

1. INTRODUCTION

Planning

The site is located within the Core Strategy Area, the Reading Central Area Action Plan and the 'Station/River' Opportunity Area. The Reading Station Area Framework positions the site within the wider Station Hill area, which is promoted for mixed-use redevelopment with a mix of residential, commercial, leisure and retail uses.

National Planning Policy Framework 2018

The NPPF, published in 2018, sets out the national planning policies for England. Central to the document is the requirement to achieve sustainable development through the planning system with a presumption in favour of sustainable development. High-quality, inclusive and good design is a core requirement in achieving sustainable development and requires proposals to:

- Add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development
- Establish a strong sense of place, creating an attractive and comfortable place to live, work and visit
- Be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping

Reading Local Plan (November 2019)

The Site is located within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area. The vision for this area is that it will be a flagship scheme, extending the centre and providing a mixed-use designation in itself and centred on the new station and public transport interchange. It will integrate the transport links and areas northwards towards the River Thames and into the heart of the centre.

Policy CR11 of the Local Plan states that development in this area will:

- i) Contribute towards providing a high-density mix of uses to create a destination in itself and capitalise on its role as one of the most accessible locations in the south east. Development for education will be an acceptable part of the mix;
- ii) Help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability, particularly on the key movement corridors. North-south links through the area centred on the new station, including across the IDR, 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 mass rapid transit routes and stops;
- v) Provide additional areas of open space where possible, with green infrastructure, including a direct landscaped link between the station and the River Thames;
- vi) Give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and conserve and, where possible, enhance listed buildings,

conservation areas and historic gardens and their settings;

vii) Give careful consideration to the archaeological potential of the area and be supported by appropriate archaeological assessment which should inform the development;

viii) Demonstrate that it is part of a comprehensive approach to its sub-area, which does not prevent neighbouring sites from fulfilling the aspirations of this policy, and which contributes towards the provision of policy requirements that benefit the whole area, such as open space; and

ix) Give early consideration to the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrades where required.

Policy CR11c identifies the Site as Station Hill and Friars Walk. It notes that this area will be developed for a mix of uses at high density, including retail and leisure on the ground and lower floors and residential and office on the higher floors. It goes on to note that there will be enhanced links through the Site (north – south), frontages on key routes through to the station and active uses. The edges of the Site nearest to the areas of traditional terracing west of Greyfriars road will require careful design treatment. It identifies an indicative potential for the delivery of 380-570 dwellings, 80,000-100,000 sqm of offices, retail and leisure.

Reading Central Area Action Plan 2010

This document seeks, in part, to provide a safe and distinctive high-quality environment with easy access to high-quality public areas and open space. It is informed by a series of key principles including:

- The centre to contain a broad range of different but complementary uses and be easily accessible by foot
- New development to exhibit an excellent, safe and sustainable quality of design that contributes to the attraction of the centre

The Station Hill site falls within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area which identifies the site for retail and leisure uses on the ground floor along Friar Street, with a mix of uses on the upper floors and a high-density mix of uses including retail and leisure on the ground and lower floors, and residential and offices on the higher floors of Station Hill itself. Policy RCS requires development to provide appropriate, well-designed public spaces and other public realm, including squares, open spaces, streetscapes and landscaping. The architectural details and materials should be high-quality.

1.INTRODUCTION

Reading Station Area Framework 2010

The Station Area Framework outlines broad development principles to guide the planned redevelopment of the area. The framework identifies as a key public realm objective the provision of a network of spaces that prioritises pedestrian movement.

The station redevelopment is seen to present significant opportunities to provide new landscaping within its surroundings.

Station Hill South Planning & Urban Design Brief

A Planning & Urban Design Brief for the Station Hill south side envisions a city centre with new links for people.

Other policies include: Reading Tall Building Strategy 2008 and Sustainable Design & Construction SPD which have also been considered as relevant documents.

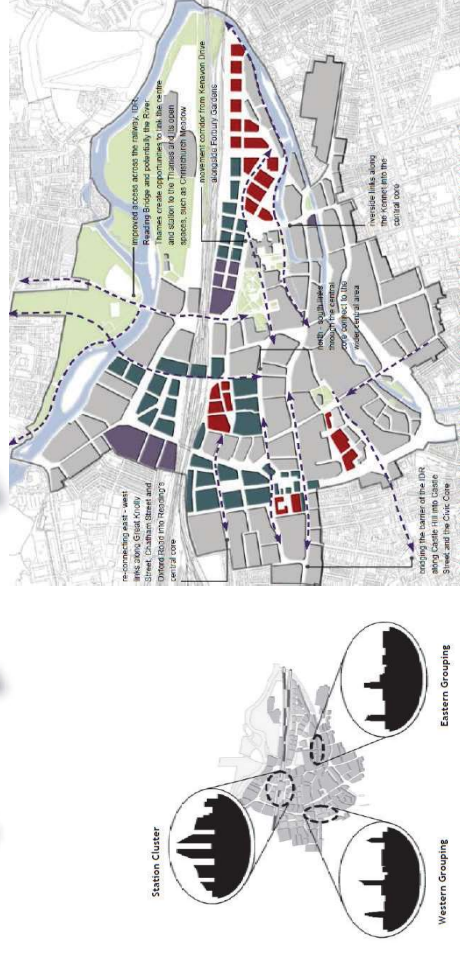
The Reading Central Area Action Plan has been developed to address the implementation of the Core Strategy within the central area. The policy describes four key components of urban design and five urban design objectives to be achieved in all new developments and which are addressed in the proposals for the application site.

The four key urban design components are:

1. Layout: Urban Structure and Urban Grain
2. Density and Mix
3. Scale: Height and Massing
4. Landscape and Architectural Design, Details and Materials

The five urban design objectives are:

1. Character, identity and sense of place
2. Continuity and enclosure with well-defined streets and places
3. Quality of the public realm with attractive and accessible public spaces
4. Ease of movement and permeability with safe access and connections
5. Legibility with clear image and easy to understand public realm



2

SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

2.1 KEY DESIGN OBJECTIVES

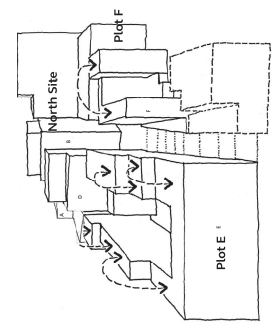
E + F Consented Section 73

The consented S73 for Plots E & F were based on parameter plans and were accompanied by illustrative proposals, design codes, design and access statements and supporting information. The Reserved Matters Applications will build on the objectives set out in those documents, adapting the design to meet the requirements of the Build to Rent market and expanding opportunities to enhance placemaking.

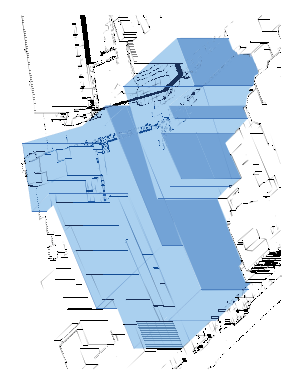


Consolidated Outline Consent Parameters Plan for ground floor uses and active frontage that brings together, for the purpose of explanation only, the various consents for the seven plots. Plot E & F application boundaries overlaid are as set out in illustrative proposals: red line for E, green line for F.

Predominantly Retail
Predominantly Residential



Extract from Design Code Guidance for stepped massing from Friar Street upwards to Station Hill.



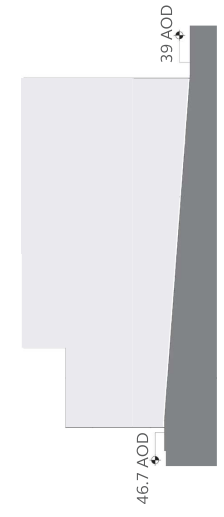
Parameter Massing of Consented Outline Applications.



CRTKL's daylight/sunlight studies of Illustrative Masterplan associated with Outline Consent (21st June 2pm).



Materials Palette from Design Code.



Section through Friars Walk showing change of level from Friar Street to Garrard Street as proposed in the outline consent.

2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

2.2 OUTLINE CONSENT DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The key design objects set out in the illustrative proposals and the Design Codes set guidance for the design, layout, composition, materials and architectural character of proposed buildings and spaces across the site. Overall, the proposals seek to provide the framework for a series of buildings and spaces that work successfully in their own right and facilitate the site's integration into the town centre.

The key objectives were defined as follows:

1. A Vibrant and Enjoyable Place

The scheme promoted a combination of office, residential, retail, food and drink and leisure activities within a vibrant and enjoyable series of buildings. The distribution of uses across the site, the arrangement of buildings and external spaces focused activities in key spaces of defined character, a public realm with busy commercial frontage and that accommodates movement of people, residential amenity spaces of a more domestic character and buildings of architectural quality that respond to the existing character of Reading.

2. A Well-Connected and Accessible Area

The desire was to make full use of the site's location and the opportunities it offers. The proximity to the station provides the site with strong public transport links. The site's key position between the town centre and the station makes it an ideal location in which to live and work. Routes across the site strengthen these links, while buildings and external spaces were positioned and orientated to enhance movement, sight-lines and views.

3. A Place to Live and Work

There was a strong desire to develop a scheme that is successful both as a place to live and to work. It is also intended that buildings and spaces provide an enlivening and enjoyable environment, while residents would benefit from attractive, self-policing external amenity spaces and neighbourhoods of distinct character that could evolve.

4. A Sustainable Development

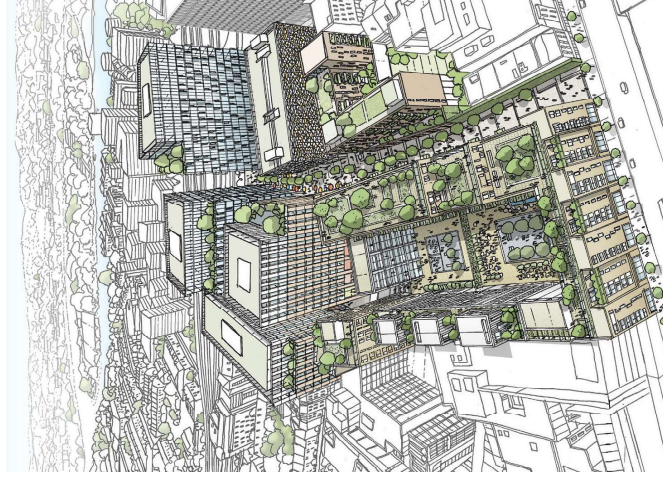
It was recognised that the development should address the agenda for sustainable design, construction and lifestyles and be exemplar. The proposals' aims were to offer an efficient, high-density, mixed-use development with the network of spaces providing amenity space and encouraging pedestrian and cyclist movement. The scheme promoted the use of practical and proven environmentally sustainable technologies.

5. An Urban Form of High-quality

The new development would represent an urban form of appropriate scale and quality to create a sense of place and respond to the character of the town centre and adjoining residential areas. The proposals would contain buildings which are a particularly robust form of urban development, capable of accommodating a mix of uses. The scheme would also contain buildings of architectural quality and design innovation.

6. Diversity and Human Scale

It was important that the proposed development provides a streetscape that is diverse and achieves a human scale. The urban blocks were made up of several buildings and frontages could be diversified. This would enliven the views along spaces with a variety of texture and grain.



Aerial view of Illustrative Proposal for Consented Outline Applications for Plots E & F in the foreground with the north site in the background from south.

2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

2.3 PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED S73 AND PARAMETER PLANS

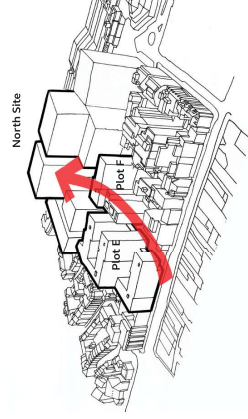
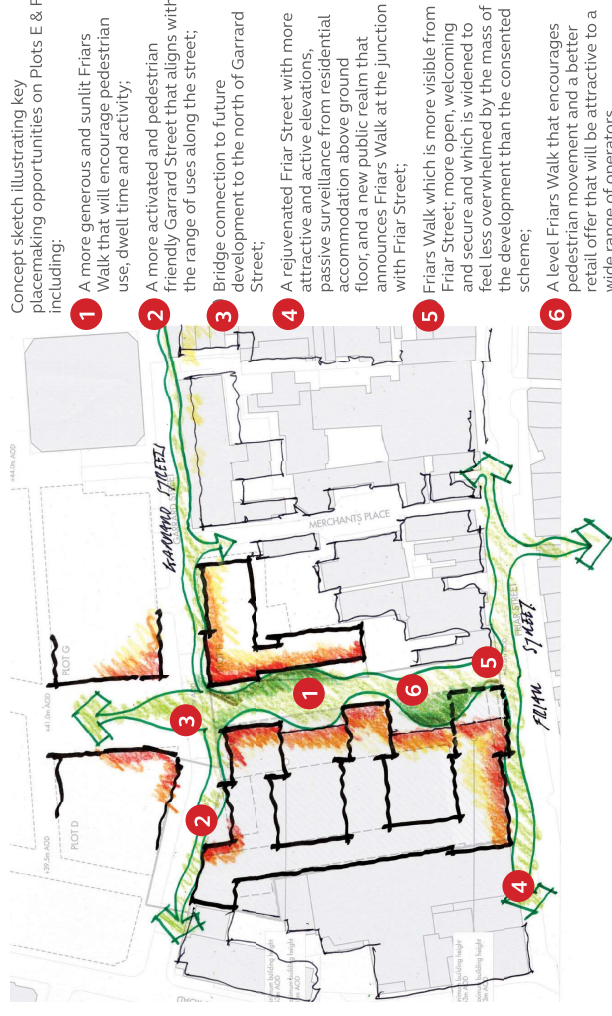
The overarching objective of the proposed modifications is to create the highest quality build-to-rent residential development with excellent amenity spaces and an attractive and inviting public realm. The revised massing will deliver enhancements to the approved scheme.

Key design revisions include:

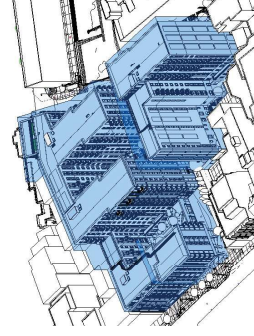
- Additional homes within enhanced heights on the southern and middle legs of Plot E.
- Additional units within enhanced height on Plot F.
- The southern courtyard on Plot E lowered to level with Friars Walk, delivering units around its perimeters and a reduced area of commercial space whilst maintaining active frontage to the streets and providing opportunities for visibility from street level into the courtyard.
- Duplex units at the ground floor of Plot F facing Friars Walk.
- Additional units at first floor, middle leg of Plot E.

The design and layout of Plots E & F involves the balancing of multiple design constraints with the opportunity to create a layout that realises the key design objectives. In revising the parameter plans the design has focused on delivering:

- A strong community and an excellent residential experience within a safe and pleasant neighbourhood;
- High-quality apartments designed specifically to cater for the needs of tenants;
- A visible, experienced landlord in Lincoln Property Company that residents can engage with on a daily basis;
- High-quality management of best in class amenities; communal gardens, leisure, social spaces and resident storage facilities, as well as curated retail and F&B offer on Friar Street and Friars Walk;
- Clear and transparent tenancy arrangements;
- Security.



Proposed massing of the building rises from Friar Street towards Garrard Street in line with the illustrative parameters plan massing.



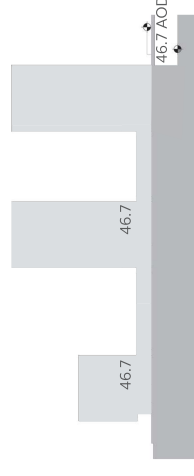
Proposed massing is generally within the Consented Parameter Envelope.



Daylight/sunlight studies of proposed scheme (21st June 2pm) showing how the public realm gains more daylight.



Proposed materials palette for proposed scheme.



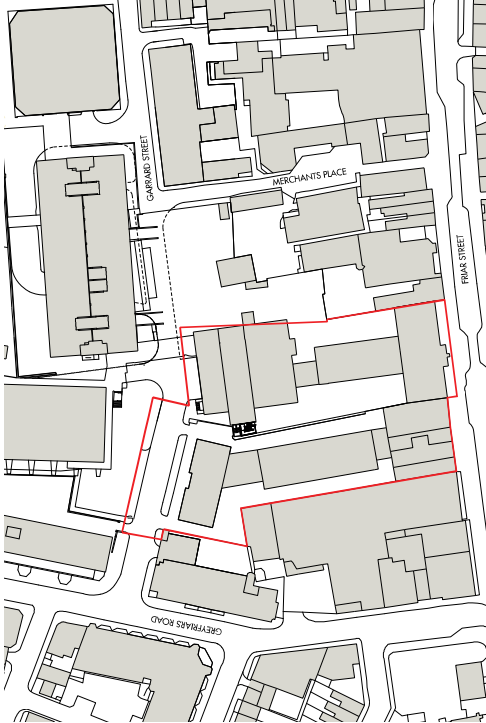
Section through Friars Walk showing no change of level from Friar Street to Garrard Street with a bridge to the development north of Garrard Street.

2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO
APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

2.4
REVISED & PROPOSED PARAMETER PLANS – PLOT E

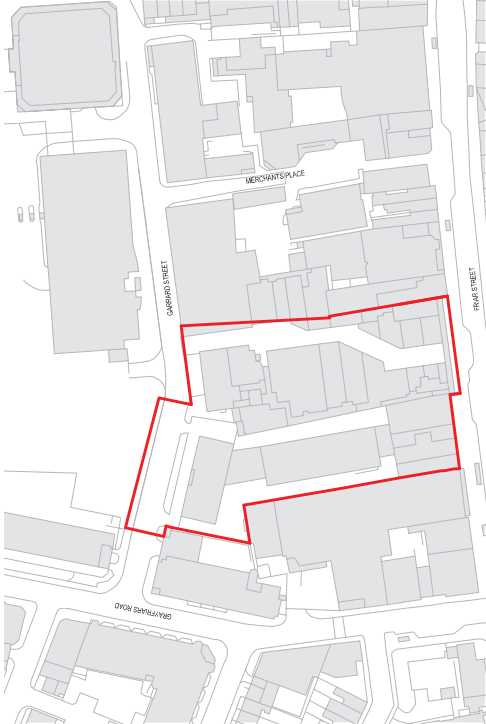
Boundaries

APPROVED



Extract from Approved Plot E Plan 1: Application Boundary

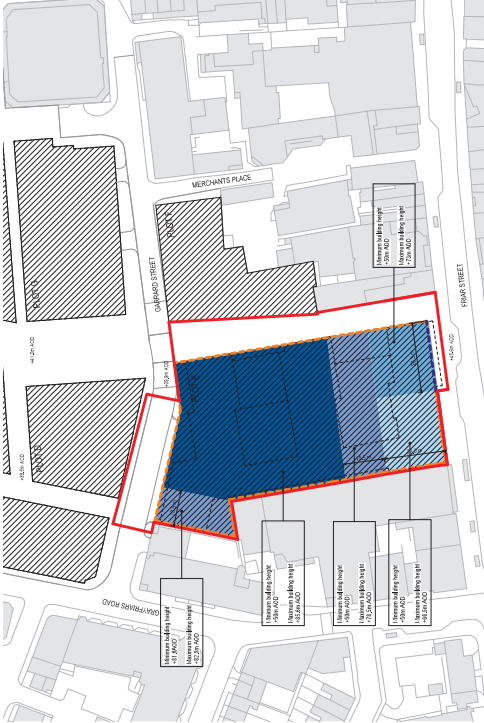
PROPOSED



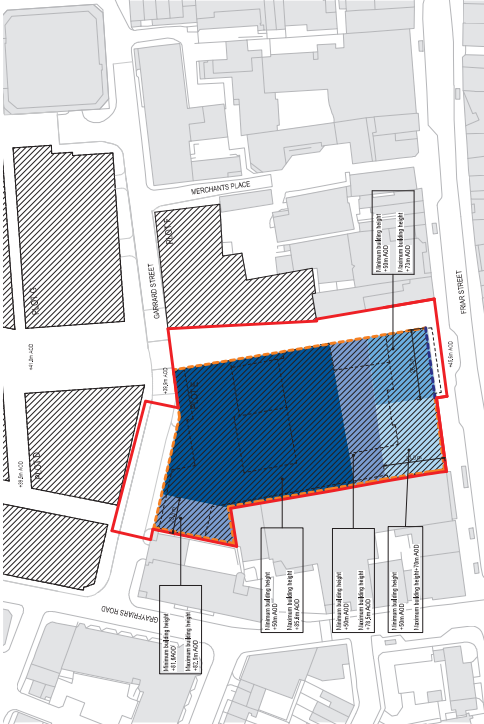
Extract from Proposed Amended Plot E Application Boundary

Comment:
• No change

Building Plots



Extract from Approved Plot E Plan 3: Building Plot Parameters

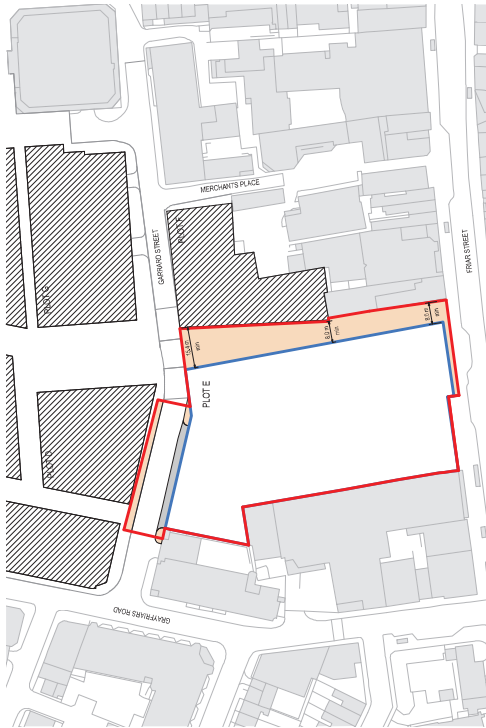


Extract from Proposed Amended Plot E Building Plot Parameters

Comments:
• Increase in the maximum height of the south western part of Plot E from 66.5m AOD to 70m AOD.
• The dark blue hatch within the northern part of Plot E has been extended slightly further south to allow for an increase in height of the middle arm of Plot E.

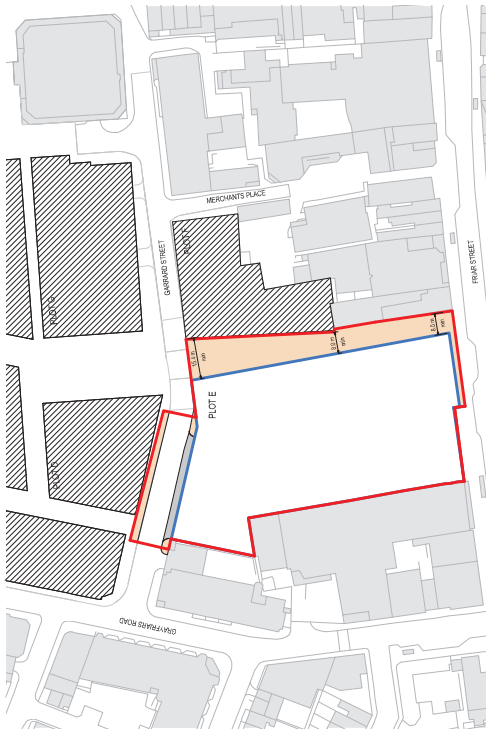
2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO
APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

APPROVED



Extract from Approved Plot E Plan 4: Public Realm

PROPOSED

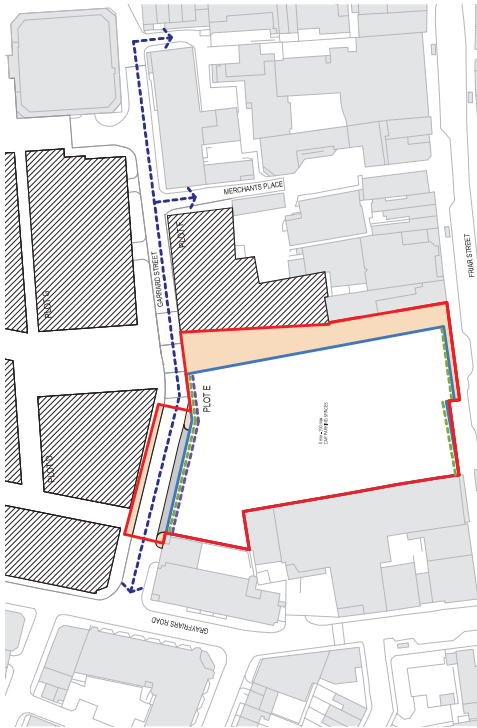


Extract from Proposed Amended Plot E Public Realm

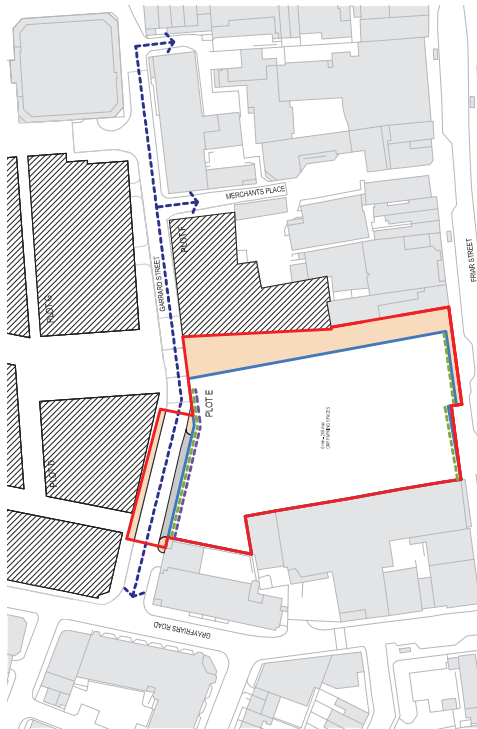
Comment:
• No change

Public Realm

Vehicle & Pedestrian
Access Routes



Extract from Approved Plot E Plan 5: Vehicle & Pedestrian Access Routes



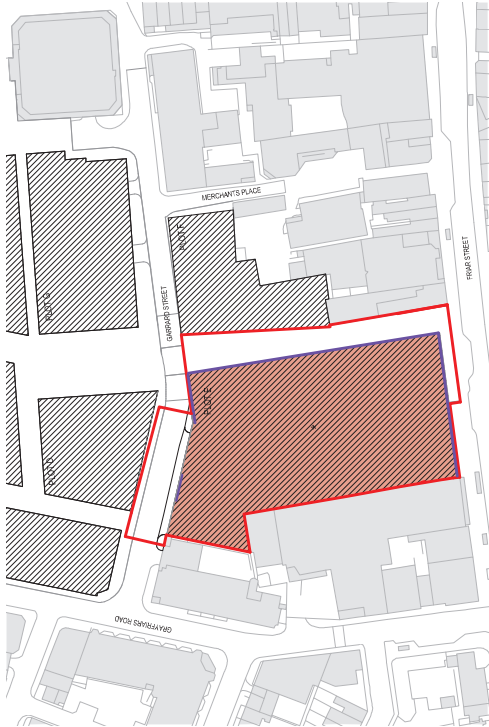
Extract from Proposed Amended Plot E Vehicle & Pedestrian Access Routes

Comment:
• Service access provided
from Friar Street

2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO
APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

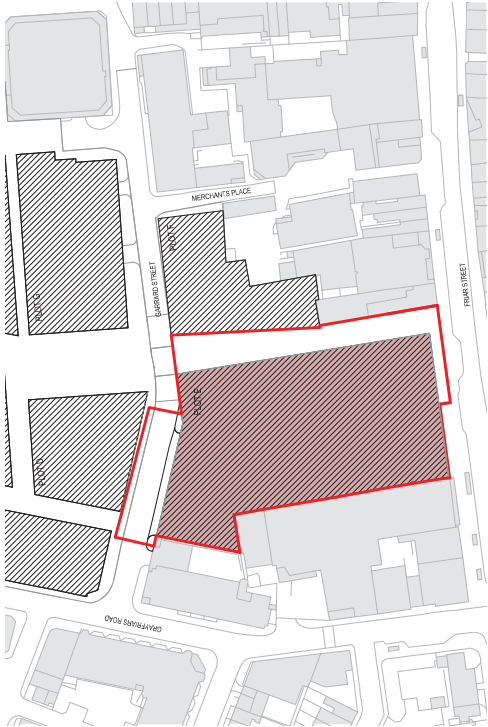
Ground Floor Uses

APPROVED



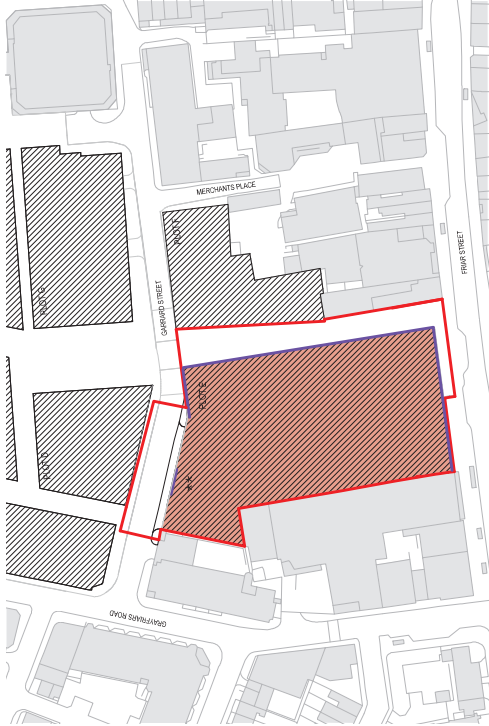
Extract from Approved Plot E Plan 6: Ground Floor Uses

Upper Floor Uses

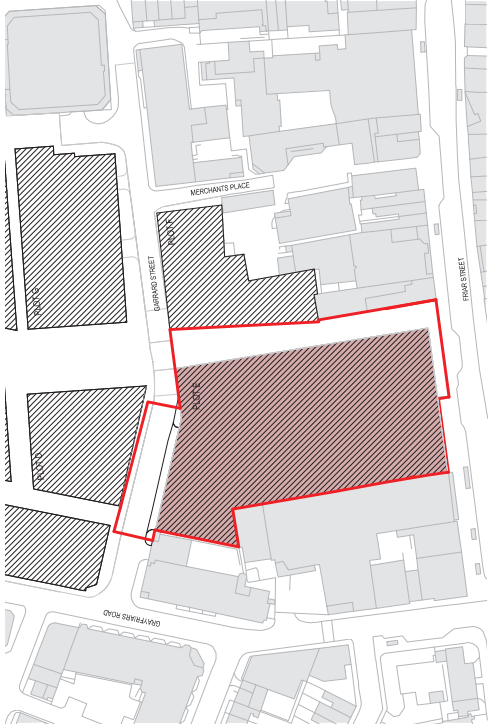


Extract from Approved Plot E Plan 7: Upper Floor Uses

PROPOSED



Extract from Proposed Amended Plot E Ground Floor Uses



Extract from Proposed Amended Plot E Upper Floor Uses

Comment:

- Predominantly no change
- ** Area of D1/D2 to Garrard Street

Comment:

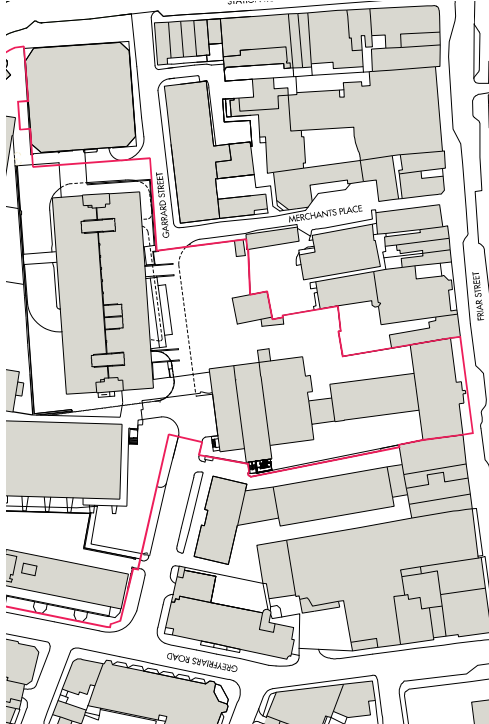
- No change

2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

2.4 REVISED & PROPOSED PARAMETER PLANS – PLOT F

Boundaries

APPROVED



Extract from Approved S73 Plan 1: Application Boundary

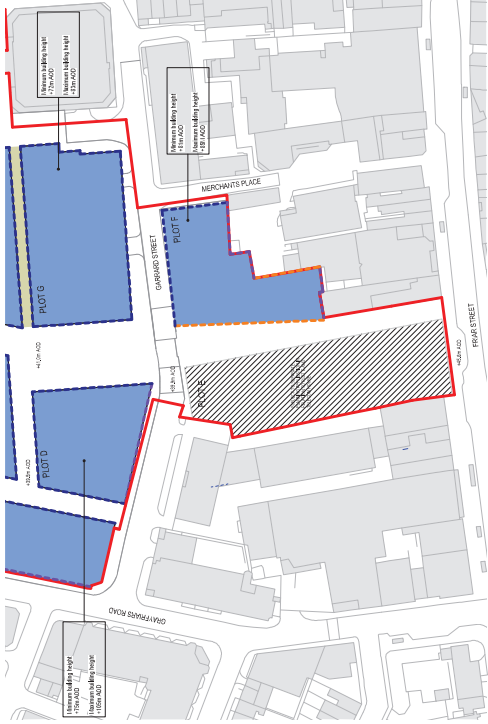
PROPOSED



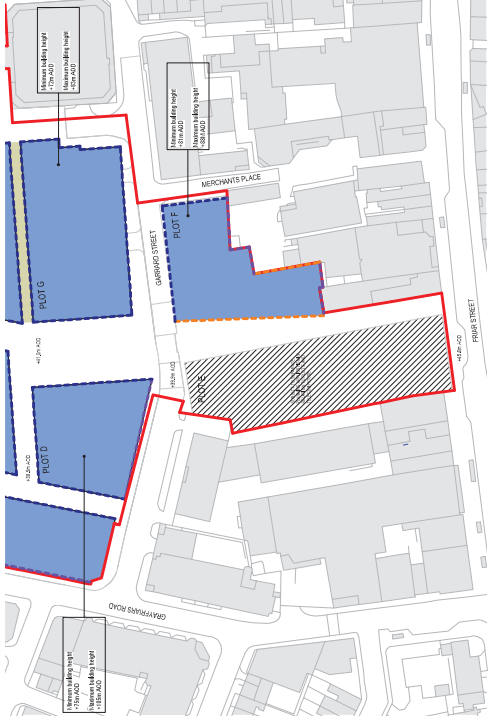
Extract from Proposed Amended S73 Application Boundary

Comment:
• No change

Building Plots



Extract from Approved S73 Plan 3: Building Plot

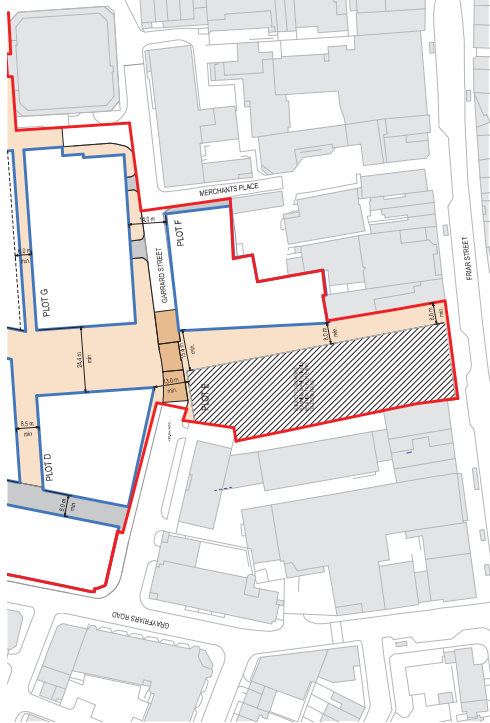


Extract from Proposed Amended S73 Building Plot Parameters

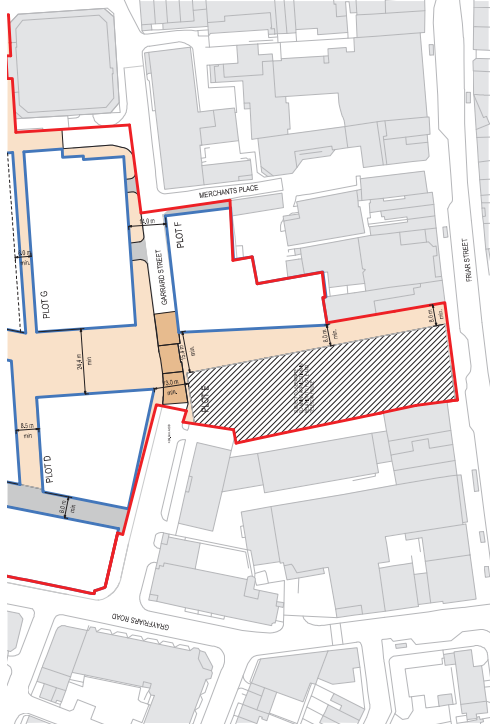
Comment:
• Changes parameter height from 85m AOD to 88m AOD

2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO
APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

APPROVED



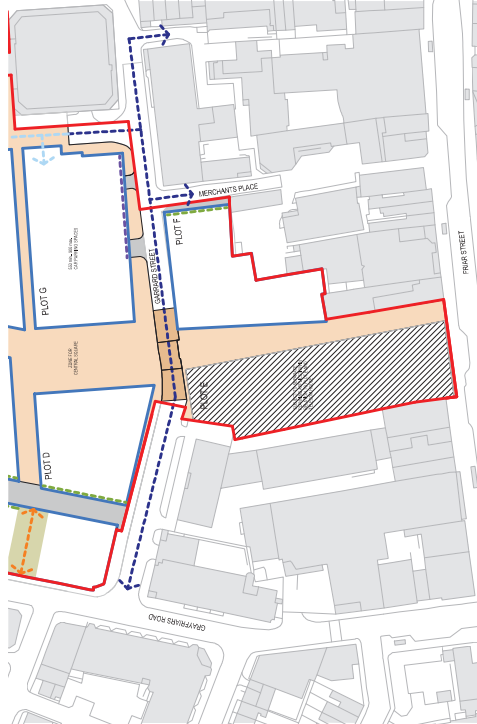
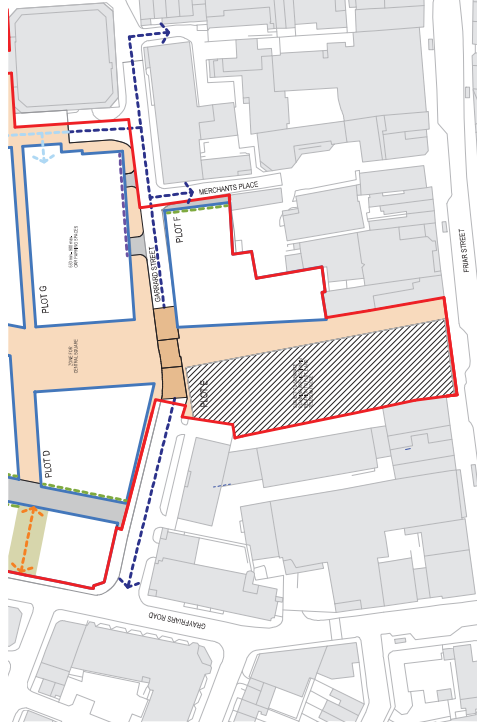
PROPOSED



Comment:
• No change

Public Realm

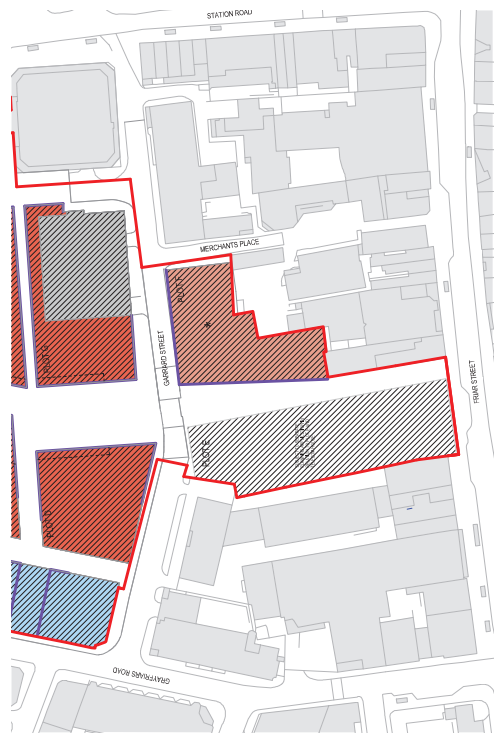
Vehicle & Pedestrian
Access Routes



Comment:
• No change

2.SCOPE OF REVISIONS TO
APPROVED OUTLINE PARAMETER PLANS

APPROVED



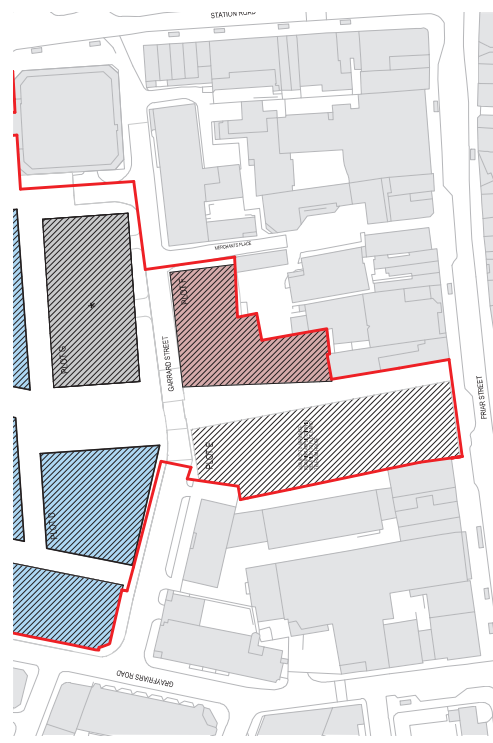
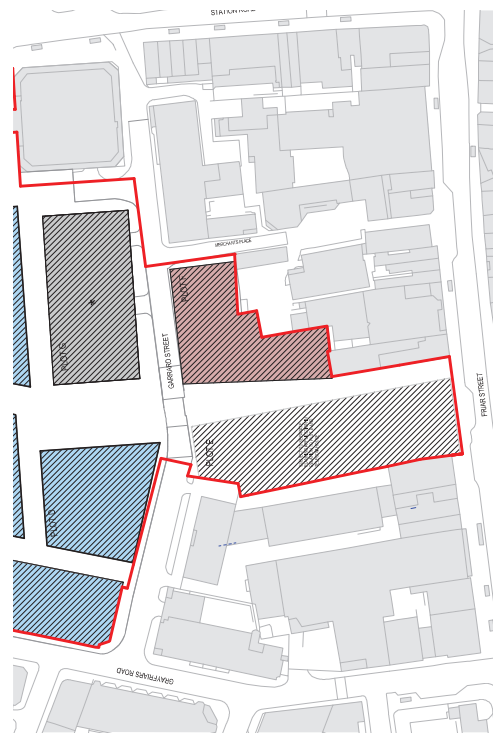
PROPOSED



- Legend:
- Predominantly Residential with Commercial/Leisure
 - Commercial, leisure use to lower ground, mezzanine and ground floor
 - Ground floor uses are now predominantly residential/retail
- Comment:
- Commercial, leisure use to lower ground, mezzanine and ground floor
 - Ground floor uses are now predominantly residential/retail

Ground Floor Uses

Upper Floor Uses



- Legend:
- Predominantly Residential with Commercial/Leisure
 - Office
 - Leisure use no longer at first floor
- Comment:
- Leisure use no longer at first floor

3

DESIGN STRATEGY

3.DESIGN STRATEGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following section demonstrates how the placemaking strategy, the site and building organisation and the architectural approach have been developed to ensure the scheme enhances the town centre and the experience of residents and the wider community. It will illustrate how the design relates to its context and the specific character of Reading.

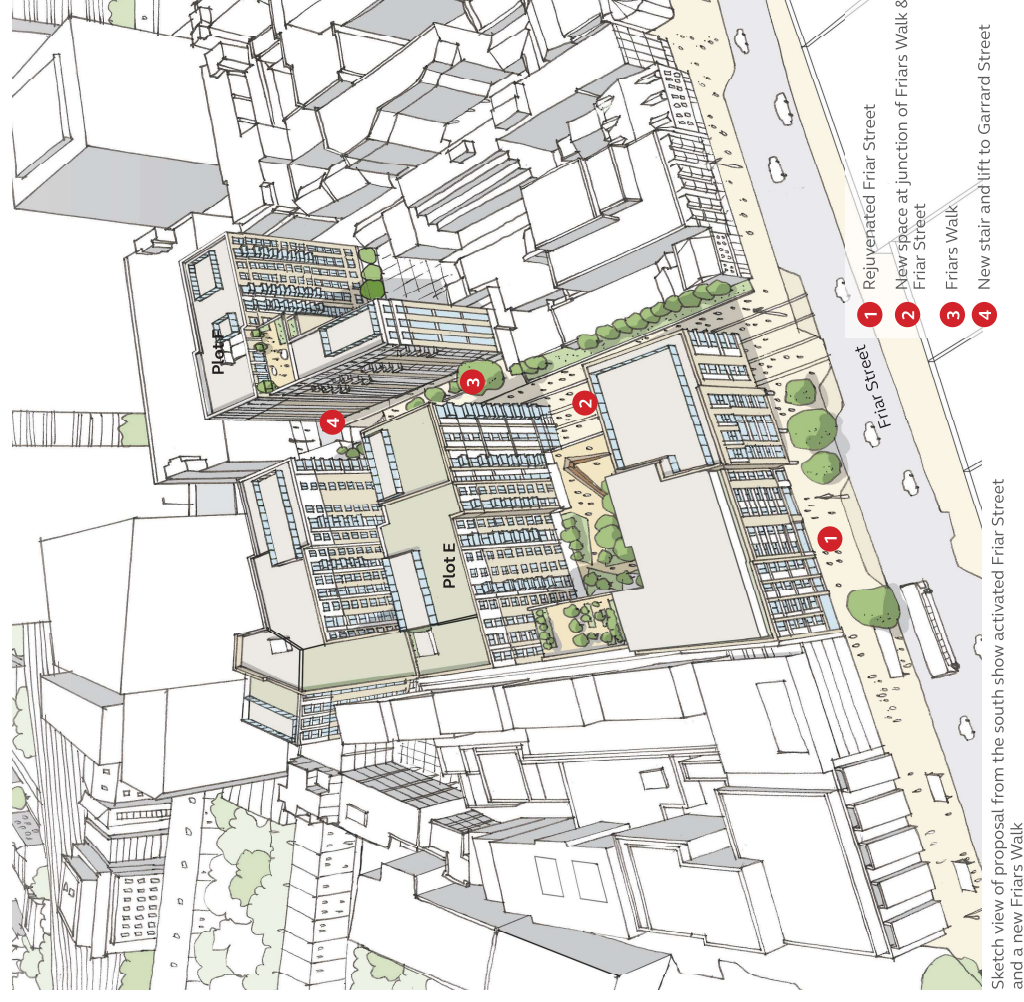
Great Placemaking, Urban Design & Resident Experience

The proposal will be designed to meet Reading's ambition to create a well-connected and attractive public realm that is integrated with surrounding districts, is attractive to residents, visitors and local communities and ensures that the scheme meets the Council's objectives of delivering a landmark development.

It will deliver a build-to-rent scheme that will entice residents to stay for the long term. It will have a high-quality public realm, great amenity spaces, an independent and curated retail offer and a sense of identity that engenders pride and loyalty and which supports the creation of a sustainable community.

By reconfiguring the massing of the illustrative proposal submitted with the outline application, the new Friars Walk will feel more open and less confined; it will feel safer and provide a more attractive setting for retail, café and residential amenity. It will improve the experience of all those who pass through the space and there will be more sunlight into it and more visibility of the sky. It will be more aligned with the urban grain of the centre of Reading, with a scaled response to Friar Street and Friars Walk, and it will be more relatable to the north-south routes that link the main east-west streets in the town centre. The scale of the new courtyards within the E-footprint will have a more residential scale appropriate to the scheme.

The development across the wider masterplan area will be laid out to provide pedestrian links from the train station, through the site north of Garrard Street and through Plots E & F and onto Friar Street. All of this aligns with the consented outline application. Plots E & F will have a high-quality public realm formed of a clear hierarchy of legible open spaces. These spaces will feel safe, well-lit and have attractive hard and soft landscaping. They will be addressed by architecture of the highest quality. The retail offer will give the development a distinct identity with independent outlets preferred to align with the needs of the new residents and the wider Station Hill community.



Sketch view of proposal from the south show activated Friar Street and a new Friars Walk