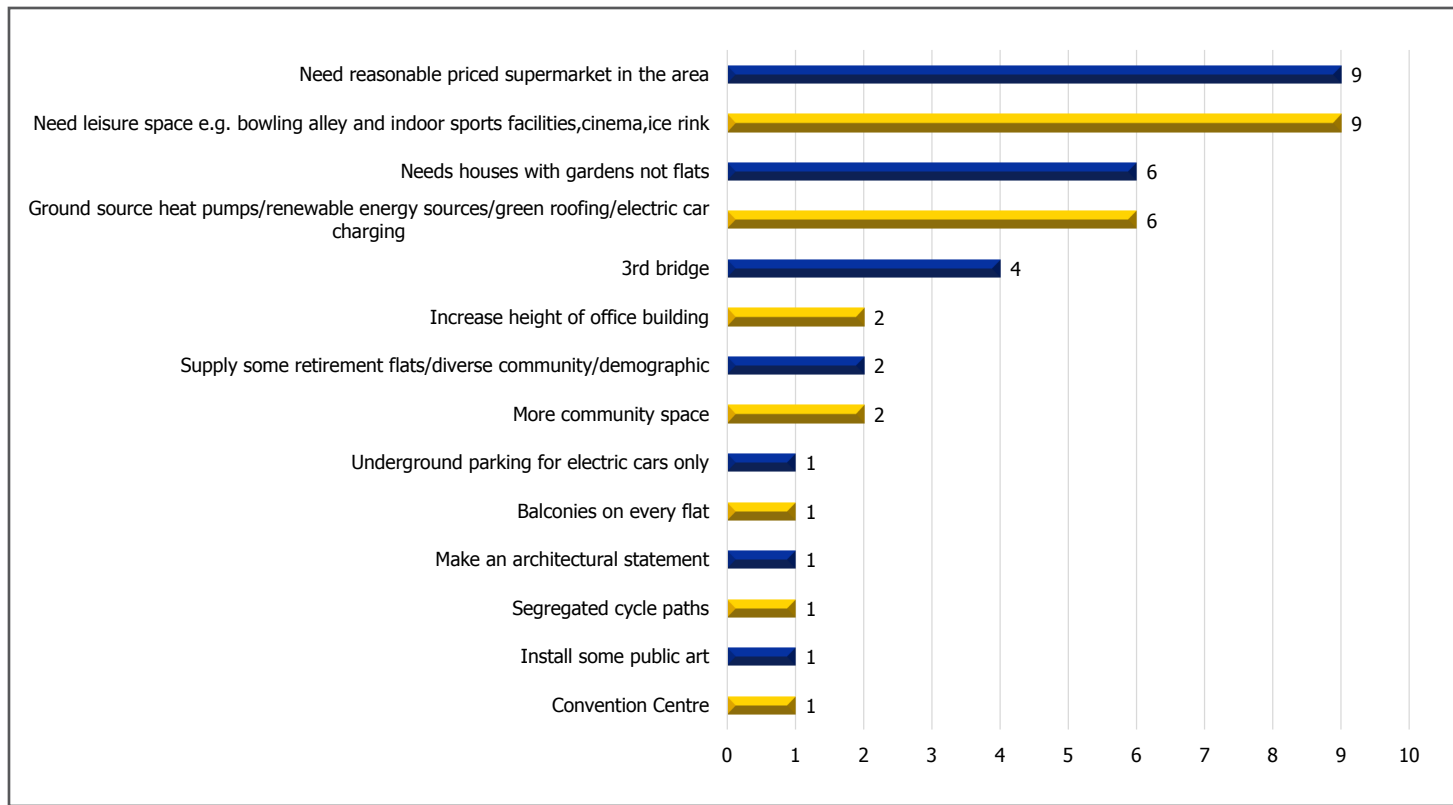
"Less flats, more family sized units to help make a community, not just a commuter ghetto."

"Totally against this development. The roads will not cope. This is on far too big a scale and there are too many new proposals all in the same tiny area. It will ruin the character and nature of the area."

"Out of town shopping with free parking and nice landscaping is a much better use for this site."

"Parking still not addressed, in my view. The loss of Aldi is also a concern."

Q7 - Do you have any suggestions?



Sample size: 155 with 46 suggestions

There seems to be frustration that Reading is building large amounts of flats but there is a lack of leisure facilities e.g. bowling alley, swimming pool, ice rink etc. Again people seem to be passionate about retaining Aldi as a low cost food offering in the area.

Whilst affordable housing rated highly in the comments section it is suggested that more family houses with gardens rather than flats are needed for local people.

6 people mentioned the importance of renewable energy and carbon free development.

"I think you should consider underground parking for electric cars. And other ways of making the whole plan more green."

"Safe, open green space will be essential. Where it is placed will decide whether it's a drug exchange point or a place for families to safely enjoy."

"Please increase the height of the office building significantly, to make better use of the land and also to create a landmark feature for this development. It is in the perfect position for such a building (opposite the new station)."

"Please provide space for a large leisure facility in the scheme."

"Would be great to have an element of social enterprise/new business spaces not just chains and commercial."

6.0 — Response to Feedback From Stages 1 & 2

Throughout the consultation process the applicants have listened to feedback from stakeholders and local residents, and where possible have made changes to address any concerns raised.

Due to the nature of the planning application, it has not been possible to make considerable changes, but the team have worked hard to explain that many questions and concerns that have been raised will be addressed at the Reserved Matters application.

The following table is the response to concerns and where it has been possible to make changes in order to address stakeholder and residents' concerns.

Concerns and questions raised	Response
Height of proposed office building	Concerns were raised by residents regarding the height of the proposed office building (Block D). In response to these concerns we have reduced the height by 2 storeys.
Parking – residents and visitors	The national and local planning policy aims to reduce the reliance on cars generally and as the site is regarded as a 'highly sustainable location' (meaning it is very close to the Railway Station and the Town Centre), we are encouraged to maximise the area for development and reduce car parking provision throughout. This will mean: • It will help reduce the carbon footprint and lower emissions • Reduce traffic levels in central Reading 2 car club spaces have also been added in response to concerns over residents parking. There will be parking facilities for blue badge holders. Many visitors will use the train or bus services, however anyone using a car can park in the adjacent multi-storey car park. There are also over 4 other public car parks within walking distance of the site.

Loss of retail space, mainly ALDI	Sufficient floor space to allow for a possible replacement of a small supermarket has been included in the parameter plans.
Traffic congestion	The proposed predominantly car free development will reduce the number of trips generated by the site, therefore the proposed scheme will not contribute to additional traffic congestion in the area, it will potentially reduce traffic congestion as there will be considerably less trips than the current use of the site is generating.
Public open space	Landscaping design has been further developed and shared at the second Public Exhibition. A landscaping report will be submitted with the Outline Planning Application. Green spaces for public access will where possible be incorporated into the ground level external areas of the buildings.
Provision of affordable housing	There are several types of affordable housing including social rent, intermediate rent, and shared ownership, with differing rent or mortgage costs associated with each. We are uncertain how many flats will be affordable as we will agree a level with the Council. At this stage social housing providers have not been approached about taking part of the development as it is too early in the process.
Provision of Healthcare/ Dental services	We will provide space for community uses which could include dentist or health uses if sought. During the consultation with the Local Planning Authority, the need for new health services will be identified through their consultation with Berkshire West Primary Care Trust.
No need for more office space	At the Reserved Matters stage in-depth reports into the market demand and supply characteristics will be commissioned before finally deciding on what level of use classification will be implemented. The scheme looks to accommodate market change in the years to come, by adopting a flexible approach.

7.0 — Conclusion

The applicants engagement process has actively enabled local residents and stakeholders to comment on the proposed scheme prior to submission of the outline planning application.

7.1 — Applicants' pre-application engagement

The applicant is confident that their consultation process to date has followed guidance set out within the NPPF and the Council's SCI, demonstrating engagement with stakeholders and the local community.

In summary the applicants' pre-application engagement strategy for the detailed residential scheme has focused on:

- The identification of, and engagement with, key local stakeholders
- An extensive notification by post of the public exhibitions covering all households and businesses within the consultation boundary (1,168), providing further details of the exhibition via the dedicated community engagement website page (www.rssp.co.uk) and multiple online and press advertisements, including local community Facebook pages
- Providing sufficient opportunity to comment upon the proposed scheme • The appropriate timing for the engagement events i.e. daytime and evening periods
- The appropriate timing for the engagement events i.e. daytime and evening periods
- Using an accessible, well known and convenient location to stage the public exhibitions

- Ensuring the applicant and key members of the development team were on hand during the public exhibitions to respond most effectively to any detailed and technical questions that were raised
- Maintaining a positive and ongoing dialogue with local stakeholders, responding to requests for further meetings and information where possible
- Undertaking a thorough review and analysis of all feedback received

As part of the collaborative approach to planning, the applicants and the development team have listened to all the feedback received. The applicants' submission has been informed by the pre-application process and the enclosed package provides responses, where appropriate and possible, to all feedback received to address any concerns expressed and include any suggestions and comments.



READING STATION PARK

PUBLIC EXHIBITION

You are warmly invited to our first public exhibition to view the emerging proposals to redevelop the Station Shopping Park on Vastern Road.

Wednesday 25th September 2019

from 3pm to 8pm

Thursday 26th September 2019

from 3pm to 8pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8BD

There is free car parking adjacent to the hotel accessed from Thames Side Promenade off Richfield Avenue.

We do hope you can attend, and we look forward to meeting and sharing our plans with you. If you require further information, please contact Kate Greatrix or Lucy Yaquib.



0207 446 6837 or 0207 446 6834



readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk



www.rssp.co.uk





READING STATION PARK



PRIVATE EXHIBITION

**You are warmly invited to a private preview to view
our emerging proposals to redevelop the Station
Shopping Park on Vastern Road.**

Wednesday 25th September 2019

from 2pm to 3pm

FOLLOWED BY THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION ON:

Wednesday 25th September 2019

from 3pm to 8pm

Thursday 26th September 2019

from 3pm to 8pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8BD

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0207 446 6837 or 0207 446 6834



readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk



www.rssp.co.uk

Welcome



Thank you for taking the time to visit our public exhibition on the potential redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park.

This exhibition gives you the chance to view and comment on our emerging plans to redevelop the Station Shopping Park.

You can help shape our emerging scheme by providing us with your feedback. All of your comments and suggestions will be taken into consideration as we progress towards submitting our outline planning application later in the year.

We are committed to working with the local community, associations, businesses, Councillors and Reading Borough Council.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK...

After looking through the material on display, please complete a feedback form to let us know what you think of our emerging proposals shown here today.

Members of our team are here to answer any questions you may have.



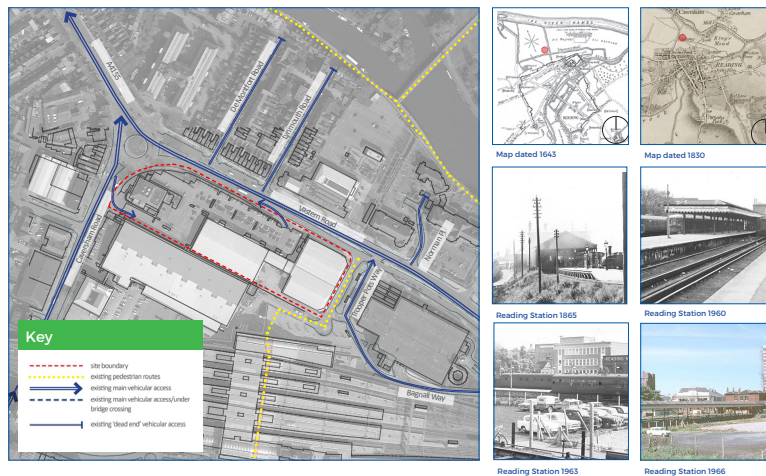
All pictures shown today are indicative examples only



Background



The surrounding location was heavily influenced by the development of the Great Western Railway (GWR), one of the main contributing factors to the rapid growth of Reading.



- The area north of the tracks was mainly used as storage for the GWR signalling works until 1960.
- Reading station was opened on 30 March 1840 as the temporary western terminus of the original GWR line. The time taken to travel from London to Reading was reduced to one hour and five minutes, a 75% decrease compared to the fastest stagecoach route.
- Between 1865 and 1867, a station building incorporating a tower and clock was constructed.
- In 1898 the single sided station layout was replaced by a conventional design with 'up' (to London), 'down' (from London), and 'relief' platforms linked by a pedestrian subway.
- A common negative impact of railway development is the uneven growth of areas divided by the tracks. Reading, located south of the railway, grew rapidly and expanded south. In 1911, expansion was focused to the north, annexing Caversham.
- Since 1989, redevelopment projects aimed at connecting Reading to Caversham have incorporated means of linking the two sides of the tracks, for better connectivity and balanced growth.
- The site has a total area of 1.77 hectares (4.4 acres) and currently provides retail floorspace.
- The site is surrounded by storage facilities and small retail units on the southern and western borders, with parking, commercial and office spaces to the east. On the northern boundary, the site is separated by Vastern Road from a row of terraced houses.



Planning Policy Context



The site is allocated for redevelopment within Reading Borough Council's emerging Local Plan and falls within Reading's 'tall buildings policy' area.

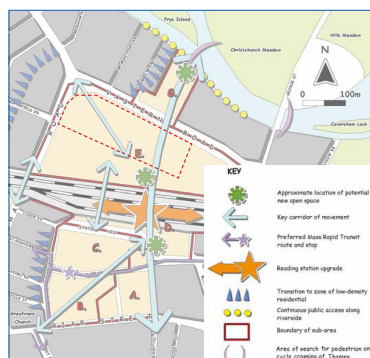
The site represents part of a comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the Station Area and is of unique importance in helping to deliver the strategy for how Reading will develop in the future.

Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP)

The station/river area will be a flagship scheme, extending the centre and providing a mixed use destination in itself, and centred on the redeveloped station and new public transport interchange. It will integrate the transport links and areas northwards towards the river and into the heart of the centre.

Set out in the RCAAP, development in the Station/River Major Opportunity Area will:

- I. Contribute towards providing a high-density mix of uses to create a destination in itself – the areas that also make up part of the primary shopping area and central core will have a particular emphasis on delivering much of the identified retail and leisure need;
- II. Help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability, particularly on the key movement corridors. North-south links through the centre and across the railway line, IDR and River Thames centred on the new station are of particular importance;
- III. Provide developments that front onto and provide visual interest to existing and future pedestrian routes and open spaces;
- IV. Safeguard land which is needed for improvements to Reading Station, Reading Station Interchange, and mass rapid transit routes and stops;
- V. Provide additional areas of open space where possible, including a direct green link between the station and the River Thames;
- VI. Give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and protect and, where appropriate, enhance the setting of listed buildings;
- VII. Be laid out in a way that allows the area to come forward in parcels – for instance, single developments should not be solely inwards-facing, ignoring the links with other potential future development areas.



Particularly referring to the site considered for this application:

RC1e, NORTH OF STATION: There will be retail and leisure development on the ground floor with other uses including residential and offices on upper floors. Provision of retail development is contingent on improved links across the railway. Public car parking will be provided. An area of civic open space will be provided at the northern entrance to the station, and a green link provided to the Thames. An acceptable dry access scheme from across the site must be part of any development.



Emerging Context for Station Area

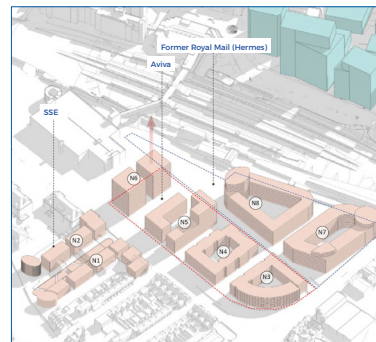


Within the Reading Station Area Framework (RSF) document, an illustrative scheme is presented as a guideline to how the outline principles could help shape future developments for the three key sites.

Former Royal Mail (Hermes) site

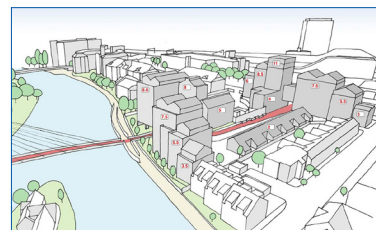
In 2011, an Outline Planning Application for the site located south of Aviva's was approved. This consent covered the redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed use scheme with office, residential and ancillary spaces. This consent is now expired.

This year, a new Outline Planning Application has been submitted for the former Royal Mail (Hermes) Site.



SSE site

A Planning Application for the redevelopment of the SSE site is currently under development.



Emerging Masterplan



Our proposal seeks to replace the existing Station Shopping Park with a high quality mixed-use scheme to support the development of the new Station Quarter into an enjoyable place to work, live in and to visit.



Illustrative aerial view of the site

- 750-950 homes can be provided, and accommodation may range between studio apartments to 3 bed apartments.
- The scheme will be primarily car free, with some car parking provision made for blue badge holders. Cycle parking will be provided through the scheme.
- New public realm spaces would be created within the scheme.
- New pedestrian linkage between the train station, underpass and Vastern Road heading towards the River Thames.
- New offices, hotel, retail units/ gym/community facilities.
- A landmark can be created at the south eastern corner.



Illustrative aerial view of the station square



Illustrative Images



Access & Parking



Pedestrian access



Vehicle access



Residents' access



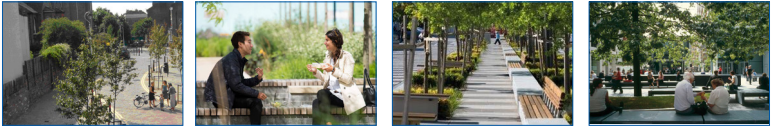
- The scheme will be primarily car free, with some car parking provision made for blue badge holders. Cycle parking will be provided through the scheme.
- It is envisaged that the scheme will include improvements to cycleways surrounding the site.
- Provision will be made for cycle routes within the site. These may include some shared paths, but it is too early in the scheme design to confirm this.



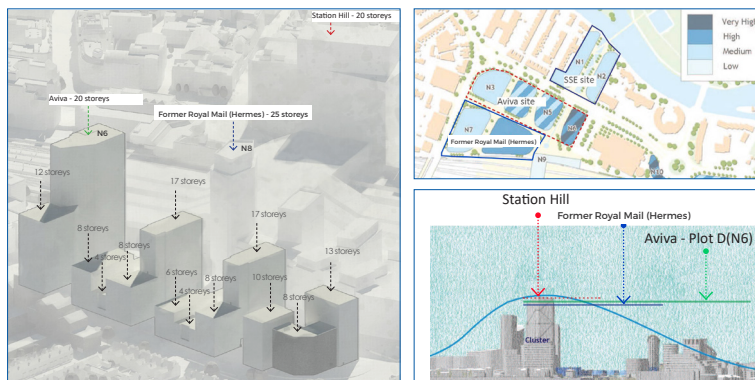
Landscape and Public Space



Indicative landscape masterplan



Height of Proposed Development

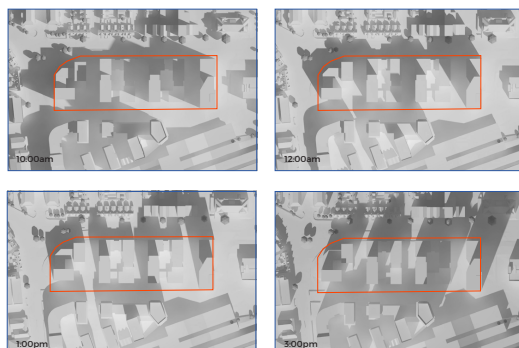


- Following the guidance set out in the RSAF document and the current schemes being proposed on the neighbouring sites, the proposed Local Landmark - located on Plot D (N6) - is set to a height

lower than Station Hill, but taller than plot N8 which presents the tallest height reached on the Royal Mail (Hermes) site.

- Development will take place in accordance with the maximum building heights shown.

DAYLIGHT/SUNLIGHT CONSIDERATIONS



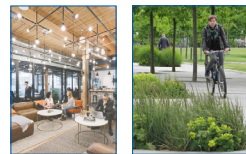
In developing our proposals to meet the Reading Station Area Framework aspirations for this key site, we have paid close attention to the relationship that our scheme design has with all of its neighbours, including existing residents.

We have modelled the proposals at each step of the process in three dimensions to ensure that the relationship between the existing and proposed built form is acceptable.

Daylight and sunlight are key design considerations in developing projects in urban locations and these have informed our proposals from the outset to ensure our scheme accords with the British Research Establishments (BRE) guidance with regard to daylight and sunlight.



Benefits



Station Square Pedestrian Link - there is an opportunity to provide a landscaped link between Station Square and the River.



New landscaped public open space.



Proximity to public transport facilities makes it an ideal location for high-density living, not dependent on car travel.



Business and employment development will make a significant contribution towards Reading's established position as the 'Capital of the Thames Valley'.



New community facilities can benefit existing residents as well as future occupiers.



Contribution to affordable housing.



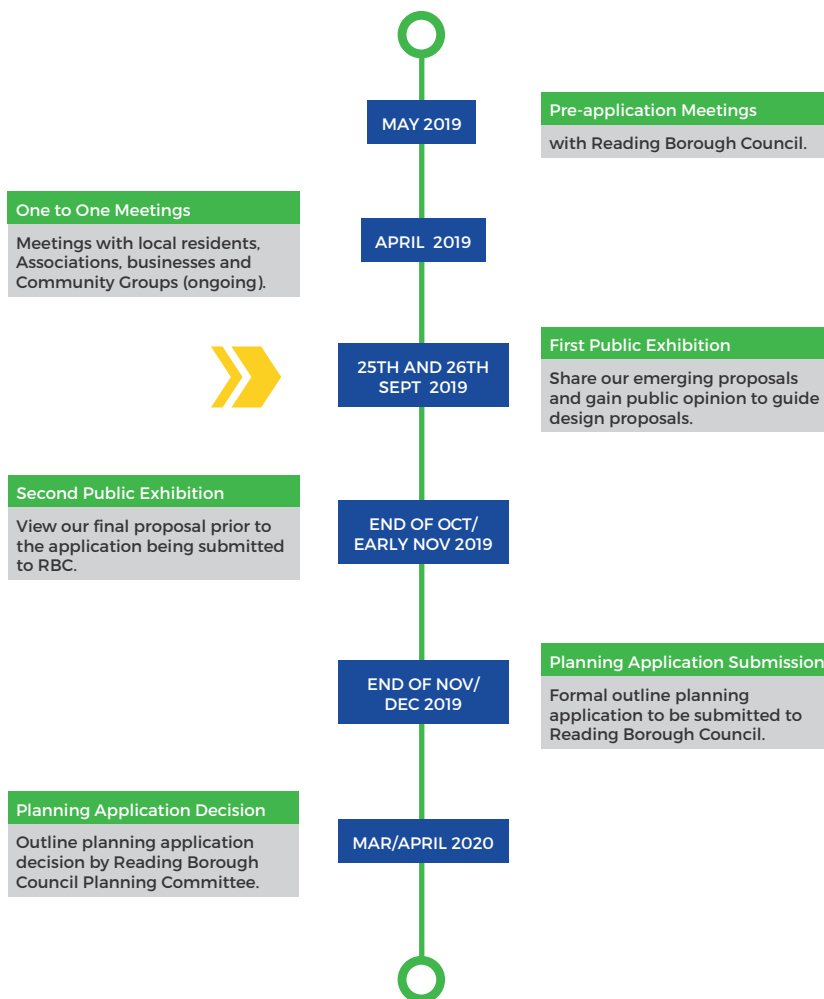
Provides the opportunity to secure vibrant retail and leisure uses, to help make the Station Area an enjoyable place to work, live in and to visit.



The site can accommodate a significant level of new homes of mixed tenure, responsive to local housing needs.



Timeline



Please note, all dates and timings are subject to change.



Have Your Say



We hope you have found this public exhibition useful and informative.

Please do talk to us and ask us any questions - we are here to help and would very much like to hear your views.

Please leave your comments on our emerging proposals by completing our feedback form and posting it in the box provided. If you would prefer to take one away with you, please ask a member of the team for a stamped addressed envelope.

In order for us to consider all the feedback, we need to set a deadline for your form to be returned to us by **Monday 7th October 2019.**

Over the coming weeks, we will analyse and discuss, as a team, all the feedback we receive from the community. We will share our final plans with you, prior to submitting our outline planning application, at our next exhibition at the end of October/early November.



Thank you for attending today, your views really do make a difference.

If you require further information, please contact Kate or Lucy:

☎ 0207 446 6837 or 0207 446 6834

✉ readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk

 www.rssp.co.uk



READING STATION PARK

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE STATION SHOPPING PARK

Vastern Road, Reading RG1 8AJ

We know your time is precious, but we would really appreciate you giving us some details - before you give us your thoughts and comments - to help us ensure we are reaching as many people in the community as possible.

Date:

Postcode:

What is your connection to the area?*

- ☐ I live here ☐ I work here ☐ I study here ☐ Other

What is your age group?*

- ☐ 17 or Under ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54
☐ 55-64 ☐ 65-74 ☐ 75-84 ☐ 85 or Over

What is your gender?*

- ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your employment status?*

- ☐ Working full-time ☐ Working part-time ☐ Self-employed ☐ Apprenticeship
☐ Student ☐ Unemployed ☐ Retired ☐ Other

Please proceed to questions within.

We would very much like to hear your views on the development proposals we have shared with you today. We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to answer the following questions. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of our project team.

Please indicate your level of response by ticking ONE box for each question:

Q1 Our aspiration for the site is to deliver high-quality housing and office space to help make the new station quarter an enjoyable place to work, live in and to visit. Do you agree with the overall approach to this scheme?

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Q2 New pedestrian routes through the site will extend public access from the city centre, through the site to the riverfront and beyond. Do you think this is a good idea?

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Q3 The provision of open space, landscaping, cafes, restaurants and retail is important for new and existing residents. Do you think this will be an improvement to local amenity provision?

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

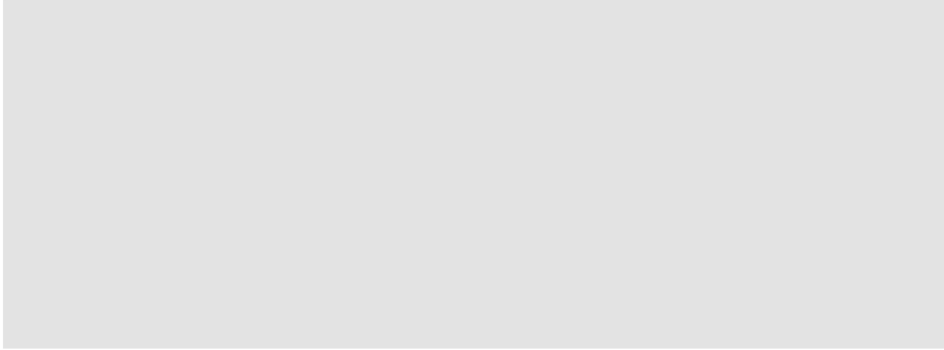
Q4 New premium office space will make a significant contribution towards Reading's established position as the 'Capital of the Thames Valley.'

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

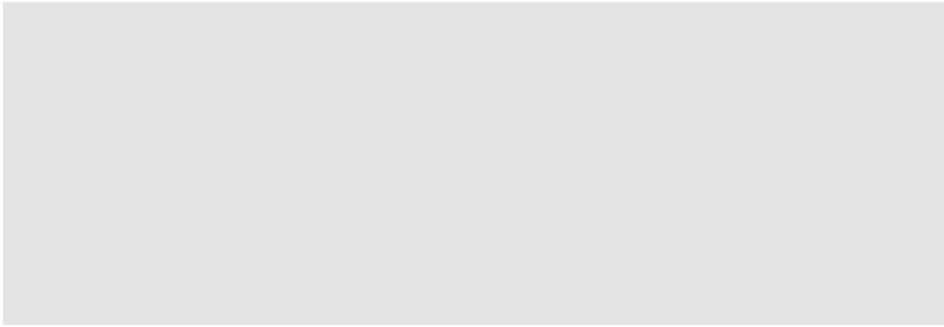
Q5 At this stage, would you support a planning application for this proposed development?

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNDECIDED

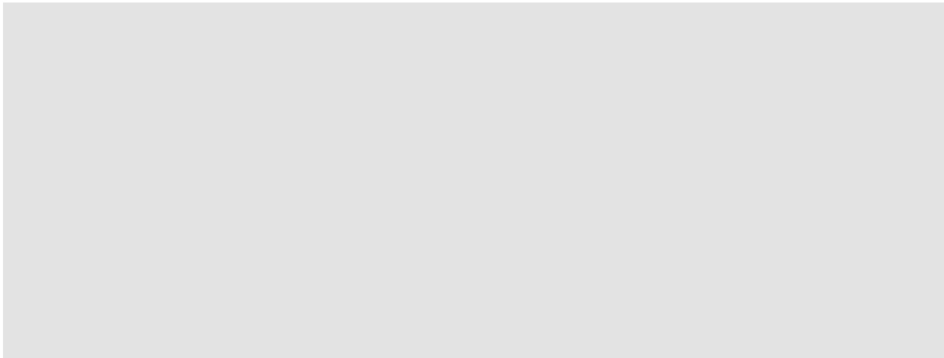
Q6 What aspects of the design proposals do you particularly like?



Q7 Do you have any reservations about the design proposals?



Q8 Do you have any other comments or suggestions?



Please place your completed form in the boxes provided or return to us in the SAE
no later than Monday 7th October 2019.

Thank you





READING STATION PARK

Please leave us your details if you would like to be kept up to date on the progress of the redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park.

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email Address

☐ I would like to be kept updated on any progress regarding this site.



READING STATION PARK

We take data protection seriously. Please only provide your personal details if you are willing for them to be used by Barton Willmore and the project team for the purpose of research in connection with this project and in order to update you as to progress of the project. Your details will be treated as confidential and will not be shared, passed on or used by any third parties and they will only be retained until the end of the planning process for the project, after which time they will be deleted.

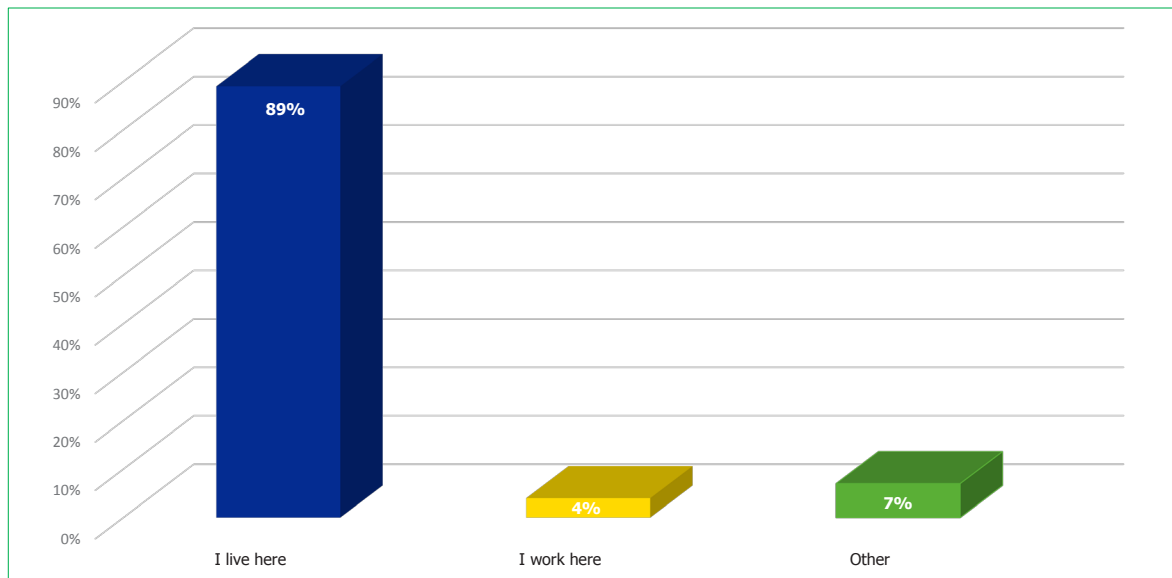
If you wish to withdraw consent to the processing of your personal data you may do so by emailing:
readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk

If you require further information, please contact Kate Greatrix or Lucy Yaqub

T: 0207 446 6837 or 0207 446 6834 E: readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk

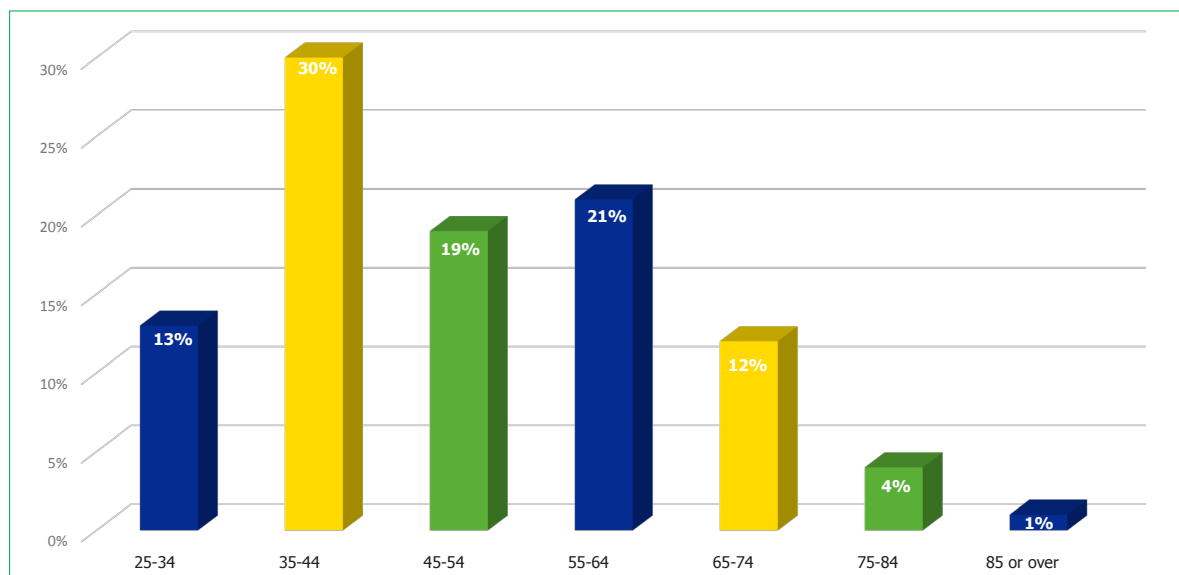
Or visit our Website: www.rsp.co.uk

Q1. What is your connection to the area?



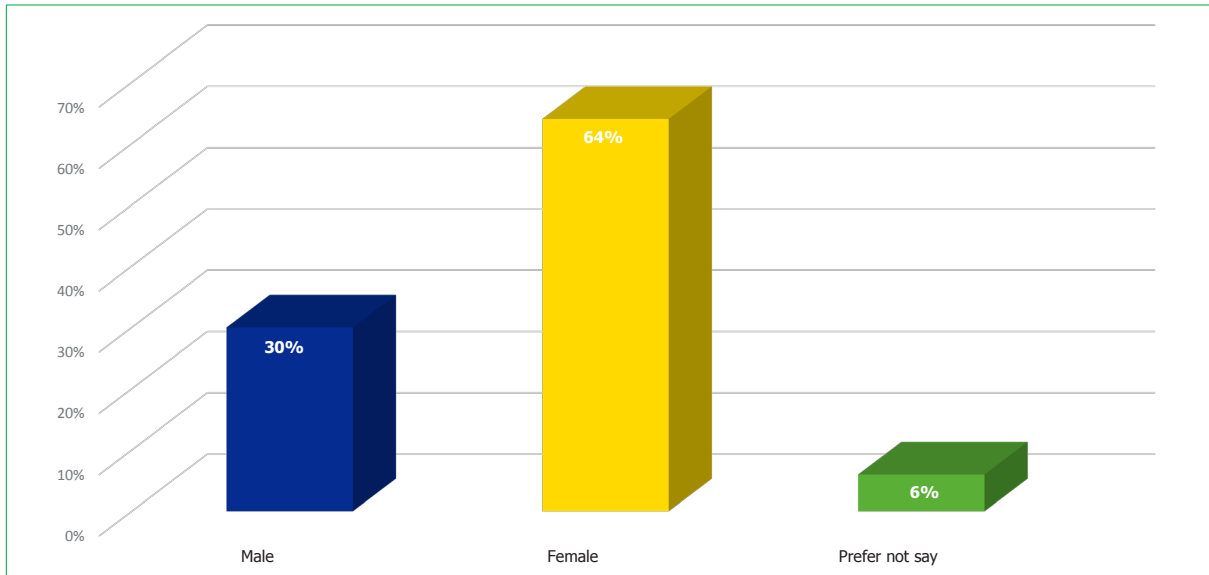
Sample size: 220 people

Q2. What is your age group?



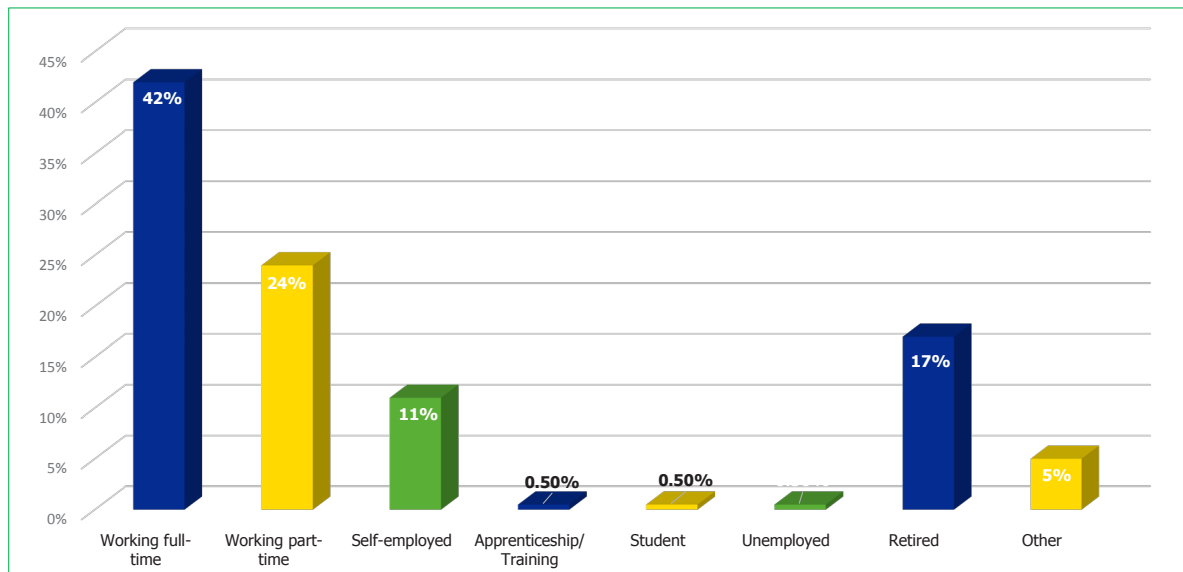
Sample size: 220 people

Q3. What is your gender?



Sample size: 220 people

Q4. What is your employment status?



Sample size: 220 people



READING STATION PARK

SECOND PUBLIC EXHIBITION

You are warmly invited to view our evolving proposals for the redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park on Vastern Road.

Wednesday 30th October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Thursday 31st October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8BD

There is free car parking adjacent to the hotel accessed from Thames Side Promenade off Richfield Avenue.

Drop-in at any time and stay for as long as you wish. Members of the project team will be on hand to answer your questions and to hear your views. Copies of the information on display at the exhibition will be available for download from 3pm on the 30th October from the project website: www.rssp.co.uk

We do hope you can attend and look forward to meeting and sharing our proposals with you.

If you require further information, please contact Kate Greatrix



0207 446 6837



readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk





READING STATION PARK

SECOND PRIVATE EXHIBITION

You are warmly invited to our private preview to view our evolving proposals for the redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park, Vastern Road.

Wednesday 30th October 2019
from 2pm to 3pm

FOLLOWED BY THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION ON:

Wednesday 30th October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Thursday 31st October 2019
from 3pm to 8pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Caversham Bridge
Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8BD

There is free car parking adjacent to the hotel accessed from Thames Side Promenade off Richfield Avenue.

We do hope you can attend and look forward to meeting and sharing our proposals with you.

If you require further information, please contact Kate Greatrix



0207 446 6837



www.rssp.co.uk



readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk



Final Public Exhibition



Welcome and thank you for taking the time to come and see our latest plans for the redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park, prior to submission of our planning application at the end of the year.

In September we held our first public exhibition where over 100 members of the community came along to find out more about our plans for the Station Shopping Park. As well as having really useful conversations, we received 220 feedback forms.

We have been working hard to further develop our vision for the site, taking into account the valuable feedback we have received from the community and stakeholders.

At this final exhibition, we would like to share with you the feedback you have given us and our latest proposals.

All your comments from this exhibition will be taken into consideration as we progress towards submitting our outline planning application to Reading Borough Council at the end of the year.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK...

After looking through the material on display, please complete a feedback form to let us know what you think of our emerging proposals shown here today. Alternatively, you can complete the feedback form online.

If you have any questions, please ask any members of the project team here today.

Thank you



Illustrative pictures of Vastern Road and Station Square



Planning Policy Context



The site is allocated for redevelopment within Reading Borough Council's emerging Local Plan and falls within Reading's 'tall buildings policy' area.

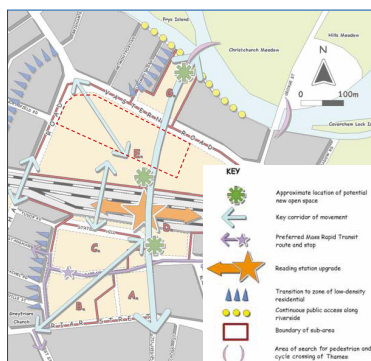
The site represents part of a comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the Station Area and is of unique importance in helping to deliver the strategy for how Reading will develop in the future.

Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP - 2009)

The station/river area will be a flagship scheme, extending the centre and providing a mixed-use destination in itself, and centred on the redeveloped station and new public transport interchange. It will integrate the transport links and areas northwards towards the river and into the heart of the centre.

Set out in the RCAAP, development in the Station/River Major Opportunity Area will:

- I. Contribute towards providing a high-density mix of uses to create a destination in itself – the areas that also make up part of the primary shopping area and central core will have a particular emphasis on delivering much of the identified retail and leisure need;
- II. Help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability, particularly on the key movement corridors. North-south links through the centre and across the railway line, IDR (Inner Distribution Road) and River Thames centred on the new station are of particular importance;
- III. Provide developments that front onto and provide visual interest to existing and future pedestrian routes and open spaces;
- IV. Safeguard land which is needed for improvements to Reading Station, Reading Station Interchange, and mass rapid transit routes and stops;
- V. Provide additional areas of open space where possible, including a direct green link between the station and the River Thames;
- VI. Give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and protect and, where appropriate, enhance the setting of listed buildings;
- VII. Be laid out in a way that allows the area to come forward in parcels – for instance, single developments should not be solely inwards-facing, ignoring the links with other potential future development areas.



Particularly referring to the site considered for this application:

RC1e, NORTH OF STATION: There will be retail and leisure development on the ground floor with other uses including residential and offices on upper floors. Provision of retail development is contingent on improved links across the railway. Public car parking will be provided. An area of civic open space will be provided at the northern entrance to the station, and a green link provided to the Thames. An acceptable dry access scheme from across the site must be part of any development.



Emerging Context for Station Area



Within the Reading Station Area Framework (RSF - 2010) document, an illustrative scheme is presented as a guideline to how the outline principles could help shape future developments for the three key sites.

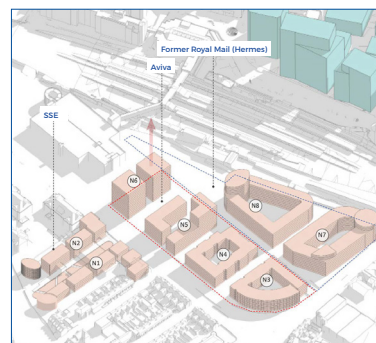
Former Royal Mail (Hermes) site

In 2011, an Outline Planning Application for the site located south of Aviva's was approved. This consent covered the redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed-use scheme with office, residential and ancillary spaces. This consent is now expired.

This year, a new Outline Planning Application has been submitted for the former Royal Mail (Hermes) Site.



Extract from Royal Mail 2019 Planning Application



RSF illustrative scheme

SSE site

A Planning Application for the redevelopment of the SSE site is currently under development.



Summary of feedback from our first exhibition



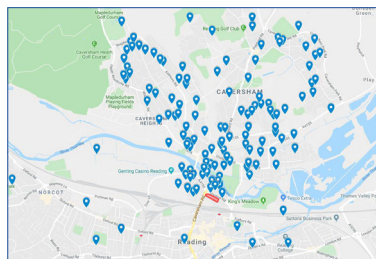
The following is a high-level summary of the feedback received from our first public exhibition. Key recurring topics and comments, in no particular order, are as follows:

100+

People attended over 2 days

220

Comment forms received



Location of attendees at public exhibition



Positive Comments:

- Walkways/pedestrian & cycle access linking the Railway Station to Vastern Road and River Thames and around the site
- Green spaces/trees/public space
- Good use of the site for mixed-use redevelopment
- Improvement to the area
- Retail space: shops/restaurants
- Predominantly car free development
- Design: mix of high/low rise and high quality
- Landscaping
- Provision of more housing

Concerns:

- No need for any more office space - lots already empty
- Design - boring/no wow factor/ugly/soulless
- Too many flats - don't need more housing
- Traffic congestion
- Height of tallest building
- Lack of impact/strain on local services e.g. GP surgery, schools
- Lack of car parking
- Loss of retail stores especially ALDI

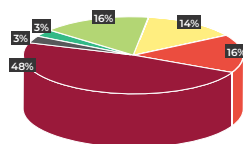


Feedback from our first exhibition



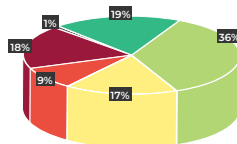
It should be noted that the majority of the feedback has come from residents living in Caversham, with only a few residents commenting from the area immediately surrounding the site and in Abbey Ward. The results to our questions, are therefore heavily weighted to residents beyond the River.

Q1. Our aspiration for the site is to deliver high-quality housing and office space to help make the new station quarter an enjoyable place to work, live in and to visit. Do you agree with the overall approach to this scheme?



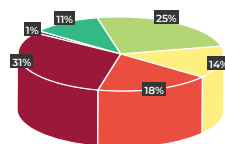
19% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the site could deliver high-quality housing and office space to help make the new station quarter an enjoyable place to work, live in and visit. 64% disagreed or strongly disagreed, 14% were neutral and 3% did not comment.

Q2. New pedestrian routes through the site will extend public access from the town centre, through the site to the riverfront and beyond. Do you think this is a good idea?

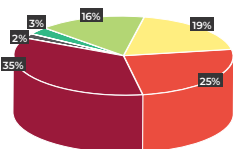


Just over a half of respondents (55%) agreed or strongly agreed that it was a good idea to have new pedestrian routes through the site that will extend public access from the town centre, through the site to the riverfront and beyond. 27% either disagreed or strongly disagreed, 17% were neutral with only 1% of respondents choosing not to comment.

Q3. The provision of open space, landscaping, cafes, restaurants and retail is important for new and existing residents. Do you think this will be an improvement to local amenity provision?



36% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the provision of open space, landscaping, cafes, restaurants would be an improvement to local amenity provision, with 14% remaining neutral. However, 49% disagreed or strongly disagreed, with 1% choosing not to comment to this question.



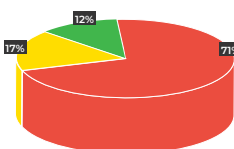
Q4. New premium office space will make a significant contribution towards Reading's established position as the 'Capital of the Thames Valley.'

The majority of respondents (60%) strongly disagreed or disagreed that new premium office space would make a significant contribution towards Reading's established position as the 'Capital of the Thames Valley'. 19% either agreed or strongly agreed with 19% remaining neutral on this question. 2% chose not to comment.

KEY

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- No Comment

Q5. At this stage, would you support a planning application for the proposed development?



KEY

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

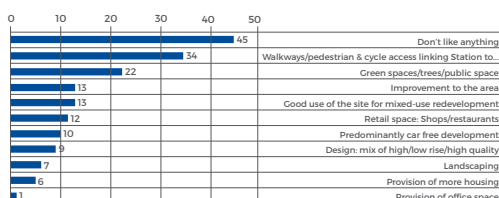
Sample size 220 people



Feedback from our first exhibition



Q6. What aspects of the design proposals do you particularly like?



"Open spaces and pedestrian access to the station...love the New York like skyline"

"The regeneration of an old and poorly maintained area of the town."

"I like the height of the office building, although I think it could be even taller (30+ storeys)."

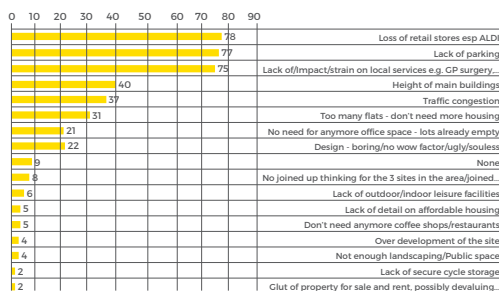
"New housing on brownfield site."

"I like the increase in density of the site."

"It will provide more housing."

Sample size: 201 people with 172 responses.

Q7. Do you have any reservations about the design proposals?



"Soon enough, people will not want to live here as it will be full of empty offices, empty buildings and no facilities, education space or health advice."

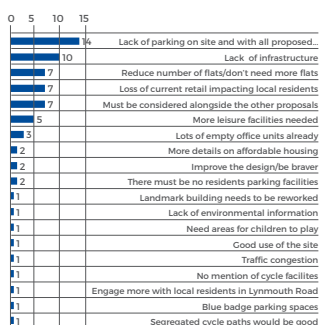
"Too many flats going into town, with not enough provision for family housing, car spaces, private gardens, doctors surgeries, sports facilities, schools etc."

"To lose a food supermarket as well used as Aldi is a major step back for the immediate area."

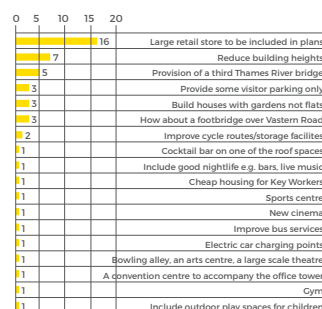
"I really don't see why more office space is needed when there are empty offices."

Sample size: 201 people with 430 responses

Q8. Do you have any comments?



Do you have any suggestions?



"I would like to see some social housing included in the plans for families, singletons, couples etc."

"Be braver, use different materials like the new copper clad office in town. In 10 or 50 years' time no one will be giving this any award for innovation!"

Sample size: 165 people with 68 comments and 50 suggestions



Questions Raised



What type of planning application are you planning to submit?

We will be submitting an outline application, which deals with the broad principles of the development, such as what the site will be used for. This allows us to later agree with the Council and local community a more detailed future proposal, called a Reserved Matters application. This will allow us to finalise aspects such as the design of the development, housing numbers, parking spaces and landscaping.

How many of the flats will be affordable? Is there social housing or reduced rent accommodation?

We are uncertain how many flats will be affordable as we will agree a level with the Council. At this stage social housing providers have not been approached about taking part of the development as it is too early in the process. At present it is not Aviva's intention to rent out the accommodation, but this may be reviewed nearer the completion of the development.

Why do we need more office space, when there are lots of empty locations already in Reading?

We do not know the reason for vacant office space. It could be that it is not providing the specification that occupiers seek, or it might have a tenant who is not occupying the space. We are advised by Savills, our investment agent, that in the future there will be demand for office space. What's more, providing multiple uses enables the space to be more sustainable, with people around at all times.

Where will visiting family and friends of the new residents park?

Many visitors will use the train or bus services, however anyone using a car can park in the adjacent multi-storey car park. There are also over 4 other public car parks within walking distance of the site.

Where is the parking for the residents?

There will be parking facilities for blue badge holders. The current Government policy is that inner town/city developments, with good transport links should not be provided with parking for all.

What is the plan for the existing shops already in situ?

To deliver the development all the existing shops will need to be demolished. In the new development, most of the ground floors will offer space for shops, restaurants, offices and other non-residential uses, which means the existing retailers could be accommodated.

Where are residents expected to shop for groceries and access amenities like schools and leisure facilities without putting more strain on local transport infrastructure?

We would like a shop selling groceries to be one of the shop occupiers. In relation to schools, we will be required to pay a Community Infrastructure Levy to the Council when the works start so that they have the money to provide school places. As for leisure, we see this as a good addition to the completed project and will have space for a gym or similar facility if sought.

What provision for dentist/health services will there be?

We will provide space for community uses which could include dentist or health uses if sought. During the consultation with the Local Planning Authority, the need for new health services will be identified through their consultation with Berkshire West Primary Care Trust.

Will mature trees actually be planted not young trees?

We will seek to provide a variety of landscaping. We will have to agree with the Council on the types of trees to be planted, and those selected need to be sustainable. We will consider the provision of suitable mature trees in the development.

What limitations are there/will there be for public access to the green spaces within the site?

Green spaces for public access will where possible be incorporated into the ground level external areas of the buildings.

Does Reading have a plan for encouraging independently run businesses to open and flourish in the secondary and tertiary areas of the town?

We are unaware of a plan that specifically focuses on independent businesses in secondary and tertiary areas of the town. However, the current Reading Economic Development Plan (2016-2020) www.livingreading.co.uk/doing-business/economic-development-strategy was written by Reading UK CIC in collaboration with Reading Borough Council and mentions maximising investment through promotion, business engagement and in **micro start-ups** and workplace provision.



Emerging Masterplan



Our evolving proposal considers the site's surroundings and the feedback we have received from stakeholders and residents. We have been able to refine our masterplan taking these inputs into account.



Artist's impression showing the current height of illustrative scheme reflecting proposed maximum height parameter

Proposed

- 750-950 homes - studio to 3 bed apartments.
- Primarily car free, with car parking provision made for blue badge holders.
- Resident and visitor cycle parking.
- New public realm spaces.
- New pedestrian linkage between the Railway Station, underpass and Vastern Road heading towards the River Thames.
- New offices, hotel, retail units/gym/ community facilities.

You said..... We listened

- Height of tallest building reduced.
- Car club parking spaces provided.
- Dedicated cycle route along Vastern Road.
- Parking - The national and local planning policy aims to reduce the reliance on cars generally and as the site is regarded as a 'highly sustainable location' (meaning it is very close to the Railway Station and

the Town Centre), we are encouraged to maximise the area for development and reduce car parking provision throughout. This will mean:

- It will help reduce the carbon footprint and lower emissions
- Reduce traffic levels in central Reading
- Loss of retail (ALDI): sufficient floor space to allow a possible replacement has been included in the parameters.
- Traffic congestion: car free development will reduce the number of trips generated by the site.
- Public space: landscaping design has been developed.
- Need for office space: at the Reserved Matters stage in-depth reports into the market demand and supply characteristics will be commissioned before finally deciding on what level of use classification will be implemented. The scheme looks to accommodate market change in the years to come, by adopting a flexible approach.



The Planning Process



An outline planning permission will provide certainty over the principle for development and the parameters within which a detailed design (via a Reserved Matters approval) can be developed for the site. This will provide the LPA (Local Planning Authority) with control over a subsequent Reserved Matters application.

Our Outline Planning application will determine the following:

- Maximum extent of development footprint
- Access & movement corridors
- Minimum extent of open space & landscape
- Minimum extent of separation distances
- Maximum heights of buildings
- Density and amenity space
- Housing mix
- Car parking



Proposed separation distances

An Outline Planning consent requires a further application, known as a **Reserved Matters application**, to complete the development. The Reserved Matters application which will cover the following elements in full detail:

- Design - quality and appearance
- Public realm
- Access
- Layout & Scale - footprint, floorspace, massing and height
- Landscaping

A Reserved Matters application will give the community the opportunity to comment on the detailed proposals through a thorough consultation process before the application is submitted.



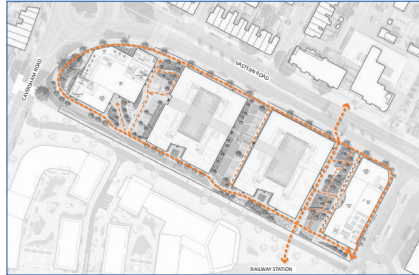
Design Code and Design and Access Statement



Access Circulation and Parking



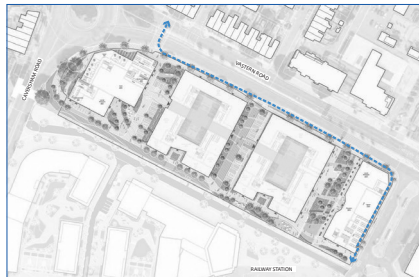
Pedestrian movement



Linear park created to provide links between the river and Caversham to the Railway Station and Reading.

Pedestrians prioritised to increase permeability within the local area.
Significant amount of street trees and planting to create a pleasant walking environment.

Cycle movement



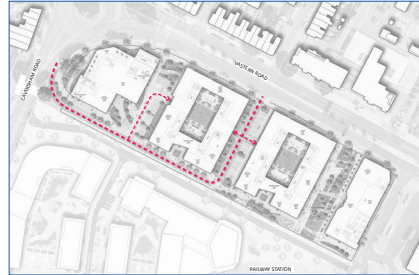
Separated cycle lanes around the perimeter of the site to promote sustainable transport options and reduce potential conflict with pedestrians through the site. Cycle routes promoted from the Town Centre to the River Thames and Caversham.

Parks, open space and play



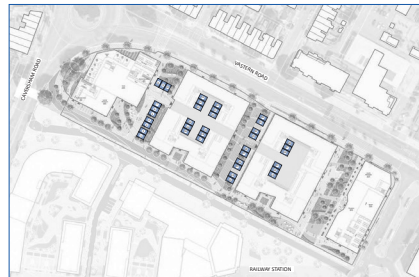
● Large Species Street Trees ● Pocket Parks ★ Areas for Play Features
Planting and trees create pocket parks and substantial greening of the development. Areas of open space provide positive amenity for local people and new residents. Areas where play features can be provided for local children to enjoy their environment.

Vehicular movement



Access into the site from Vastern Road and Caversham Road.
Egress from the site onto Vastern Road.
Access onto site for blue badge parking and for servicing of the buildings.

Blue badge parking



38 Blue badge parking spaces provided for new residents.
20 externally on the secondary streets and 18 internally under the podium landscapes.

Car club parking



At least 2 Car club spaces proposed for residents' use, to allow car hire as required and reduce the need for individual car ownership.



Landscape and Public Open Space



Road frontage

- A green fringe that provides separation between Vastern Road and the site.
- Comprises a minimum zone of 5 metres to include replacement tree planting, pedestrian routes and a dedicated cycle lane connecting the railway station to the existing cycle lane along DeMontfort Road.
- The existing trees at the site entrance along Caversham Road will be retained and enhanced with new planting.



Secondary streets

- Provide access for building servicing and parking for blue badge holders.
- The eastern street provides access and egress to the site with a dedicated pedestrian route along the building facade, creating a link between Varnish Road and the avenue ensuring permeability through the site.
- The western street will be a shared surface with priority given to pedestrians and cyclists. A pocket park at the end of the street creates a destination space and softens the streetscene.



Linear park

- Provides a new strategic connection between the River Thames and the town centre.
- Connects the railway station to the site, providing a car free route to Vastern Road, the Thames path, King's Meadow and Christchurch Meadows.
- Provides 'greening' of the site by creating a linear park comprising new trees, shrub and herbaceous planting.
- Opportunities for both active and passive recreation and door step play.
- Provision of a range of seating spaces and seating options along the route.



The Avenue

- The avenue forms the primary route through the site for cars, delivery and people.
- It provides vehicular access for building services, deliveries, emergency services and blue badge parking.
- Creation of a tree lined boulevard incorporating large, specimen trees and blocks of structural shrub planting creates a verdant streetscene.
- Pavements will be designed to be wide enough to accommodate spill-out space for potential ground floor retail or food and beverage units.
- Opportunities for 'play on the way' and sustainable drainage features.



Hotel plaza

- Create a welcoming public plaza to the front of the hotel.
- Opportunity for specimen / feature trees within this key location.
- Bespoke seating or public art features.
- Potential outdoor cafe space.



Lobby courtyards and podium landscapes

- Provides breathing space off of the avenue, for residents entering the lobbies.
- Opportunity for greening with tree, shrub and herbaceous planting.
- Quiet and tranquil spaces to incorporate a range of seating options.
- Provides private amenity space for residents.



Daylight/Sunlight



We asked independent surveyors to assess the implications that development of the site might have on the daylight and sunlight enjoyed by the existing neighbouring properties on the opposite side of Vastern Road and Caversham Road.

With the site currently being underdeveloped for such an urban location, these residential properties currently enjoy a very high level of daylight and sunlight.

The surveyors were asked to assess two scenarios using guidelines set out by the Building Research Establishment (BRE):

1. The massing proposed in the Council's Reading Station Area Framework Document (RSAF)
2. Our current proposed massing

Their analysis of the RSAF (Reading Station Area Framework) massing showed that all windows

in these properties would achieve at least a VSC appropriate for an urban location. (Vertical Sky Component – a measure of the amount of daylight reaching a window).

The results of the analysis of our proposed massing were similar with all the windows achieving an appropriate VCS.

The analysis also considered the level of sunlight that all rooms with windows facing within 90° of due south would enjoy. The analysis demonstrated that all will achieve at least 25% Annual Probable Sunlight Hours (APSH) with at least 5% during the winter months, as set out

in the BRE (Building Research Establishment) guidelines.

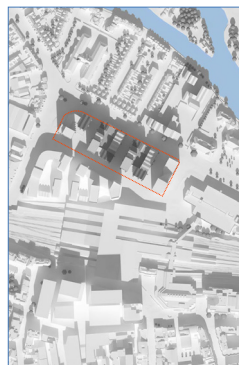
It is therefore considered that taking into account all factors, the aims of the BRE guidelines are achieved and the proposals will not have a significant effect on the daylight and sunlight enjoyed by the neighbouring residential properties.



Shadow study on the 21st of March at 10 am



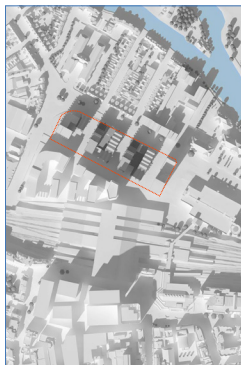
Shadow study on the 21st of March at 11 am



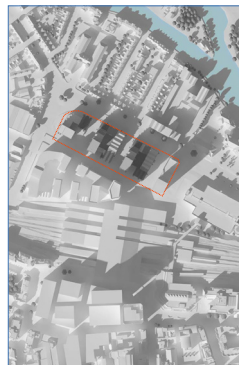
Shadow study on the 21st of March at 12 am



Shadow study on the 21st of March at 1 pm



Shadow study on the 21st of March at 2 pm



Shadow study on the 21st of March at 3 pm



Benefits



Station Square Pedestrian Link - there is an opportunity to provide a landscaped link between Station Square and the River.



New landscaped public open space.



Proximity to public transport facilities makes it an ideal location for high-density living, not dependent on car travel.



Business and employment development will make a significant contribution towards Reading's established position as the 'Capital of the Thames Valley'.



New community facilities can benefit existing residents as well as future occupiers.



Contribution to affordable housing.



Provides the opportunity to secure vibrant retail and leisure uses, to help make the Station Area an enjoyable place to work, live in and to visit.



The site can accommodate a significant level of new homes of mixed tenure, responsive to local housing needs.



Have Your Say



We hope you have found our final public exhibition useful and informative.

Please do talk to us and ask us any questions – we are here to help and would very much like to hear your views prior to us submitting our outline planning application.

Please let us have your comments on our proposals by completing a feedback form and posting in the boxes provided here today.

If you would prefer to take one away with you, please ask us for a stamped addressed envelope. We would appreciate receipt of your comments by **Friday 8th November 2019**. Alternatively you can comment online at www.rssp.co.uk



Thank you once again for attending today.

For more information, please contact the Community Engagement Team:

☎ 0207 446 6837

✉ readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk

🌐 www.rssp.co.uk



READING STATION PARK

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE STATION SHOPPING PARK

Vastern Road, Reading RG1 8AJ

We know your time is precious, but we would really appreciate you giving us some details - before you give us your thoughts and comments - to help us ensure we are reaching as many people in the community as possible.

Date:

Postcode:

What is your connection to the area?*

- ☐ I live here ☐ I work here ☐ I study here ☐ Other

What is your age group?*

- ☐ 17 or Under ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54
☐ 55-64 ☐ 65-74 ☐ 75-84 ☐ 85 or Over

What is your gender?*

- ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your employment status?*

- ☐ Working full-time ☐ Working part-time ☐ Self-employed ☐ Apprenticeship
☐ Student ☐ Unemployed ☐ Retired ☐ Other

Please proceed to questions within.

We would very much like to hear your views on our evolving development proposals we have shared with you today. We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to answer the following questions. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of the project team.

Q1 What do you think are important facilities to be included in this development?

	Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No
Gym	☐	☐	Retail (non-food)	☐	☐	Business start-up space	☐	☐
Small Supermarket	☐	☐	Takeaways/fast food	☐	☐	Community Hub	☐	☐
GP Surgery/healthcare	☐	☐	Café/restaurant	☐	☐	Pub/wine bar	☐	☐

Q2 A number of residents felt the height of the proposed office building was too high. In response to these concerns, we have reduced the height of the building to 18 storeys from 20 storeys. Do you welcome this change?

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNDECIDED

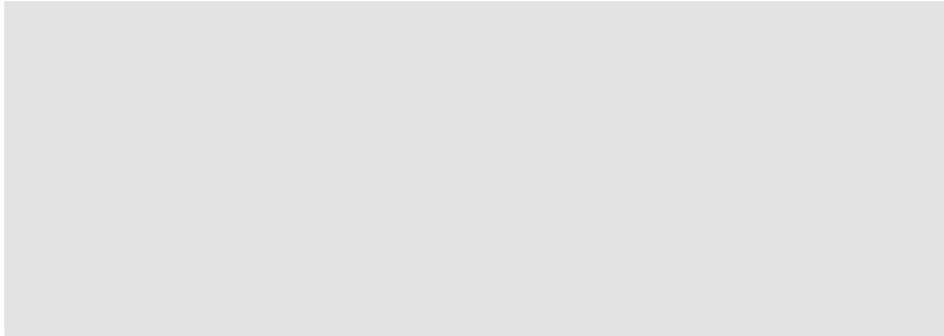
Q3 Which ONE of the following do you consider should be a priority for this development?

Public open space	☐	Café outdoor dining/ drinking space	☐	Planting new trees	☐
Dedicated cycle routes	☐	Landscaping	☐	Link to Station & River	☐
Water feature(s)	☐	Disabled parking	☐	Residents car parking	☐
Children's play area	☐				

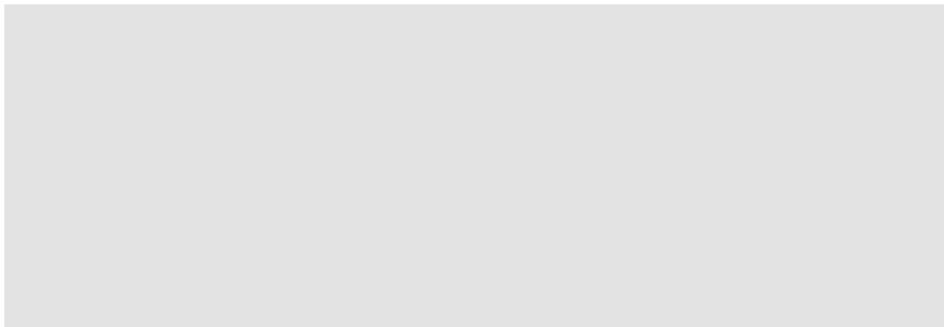
Q4 Following your feedback, at least 2 car club spaces are proposed for residents' to use, helping to reduce the need for individual car ownership. Do you welcome this?

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNDECIDED

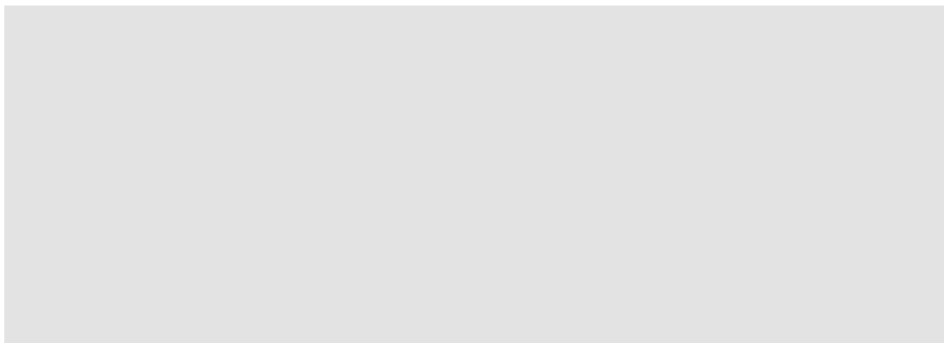
Q5 Following our amendments to the proposals, what aspects of the proposals do you particularly like?



Q6 Following our amendments to the proposals, do you have any further concerns about the proposals?



Q7 Do you have any other comments and suggestions?



Please place your completed form in the boxes provided or if you would prefer to complete the form at your leisure, please ask us for a SAE.

We would appreciate receipt of your comments by **Friday 8th November 2019.**

Thank you





READING STATION PARK

Please leave us your details if you would like to be kept up to date on the progress of the redevelopment of the Station Shopping Park.

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email Address

☐ I would like to be kept updated on any progress regarding this site.



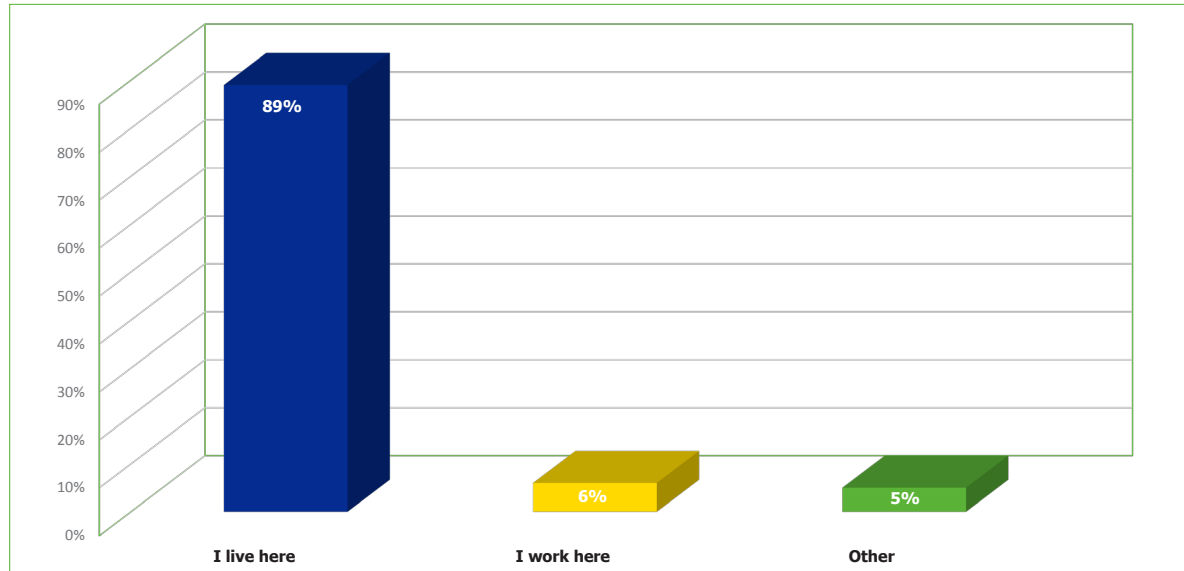
READING STATION PARK

We take data protection seriously. Please only provide your personal details if you are willing for them to be used by Barton Willmore and the project team for the purpose of research in connection with this project and in order to update you as to progress of the project. Your details will be treated as confidential and will not be shared, passed on or used by any third parties and they will only be retained until the end of the planning process for the project, after which time they will be deleted.

If you wish to withdraw consent to the processing of your personal data you may do so by emailing: readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk

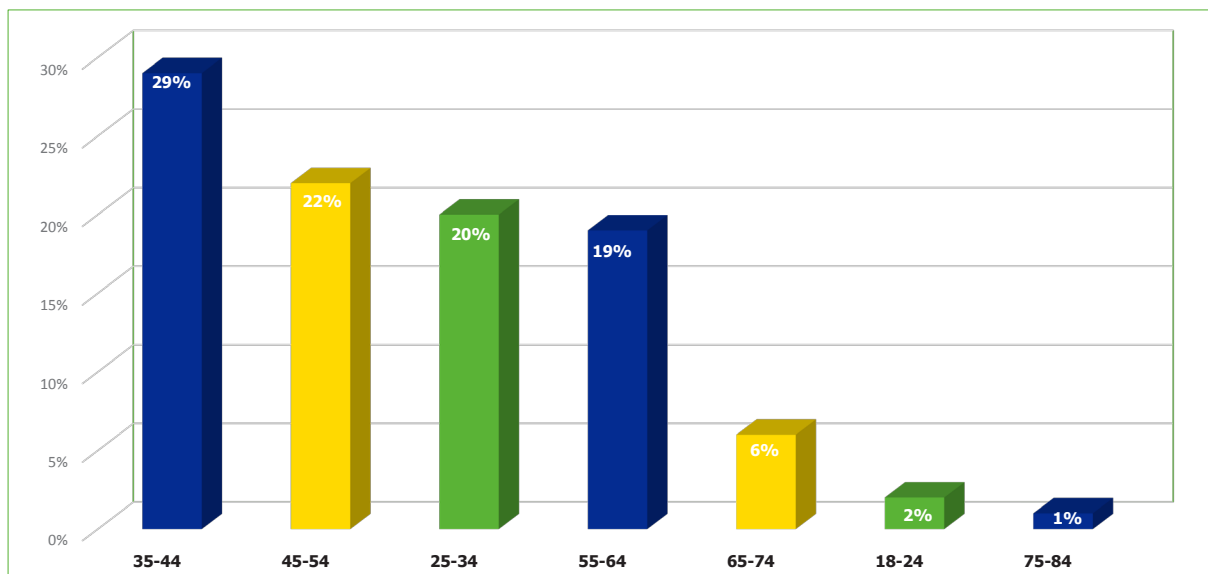
If you require further information, please contact Kate Greatrix
T: 0207 446 6837 E: readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk
Or visit our Website: www.rssp.co.uk

Q1. What is your connection to the area?



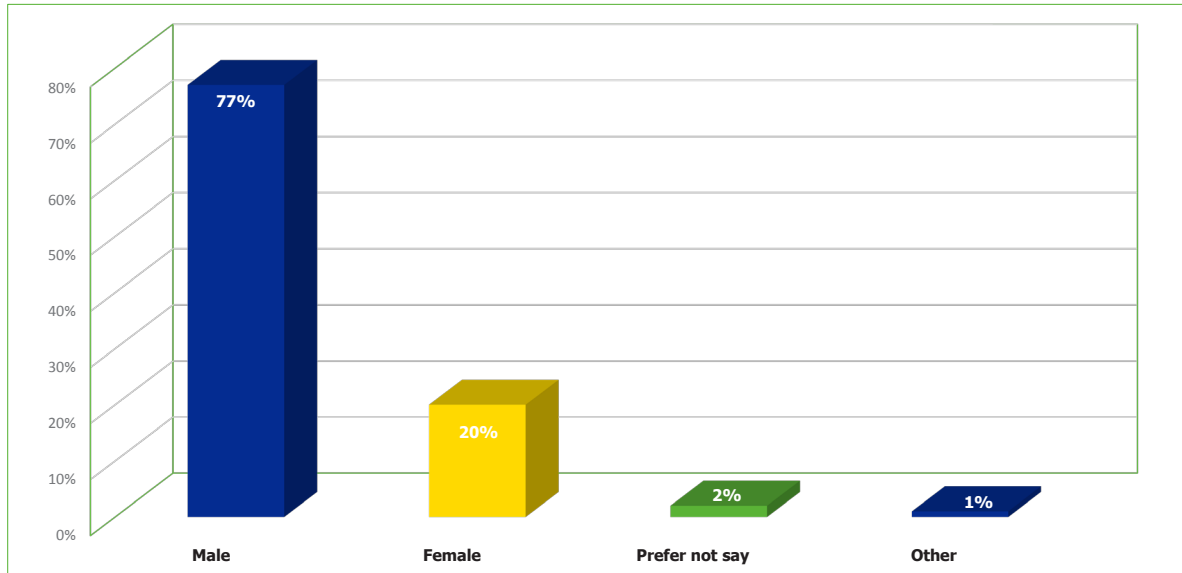
Sample size: 208

Q2. What is your age group?



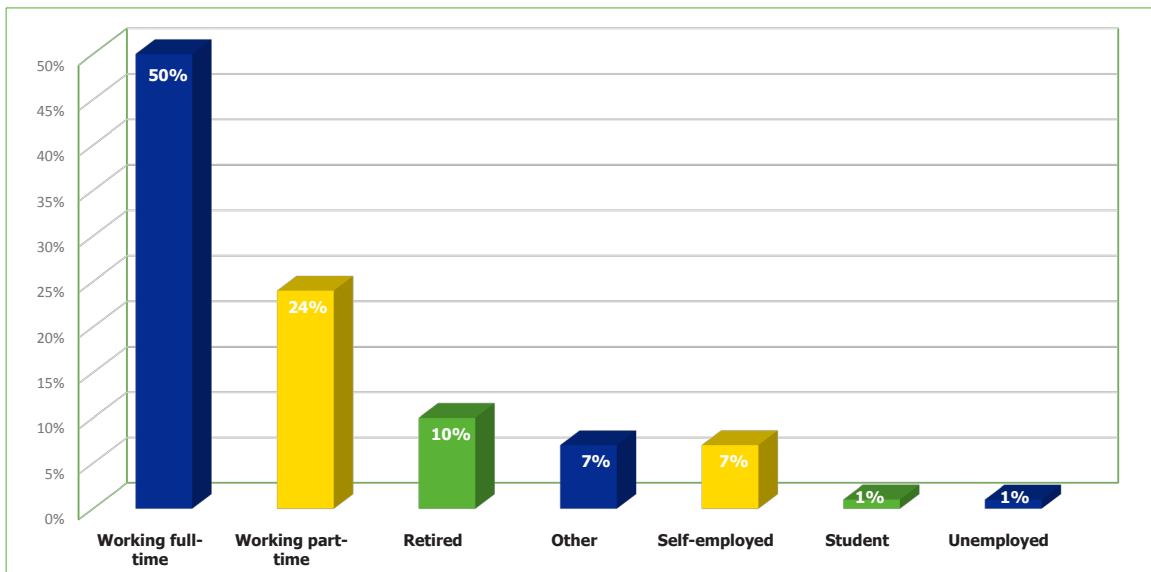
Sample size: 208

Q3. What is your gender?



Sample size: 208

Q4. What is your employment status?



Sample size: 208



READING STATION PARK

Sorry we missed you today

We called today to chat to you about our plans to redevelop the Station Shopping Park. If you are interested in the future of the site and would like to know more and share your views with us, please contact us or take a look at our website where you can comment online and sign up for updates.

CONTACT US



BY EMAIL

readingstationpark@bartonwillmore.co.uk



BY PHONE

0207 446 6837



ONLINE

www.rssp.co.uk



Good Practice Guide to Public Engagement in Development Schemes

For developers, communities and decision makers, one of the biggest challenges in taking forward a development scheme is to ensure that public engagement is undertaken in a way which is meaningful, inclusive and brings benefits for all involved.

This guide is intended to provide practical advice for all those involved in public engagement in development schemes which require planning consent. It is illustrated by real examples of good practice and provides information and assistance to those planning, engaging in, or assessing community consultation.

Good engagement reduces conflict, results in better development and most importantly allows communities to have an influence over the future shape of the places where they live.

About Planning Aid

Planning Aid offers people the opportunity to get involved in the development of their local areas. We provide free and independent professional planning advice to community groups and individuals who cannot afford to pay professional fees. We work with communities to help them understand and play a role in the planning process. We are an independent source of advice and information on planning issues, and not part of central or local government.

Further information and contact details can be found at the back of this guide.

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Engagement is a two way process of openly sharing and exchanging information, understanding different views, listening and responding to suggestions, developing trust and dialogue to support effective working relationships to the mutual benefit of all involved.



"Good engagement motivates and inspires individuals and communities to help shape the future of their neighbourhoods, with positive outcomes for all involved."

Sue Manns, National Planner, Planning Aid England.

"Effective consultation at the early stages of proposals improves schemes and creates value."

Mike Dunton, Consultant G L Hean.



There are many challenges to successful engagement with the community on development schemes, but they are small in comparison to the risks of failing to engage in a timely, meaningful and inclusive manner.



Why Engage?

Depending on the size and type of development project, there are different legal requirements for community consultation. Larger projects, including nationally significant infrastructure projects now require considerable consultation by the developer before an application is submitted. Other projects, for example small developments such as a change of use or householder application, may only require neighbours to be notified by the local authority once an application has been submitted. Whatever the requirements, talking to neighbours and others before an application is submitted will often save time, reduce risks and most importantly result in a better scheme.

It makes sense to engage

Good developments are those which work well with their local areas. This means that as part of the design process there is a need to understand how a place works and functions. The community are well placed to help with this information. Good community consultation and engagement is an essential part of a good development process, especially when undertaken early on in the process when changes to a scheme can more easily be made.



For **communities**, engagement means a chance to understand what is proposed, to explore how a development can bring value to an area, to identify which options would work best within a local context, to help shape solutions and to have their say on a scheme.

For **developers**, engaging with the local community can provide vital local knowledge, reduce the risk of challenges and delays, identify how a scheme can bring value to a local area and enhance the reputations of all involved.

For **decision makers**, good pre-application engagement will have identified those issues of importance to the local community and show how the proposal has responded to these. It will be for the decision maker to balance these alongside planning policy and other considerations, e.g. traffic impact, job creation and make a decision on the application.

When making design changes in response to comments from the community, it is important to be sure that the views are representative of the community, because if not, then it might not be the right solution. Inclusive engagement is the key to success.

"Change happens – and needs to happen – but people are often very uncomfortable with the uncertainties that change brings to their lives. Early and appropriate engagement in the development process can do much to minimise uncertainty, and help people make a positive impact on schemes rather than just sniping from the sidelines. This Good Practice Guide will help planners and other key players ensure that this happens."

Mark Middleton, Head of Planning, Worcestershire County Council.

Good engagement does not mean that a scheme will definitely go ahead as it may be unacceptable in terms of planning policy however, it will play a big part in helping all those involved to understand the issues and risks associated with an application and in reducing delays once an application has been submitted.

Good engagement is about more than just 'ticking a box'. If there is no real commitment, all the key decisions have been made, not enough time is allowed or there are insufficient resources to engage properly, it is likely that at best little will be achieved and at worst, may add to the frustrations of a community increasing the risk of objections, delay and possible refusal of consent.

A recipe for good engagement

There is no 'perfect recipe' for good community engagement. Every development scheme and every community will be different. However this guide describes some good practice 'ingredients' which can be used to develop a positive and beneficial engagement process.

"The typical participants in local decisions vary according to activity, but generally are more likely to be white, older, better educated, richer, middle class males."

Pathways through Participation: What creates and sustains active citizenship? Understanding Participation: A literature review. NCVO, IVR and Involve. Dec 2009

Community consultation and engagement should not be carried out just to tick a box – it should have a clear purpose and be of value to all involved, otherwise it might do more harm than good!

Good engagement reduces conflict, results in better planning outcomes and most importantly allows communities to have an influence over the future shape of the places where they live.

When investing in a new product, a good business will invest in 'market research' or consultation to ensure that the product is fit for market. Development schemes are no different.

Principles of Engagement



Learn from the process – identify what people think of the way the consultation has worked. What could be done better, what else needs to be done, was it a balanced and inclusive process. Identify the lessons learned and take these forward into other projects.



Research and analysis – explore the context, history, different communities and groups in the area who may be affected. Identify what will motivate people, what else is happening in the area, establish if it is connected and if so consider the potential to share events. Establish the goals – what are the benefits of engaging with communities and how will these be realised?



Relationship building, knowledge and skills – develop links with key groups and individuals who can assist and advise on what matters in the area. Consider how existing community groups, networks and representatives might be involved, what barriers might exist and what help might be needed to build the capacity to engage.



Communications – ensure that the information provided is clear, accessible and sufficient to tell people what they want to know, and to allow them to decide whether to engage. Be clear about what is fixed and why, and what is 'up for debate'. Check that mechanisms are in place to allow information to flow in all directions and that response dates are clear.



Continuing to engage – Has feedback been given and how will the relationships developed be continued into the construction and operational phases of a development project?



Monitor and evaluate – monitor engagement and use the results to identify gaps and inform actions to widen the process and ensure a balanced community response is achieved. Consider the comments received and how they can be taken into account in the design – is further engagement required?



Inclusive – ensure under represented individuals and groups are included and that they have an equal opportunity to be heard. Be clear when making changes that these do not respond to a vociferous minority but are a response to a wider community view.



Timing – be realistic, allow sufficient time to achieve the goals set at the start. Provide a clear timetable for the project identifying consultation opportunities. Ensure engagement takes place when things can be changed and when it is cost effective to do so. Allow sufficient time for considered and informed response. How and when will feedback be provided?

Awareness to Engagement

Moving towards effective community engagement

Every development, no matter how large or small, can benefit from effective engagement. Talking to a neighbour before submitting an application for an extension to an existing building, listening to any views they may express and responding to comments they may make always helps, as does telling them when building work will start. This applies equally to a nuclear power station or major residential development. However, the approaches used, the time taken and the resources invested in consultation will be different, and should be in proportion to the size and impact of the development.

Effective engagement

Discuss and debate

Consult and communicate

Building understanding

Awareness raising

Site notice, press notice, leaflets, talk to neighbours



More information about what is happening, where, why and when



Invite comments, listen and make changes, provide feedback



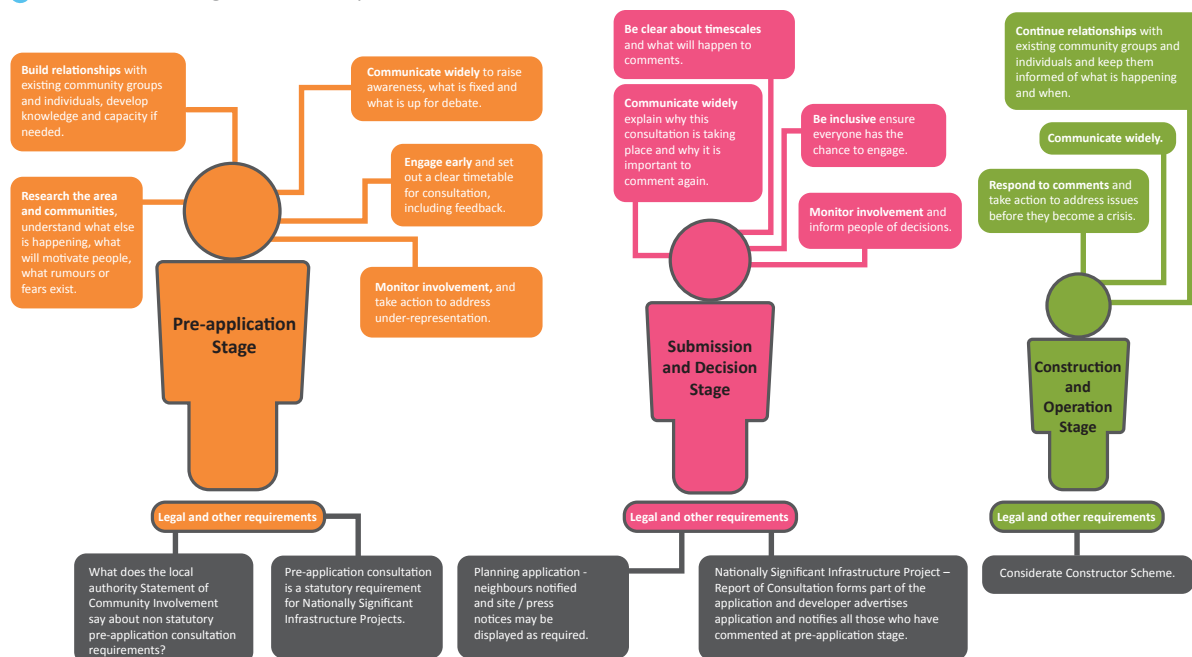
Forum to agree changes, embrace ideas and suggestions, responsive process



Build lasting, positive relationships

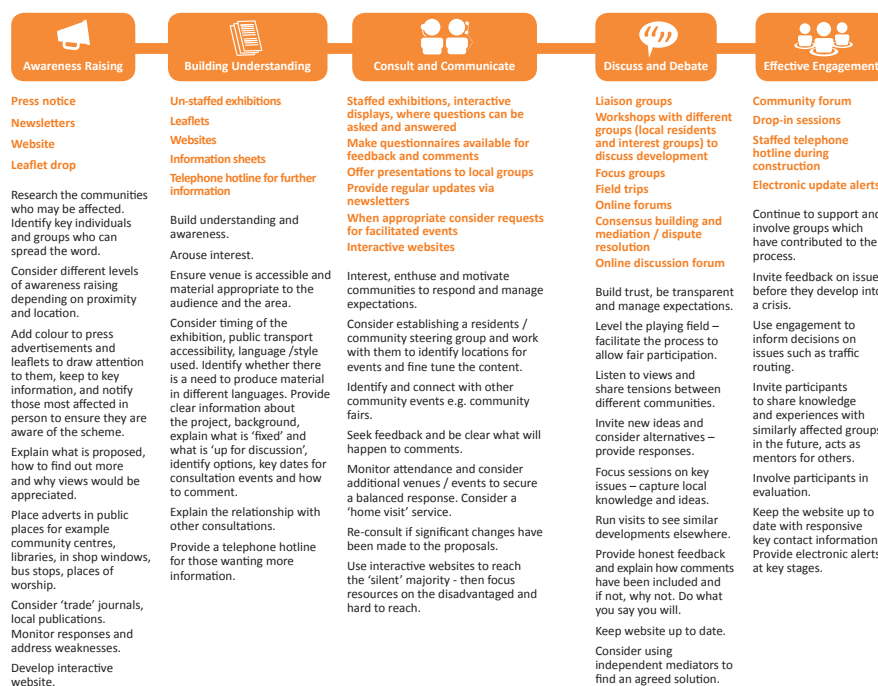
Planning for Community Engagement

The Different Stages of a Development Scheme



Pre-application Stage

Good Practice Approaches



Examples

"We aim to meet the challenges of 'consultation fatigue' and raise interest in the planning process by using local people to encourage their friends, neighbours and families."

Mike Dando, Community Outreach Coordinator, Planning Aid England.

Planning Aid for London and Crossrail set up a Community Liaison Panel for residents of Whitechapel to help them be involved in each stage of planning and constructing Crossrail. In areas where English is not a first language, translation services have been offered to enable minority groups to engage.

EDF Energy held a series of workshops for school children and young adults to help to identify the issues and opportunities associated with a new nuclear power station in their area – the suggestions which resulted have influenced the project development.

"The independent research helped to identify who was engaging in our consultation process in the early stages. By comparing these results with the profile of the population as a whole, we were able to identify groups that were missing and take specific steps to engage with them later in the process."

Alex Kaufman, Head of Communications, EDF Energy New Nuclear Build.

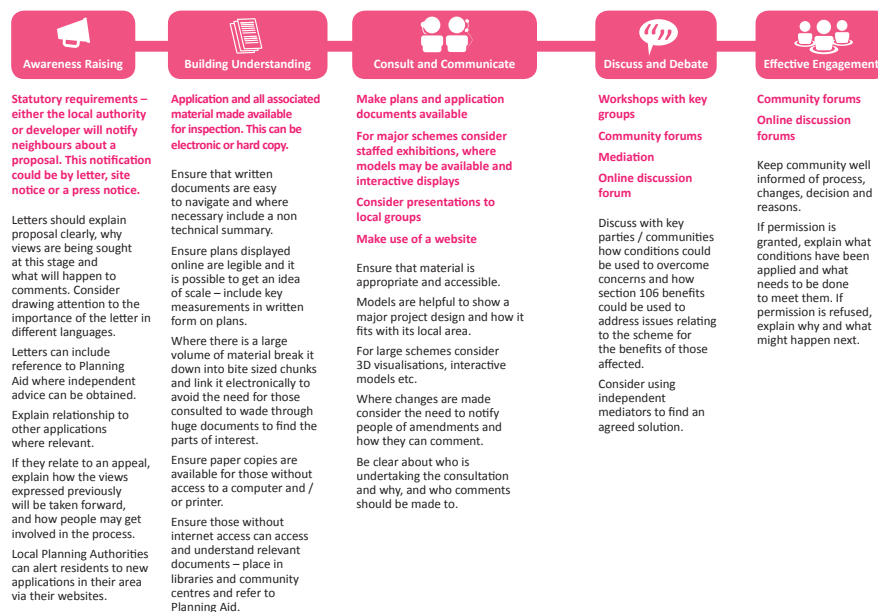
"Sharing plans with my neighbour resulted in some good ideas which saved money and improved the appearance."

Member of the public.

- A 'Building Schools for the Future' consultation in Birmingham took place on a vacant site where a new school was to be located.
- A traffic calming consultation event was advertised on road signs at affected junctions.

Submission and Decision Stage

Good Practice Approaches



Examples

Conflict between neighbours arose following refusal of planning consent for an extension which conflicted with planning policy. Due to the wording of a letter, the applicant thought refusal was also due to the objection from the neighbour and a long-standing friendship was destroyed.

Mediation may be a way of achieving an agreed solution where there is conflict between parties.

Kirkstall Forge (Leeds) is a Brownfield mixed use development of over 100,000sq metres. The developer works through the local liaison group to provide regular progress reports throughout the life of the application and subsequent amendments. Regular updates are also provided on the website and each year the developer attends the local community festival (attended by over 20,000 people) and has a stand to provide the latest details of the scheme and answer questions about the proposals.

A number of local planning authorities have a 'duty' planning officer available to help people understand planning applications and how to make their views known. In Birmingham there is also help for those who find it hard to use the online information system.

Many councils now include reference to Planning Aid on their neighbour notification letters as a source of independent advice on planning.

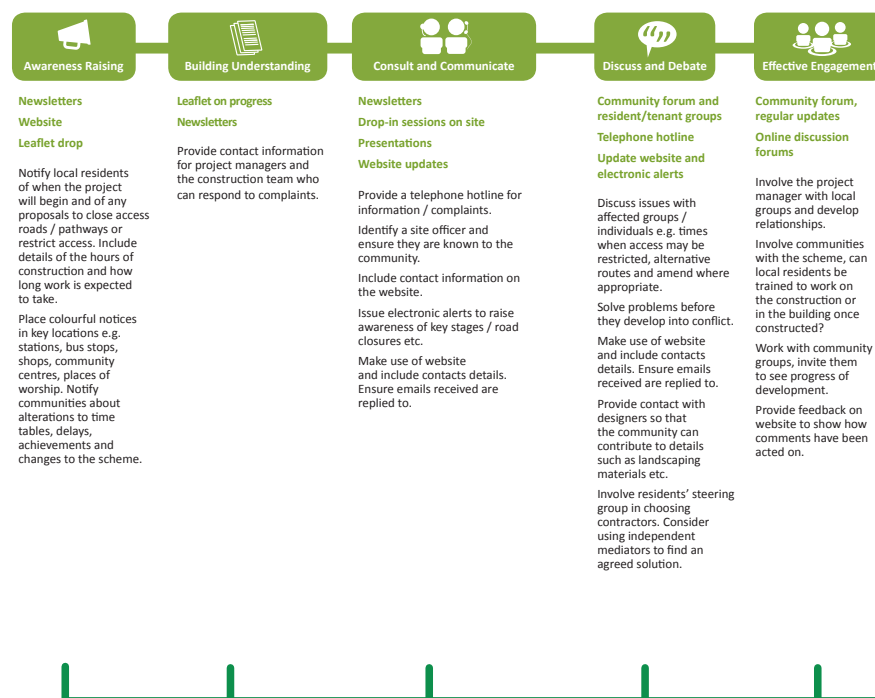
Construction and Operation Stage

Good Practice Approaches

Approaches

Good Practice Advice

Examples



Examples

Family Mosaic Housing Association held a competition to award 5 construction job apprenticeships to young people on an estate which was to be rebuilt as part of a regeneration scheme.

"Lockleaze Voice is a Neighbourhood Planning Group open to all those living and working in the local community. Regular meetings are held at which the attendees can discuss and influence local concerns, particularly development schemes."

Peter Whitehead, Community Outreach Coordinator, Planning Aid England.

The Docklands Light Railway employed a 'local ambassador' as part of the launch strategy for Langdon Park Station to promote the use of the station by liaising with the local community and distributing travel cards. This was so successful that local ambassadors will be appointed for future station schemes.

The Channel Tunnel Rail Link – High Speed project established a 24 hour helpline and appointed an independent Complaints Commissioner to oversee the project and report back to the local authorities.

The Bull Ring development in Birmingham included viewing areas and live web cameras where progress on construction could be followed.

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