

STATION HILL NORTH READING

PLANNING STATEMENT

OCTOBER 2019



PLANNING STATEMENT

Station Hill North Site
Reading, RG1 1NF

December 2019

DP9 Ltd
100 Pall Mall
London
SW1Y 5NQ

Tel: 020 7004 1700
Fax: 020 7004 1790

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	3
2.0	THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA.....	7
3.0	PLANNING HISTORY	9
4.0	CONSULTATION.....	11
5.0	THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.....	13
6.0	PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT	18
7.0	PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT	21
8.0	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY AND PLANNING OBLIGATIONS	48
9.0	SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS.....	49

GLOSSARY:

Term to be used	Definition
Applicant	SH Reading Master LLP
The Site	Station Hill, Reading, RG1 1NF
The North Site	Phases 2 and 3
The South Site	Phase 1
Phase 1	Plots E and F consented under planning permission ref. 190441 and 190442
Phase 2	Forms part of the Hybrid (detailed) planning application and comprises Plot G and the landscaped podium
Phase 3	Forms part of the hybrid (outlined) planning application and comprises Plots A, B, C and D
The Original Outline Planning Permissions	The Station Hill Outline Planning Permission (ref. 130436 as amended by 151427) and The Telecom House Outline Planning Permission (ref. 151426)
RBC	Reading Borough Council

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This Planning Statement has been prepared by DP9 Ltd to accompany a hybrid planning application comprising both outline and detailed elements. This application is submitted on behalf of SH Reading Master LLP (hereafter referred to as the ‘Applicant’) for the redevelopment of the Station Hill North site, Reading, RG1 1NF site (hereafter referred to as the ‘Site’).

The Planning Application

- 1.2** This submission represents a significant step in the regeneration of this long-awaited Site. The proposals have been designed so that they align with the Phase 1 scheme which obtained Outline Planning Permission under ref. 190441 and 190442 on the 6th December 2019 and Reserved Matters approval under ref. 190465 and 190466 on the 10th December 2019.
- 1.3** The proposals include the potential to deliver up to an additional 750 residential units on the North Site, a hotel, elderly care facilities, office floorspace, new retail, leisure and community uses, designed by Callison RTKL (‘CRTKL’) architects and Gensler architects, along with a significant high quality public realm and landscaped area which runs north to south through the site connecting Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the entire Station Hill development.
- 1.4** The suite of applications which comprise this submission include:
- Hybrid Planning Application:
 - Phase 2 – Detailed Component – comprising Plot G and the landscaped podium.
 - Phase 3 – Outline Component with all matters reserved – comprising Plots A, B, C, D and the corresponding basement and podium structures.
- 1.5** It should also be noted that a section 96a application is being submitted pursuant to the Phase 1 planning permission (ref. 190441 and 190442) to incorporate the connecting bridge link between the phases 1 and 2. This application will ensure consistency across the Masterplan Site (Phases 1, 2 and 3).
- 1.6** The Section 96a application will be submitted separately to the hybrid planning application but it is anticipated that they will be considered together in determination by RBC. Please refer to the separate application submissions for further details.
- 1.7** This planning application seeks permission for the Proposed Development, as set out below:

"(1)The OUTLINE planning application for Phase 3 reserves all matters for four building Plots (A, B, C and D), on the site for a comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment comprising:

- Residential (Class C3);*
- Hotel (Class C1);*
- Residential Institutions (Class C2);*
- Business Use (Class B1);*
- Flexible Retail, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, non-residential institutions and assemble and leisure (Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2);*
- Podium, Basement, ancillary and plant space;*
- Formation of new pedestrian and vehicular access;*
- Means of access and circulation and car parking within the site; and*
- Provision of new public open space and landscaping.*

(2) FULL DETAILS for Phase 2 (Plot G), are submitted for the demolition of existing structures on the site, the erection of a podium to allow vehicular access and parking within the site, the provision of a new public open space, bridge link and landscaping and the erection of a building for office (Class B1) and flexible retail, non-residential institutions and assemble and leisure uses (Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2)."

- 1.8** The enclosed Development Specification sets out the proposed floorspace for the different land uses within the Proposed Development and also identifies a recommended description of development for the purposes of consultation.

Planning Application Documents

- 1.9** This document will provide an overview of the Site and justification for the Proposed Development.
- 1.10** In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England & Wales) Regulations 2017, as amended, the application is one which constitutes an 'EIA development'. Accordingly, the application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES). A formal EIA Scoping Request was submitted on behalf of the Applicant to RBC by letter dated 20th May 2019. A formal Scoping Opinion was issued by letter dated 24th July 2019 by RBC.
- 1.11** The Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the other supporting

information submitted in support of these applications, which comprises:

Item	Author
Hybrid Planning Application	
Cover letter	DP9
Application forms	DP9
CIL forms	DP9
Site location plan	CRTKL
Site plan	CRTKL
Parameter plans (Outline Component)	CRTKL
Application plans (Detailed Component)	Gensler
Design and Access Statement (to include open space and landscape statement and lighting assessment)	CRTKL / Gensler / LDA
Design code	CRTKL
Planning statement (including HoTs)	DP9
Development specification	DP9
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Watermans
Daylight & Sunlight Design Guide	GIA
Statement of community involvement	Redwood
Affordable housing statement (including viability assessment)	DS2
Transport Assessment (to include Waste Management Strategy, Delivery and Servicing Strategy)	PBA
Travel Plan	PBA
Energy statement	Hoare Lea
Sustainability statement	Hoare Lea
Superfast broadband strategy	Hoare Lea
Ventilation and extraction statement	Hoare Lea
Television and Radio Signal Survey & impact Assessment	GTech Surveys
Environmental impact assessment	Watermans
01 - Main Report	
02 - Figures	
03 - Appendices	
04 - Non-Technical Assessment	

Table 1.1 – Documents submitted as part of the hybrid planning application

Structure of this Statement

- 1.12** This document provides an overview of the Site and the Proposed Development and sets out a justification for the development. The Planning Statement takes the following form:

- **Section 2** describes the Site, the main features of the surrounding area.
- **Section 3** describes the planning history to the site.
- **Section 4** describes the consultation process undertaken by the applicant.
- **Section 5** describes the main components and features of the proposed development.
- **Section 6** outlines the updated planning policy.
- **Section 7** assesses the Proposed Development against the planning policies.
- **Section 8** provides a summary of the draft planning obligations and community infrastructure levy.
- **Section 8** concludes assessment of the Proposed Development.

1.13 Overall, the Site represents a significant opportunity to deliver development that optimises the potential of the Site, making a substantial contribution to the provision of new homes, assisted living for the elderly, hotel and office accommodation as well as providing high-quality flexible retail, community and leisure floorspace.

2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Station Hill

- 2.1 The Site extends to approximately 2.01 hectares. The Site is bound by Garrard Street to the south, Thames Tower to the east, the train station to the north and Greyfriars Road to the west. The site comprises Xafinity House, a six storey 1980s office building and the NCP Car Park. The remainder of the site has now been demolished, except for a temporary retail and events offering located on the northern boundary facing Reading Station.
- 2.2 Garrard Street runs east-west connecting Greyfriars Road to the west with Station Road to the east. Garrard Street provides access to an existing 10 storey NCP car park, whilst the eastern end of Garrard Street is currently used by taxis queuing for a temporary taxi rank at Station Road.
- 2.3 To the south of the site is Phase 1 which is bordered by Friar Street, which is lined by a combination of leisure, office and retail units, beyond which are the main shopping areas of Reading Town Centre, comprising Broad Street and the Oracle Shopping Centre.
- 2.4 Figure 1 below identifies the location of the phases:



Figure 1: Station Hill phases

Planning Designations

2.5 In terms of relevant planning designations, the Proposals Map identifies the following site allocations for the Site to which the planning policies within the associated development plan documents relate:

- Site identified for Development or Change;
- Air Quality Management Area;
- Major Opportunity Area;
- Area of Archaeological Potential;
- Boundary of Flood Zone 2;
- Central Core;
- Office Core;
- Primary Shopping Area;
- Proposed Active Frontages;
- Designated Cycle Routes;
- Classified Highway: and
- Tall Building Clusters.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

2.6 The Site is not located within a Conservation Area, but there are three listed structures in the surrounding area, all of which are Grade II classified. These include the Three Guineas Pub, the Edward VII statue on the Station Approach roundabout and Great Western House on Station Road located beyond Thames Tower to the south-east.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1** The Station Hill Masterplan Site has been subject to a number of planning applications over its lifetime. The most relevant of which are noted below.
- 3.2** Station Hill Outline Planning Permission ref 130436, was granted by RBC on 9th January 2015 for a mixed use redevelopment of the Site through the demolition and alteration of existing buildings and erection of new buildings and structures to provide office (Use Class B1), a range of town centre uses including retail and related uses (Use Class A1-A5) leisure (Use Class D2) and residential units, associated infrastructure, public realm works and ancillary development. This permission reserved all matters.
- 3.3** Applications for Reserved Matters in respect of Plot B (ref. 151543) was approved by the RBC on 2nd August 2016 for a 19-storey building providing office and retail floorspace.
- 3.4** Telecom House (Plot E) Outline Planning Permission ref. 151426 was granted by RBC on 26th July 2016 for a mixed use redevelopment of Plot E of the Site and neighbouring Telecom House site to comprise the demolition of existing buildings and erection of new buildings / structures to provide residential units, a range of town centre uses including retail and related uses (Use Class A1 – A5), associate infrastructure, public realm and ancillary development.
- 3.5** In tandem with the Telcom House Outline Planning Permission, an application (ref. 1514247) under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) was submitted to Outline Planning Permission ref. 130436 to vary the Station Hill Outline to ensure that both permissions could co-exist in planning and legal terms.
- 3.6** This is illustrated in Figure 2 below with the extant Station Hill Outline (as amend by the s.73) in green, whilst the Telecom House (Plot E) is shown in red.

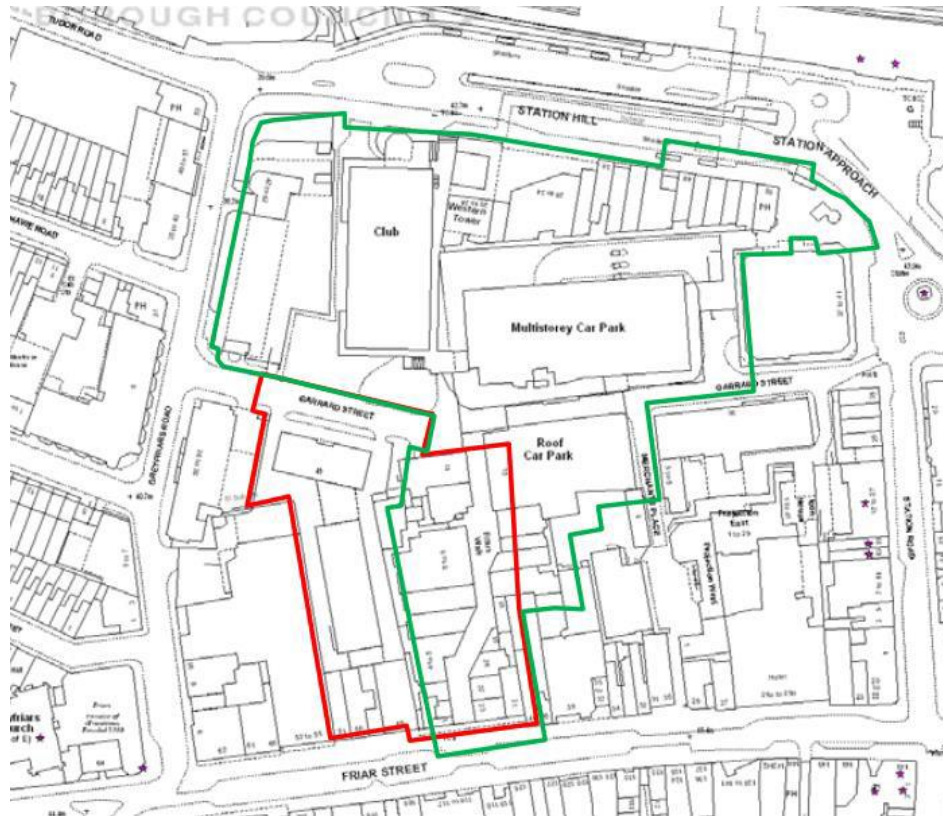


Figure 2: Boundary Plans

- 3.7** Prior approval applications were consented by RBC for the demolition of the existing NCP Car Park and Friars Walk Shopping Centre / Telecom House on 11th February 2019 (ref. 182168 and 182171).
- 3.8** Most recently, two Section 73 planning permissions (ref. 190441 and 190442) and reserved matters applications (ref. 190465 and 190466) have been approved by RBC for amendments to the outline planning permissions to deliver 538 Build to Rent residential units on the South Site (Phase 1). The Proposed Development has been designed to connect seamlessly with the Phase 1 development.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1** A series of pre-application meetings have been held with RBC Planning, Design, Environmental and Highways officers. Discussions commenced in early-2019 and have been ongoing for the duration of the pre-application period.
- 4.2** In addition, the Applicant attended a Design South East meeting on 23 July 2019. The feedback received during the pre-application process has influenced the overarching design approach.
- 4.3** Public consultation has been carried out in accordance with national and regional policies and confirms with the requirements of RBC's current Statement of Community Involvement.
- 4.4** As set out in the Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Redwood Consulting, the key aims of the pre-application stage of public consultation, were:
- To inform local residents, businesses, councillors and other stakeholders about the redevelopment aspirations for the site;
 - To gain a full understanding of local views of the proposals, engage with the local and wider community throughout the design development stage, and use these views to identify concerns and opportunities, and where possible inform the evolving final proposals; and
 - To demonstrate how the Applicant has responded to the issues raised by the community and stakeholders and identify how changes have been made to the proposals to address them.
- 4.5** To ensure the greatest level of community engagement the Applicant conducted a public exhibition at the Biscuit Tin on-site which took place in June 2019 over three days. It introduced the principles of the proposals in respect of layout, massing, scale and design.
- 4.6** The exhibition was publicised through information leaflets, invitation letters and emails which were sent to local residents, stakeholder and local ward councillors. A dedicated project website was also created to aid in the distribution of information and further engagement with the community.
- 4.7** A total of 122 attendees were recorded and 32 provided written feedback. Feedback was, on the whole, positive and in summary identified the following key issues as being important to those attending:
- Inclusion of public and community events;
 - Inclusion of public open space;
 - Support for accommodating cyclists; and

- Provision of amenities for the community.

4.8 Further details and analysis are contained within the accompanying Statement of Community Involvement.

5.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1** This section details what is being applied for in the planning applications for the Proposed Development. This Section should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement, which further describes the principal components of the Proposed Development, its design approach and relation with the context and townscape.

Hybrid Planning Applications

- 5.2** The planning application is submitted in outline, with a detailed element (Phase 2) and part submitted in outline (Phase 3) with all matters reserved for approval at a later stage. As shown on the accompanying application plans, the Site is divided into a number of Plots within which buildings will be developed.
- 5.3** Detailed plans (with no matters reserved) are submitted for Plot G (also referred to as ‘One Station Hill’) and the Phase 2 landscaped podium and are hereafter referred to as the Detailed Component of the application.
- 5.4** Plot A, B, C and D and the Phase 3 landscaped podium are submitted with all matters reserved and are hereafter referred to as the Outline Component of the application.
- 5.5** The Outline Component of the planning application will seek approval, at this stage for the amount and use of development – the maximum and minimum amount of development proposed for each land use and development plot, as shown on the submitted parameter plans.
- 5.6** For the Outline Component, all matters are reserved for future approval. However, a sufficient level of information has been provided to enable RBC to assess the Proposed Development. Three illustrative development options have been developed which have different quantum of development, massing and comprise a range of different land uses. These are summarised below:
- **Option 1:** This option provides a balanced offer of commercial office space and residential offer. The commercial office allows for a range of floorplate sizes to come forward.
 - **Option 2:** This option reflects an increased demand for residential space with a corresponding reduction in commercial office space.
 - **Option 3:** This option reflects an increase in the mix of uses across the site with a hotel function included along with residential and commercial office space.
-

5.7 These have been prepared to aid RBC in the assessment of the application to provide an indication of how development, within the control of the Parameter Plans, Design Code and Development Specification, could come forward on the Site. It should however be noted that these are illustrative examples only and do not prejudice alternative forms of development coming forward provided that they accord with the controls set out within the application. The illustrative options provide the following information:

- Means of Access – an indication of areas for access into the site for vehicles;
- cycles and pedestrians and areas within the site where circulation will occur;
- Scale parameters – an indication of the upper and lower limits of buildings in terms of the height, width and length of each building within the development;
- Appearance - With the exception of the Detailed Component, the applications do not seek approval, at this stage, for the detailed design or external appearance of the buildings;
- Indicative Layout - an indicative layout showing building plots; and
- Landscaping – an indication of the potential landscaping within the site.

5.8 The extent of Proposed Development that is proposed to be fixed as part of the application is defined in the Development Specification and shown on the Parameter Plans and Design Code.

5.9 A sitewide Design Code has been submitted with the application for approval. It includes additional detail to the Parameter Plans in relation to the layout of Plots, the appearance of buildings and landscape. RBC will be able to attach conditions to the principles established within these guidelines, which will be applied to the Reserved Matters applications for the Outline Component.

5.10 A sitewide Design and Access Statement along with other supporting documents is also submitted in support of the Proposed Development. They explain the context within which design details would come forward later, for approval, as Reserved Matters application (in respect of the Outline Component).

Total Proposed Floorspace

5.11 The total maximum floorspace proposed for the Site is 173,000sqm (GEA).

-
- 5.12** The site is subdivided into Plots to define the disposition of the Proposed Development. The maximum and minimum total floorspace figures for which planning permission is sought for each land use is identified in the Development Specification.
- 5.13** The aggregate total of the maximum floorspace figures for all categories of land use exceeds the overall total floorspace applied for (173,000 sqm GEA). The application seeks permission for up to the maximum floorspace specified for each category of land use, to provide important flexibility over the lifetime of the delivery of the Proposed Development, within the mix of floorspace, the overall total floorspace will not be exceeded.

Residential (Use Class C3)

- 5.14** The application seeks permission for a maximum level of residential floorspace of 65,000 sqm (GEA) across the site. Plots A, B and D have the potential to include Class C3 floorspace. These Plots are entirely located within the Outline Component.
- 5.15** The application proposes a range of building types. This could accommodate up to a maximum of 750 residential units depending on the precise mix of unit sizes. A minimum of 0 units would be provided under the minimum development scenario.
- 5.16** The Development Specification provides a proposed mix of units for the Proposed Development as a whole. The proportion of each unit type may change slightly, allowing for different types of residential to come forward (Build to Rent / private sale), possible changes in market demand and housing need over the period of construction of the scheme.

Affordable Housing

- 5.17** The affordable housing offer will be a function of development viability and established accordingly during the course of the planning application being determined. Any affordable housing that could be delivered on the Site would come forward within the Outline Component within Phase 3.

Residential Institutions (Use Class C2)

- 5.18** The application seeks permission for a maximum level of residential institution floorspace of 26,000 sqm (GEA) and a minimum of 0 sqm (GEA) across the Site. Plots A, B and D have the potential to include Class C2 floorspace (assisted living for the elderly). These Plots are entirely located within the Outline Component.
-

- 5.19** The Proposed Development identifies a maximum of 250 units depending on the precise mix of unit sizes and a minimum of 0 units.

Hotel (Use Class C1)

- 5.20** The application seeks permission for a maximum level of hotel floorspace of 26,000 sqm (GEA) and a minimum of 0 sqm (GEA) across the site. Plots A, B and D have the potential to include Class C1 floorspace. These Plots are entirely located within the Outline Component.

- 5.21** The Proposed Development identifies a maximum of 450 room and a minimum of 0 rooms.

Office (Use Class B1)

- 5.22** The Outline Component seeks permission for a maximum of 86,500 sqm (GEA) of B1 floorspace and a minimum of 28,000 sqm (GEA). Plot C has the potential to be 100% Class B1 use with an element of retail, community, assembly and leisure at podium and lower floors. Plots A, B and D have the potential to include elements of Class B1 floorspace.

- 5.23** The Detailed Component comprises 33,424 sqm (GEA) of Class B1 office floorspace.

Flexible Retail, Non-residential Institutions, Office, Assembly and Leisure Floorspace (Use Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2)

- 5.24** The application seeks permission for a maximum of 4,500 sqm (GEA) of Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 floorspace and a minimum of 500 sqm (GEA).

- 5.25** The proposed retail floorspace will be distributed across a number of Building Plots. Retail floorspace has the potential to come forward within each Plot for the Detailed and Outline Components.

- 5.26** The Detailed Component comprises 1,846 sqm (GEA) of Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 floorspace.

Car and cycle Parking

- 5.27** The overall development proposes, and so permission is sought for, a maximum of 835 car parking spaces. The Detailed Component will deliver 122 car parking

space. The Outline Component has the ability to deliver up to 713 car parking spaces within the podium and basement. Details of which will come forward within future reserved matters applications.

- 5.28** The overall development proposes, and so permission is sought for, a maximum of 875 cycle parking spaces. The Detailed Component will deliver 300 cycle spaces. The Outline Component has the ability to deliver up to 575 cycle spaces. Details of which will come forward within future reserved matters applications.

Podium and Basement

- 5.29** The Proposed Development will include a podium and basement area of up to 23,000 sqm (GEA). This floorspace would be used for plant, services and equipment, storage, lobby and entrance space for the buildings, parking and energy centres, except where stated in the application.

Public Realm and Open Space

- 5.30** The Proposed Development will provide significant area of new public realm and landscape. These areas comprise the following:

- **Station Hill Plaza** (located between Plots D and G)
- **Station Hill Square / Pocket Park** (located between Plot G and Reading train station)
- **The Rest** (located between Plot G and Thames Tower)
- **Station Hill Gardens** (located between Plots A and C)

- 5.31** In total, the Proposed Development comprises 10,620 sqm of new public realm and landscape.

Interim Uses

- 5.32** It is envisaged that meanwhile uses will be developed along the phasing boundary between Phases 2 and 3 at podium level to ensure this frontage is activated during any interim period, until such time as Phase 3 is developed. In addition, an interim vehicular access ramp for the podium car park and pedestrian stair/lift will be constructed within the Phase 3 site to allow access to all levels of the podium until such time as Phase 3 is developed. These interim scenarios are set out within the Design and Access Statement, the Environmental Statement and the drawings.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1** The purpose of this Section is to identify the key national and local planning policy and guidance relevant to the determination of the planning application against which the proposals have been considered during design development. An analysis of the key policies and tests relating to the proposed development is included below.

National Planning Policy

- 6.2** National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was updated on 19 February 2019 and again on the 19th June 2019. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11), with three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental. These are to be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies within the Framework.
- 6.3** This means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date, granting planning permission unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of development, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate otherwise.
- 6.4** The NPPG was published in March 2014 and updated in July 2018 and sits alongside the NPPF. The NPPG adds further context to the NPPF and should both be read together.
- 6.5** The NPPF sets out key policies on delivering sustainable development, which include:
- Chapter 5 (Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes) notes the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes. It goes on to emphasise the importance of a sufficient amount and variety of land that can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
 - Chapter 6 (Building a Strong, Competitive Economy) notes that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
 - Chapter 8 (Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities) sets out the importance of access to high quality open spaces, opportunities for sport and recreation and ensuring spaces are safe and accessible, so that crime

and disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.

- Chapter 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) requires transport policies to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes with the appropriate Transport Assessment or Transport Statement provided. Decisions must take account of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up, depending on the nature and location of development and whether improvements can cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development.
- Chapter 10 (Supporting High Quality Communication) identifies that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being.
- Chapter 11 (Making Effective Use of Land) notes that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- Chapter 12 (Achieving well Design Places) states that the creation of high quality buildings and place is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps makes development acceptable to communities.
- Chapter 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change) outlines the key role that planning has in helping to shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is described as central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
- Chapter 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) places great emphasis on enhancing and protecting the natural environment; minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible and preventing new development from contributing or being put at unacceptable risk from soil, air, water and noise pollution by remediating and mitigating where appropriate. This policy encourages the effective reuse of brownfield land provided that it is not of high environmental value.
- The NPPF outlines that LPA's should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. The right information is crucial to good decision-taking, particularly where formal

assessments such as EIAs are required. This includes participation of other consenting bodies to enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues.

The Development Plan

- 6.6** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that any determination under the Planning Acts should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.7** The Development Plan for the Site comprises the following:
- Reading Local Plan (November 2019); and
 - Reading Central Area Action Plan (January 2009).
- 6.8** There are also a number of supplementary guidance documents published by Reading Borough Council which have been taken into account during the course of design development and the preparation of the planning applications. Insofar as they may be considered relevant to this application is:
- The Reading Tall Building Strategy (January 2008);
 - Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011);
 - Station Hill South Planning and Urban Designs Brief (2007); and
 - Reading Station Area Framework (2015).

7.0 PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

7.1 This Section comprises our assessment of the Proposed Development against relevant planning policy and how the Proposed Development complies with planning policy in respect of the following:

- Principle of Development
- Proposed Land Uses
 - Office Use (Class B1)
 - Residential Use (Class C3)
 - Residential Institutions (Class C2)
 - Retail, Office, Non-residential Institutions and Assembly & Leisure (Class A1-A5, B1, D1, D2)
 - Hotel (Class C1)
- Public Realm and Landscaping
- Design
- Townscape and Visual Impact
- Transport
- Environmental Considerations
- Energy and Sustainability

Principle of Development

7.2 The Site is of strategic importance to Reading and as such it is expected to deliver significant development and play an important role in the ongoing regeneration of this part of the Town.

7.3 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.

7.4 Policy CR11 of the Local Plan states that development in this area will (our underlining):

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.

7.5 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.

7.6 The Proposed Development seeks to address the requirements set out within draft Policy CR11 by delivering a truly mixed-use development that includes residential (up to 750 dwellings on the North Site alone, with 538 dwelling already approved on the South Site), commercial floorspace, including hotel and office, active uses at ground and street level, north to south pedestrian links through the Site, dedicated cycle routes and the provision of substantial areas of open space.

7.7 The regeneration of the Site for a high density, mixed use scheme is entirely consistent with all levels of planning policy, namely:

- The NPPF promotes mixed use development on previously developed land.
- The RBC Development Plan support proposals that optimise density, increase housing supply and contribute to employment and housing targets within this area.
- The Site has consistently and continues to be specifically identified as a major development opportunity within RBC Development Plan documents.

7.8 The thrust of the planning policies seeks the provision of residential accommodation and a mix of non-residential uses providing a range of employment led opportunities, significant public realm and landscaping, set within a high-quality designed masterplan.

7.9 The principle for the redevelopment of the Site for a high-density mixed-use scheme therefore fully complies with the objectives of the NPPF and RBC Policy CR11 which establish the suitability of the Site for a mixed-use development.

7.10 The Proposed Development will regenerate a central Reading site that has remained partly vacant and underutilised for many years to provide a range of site-specific regeneration benefits and also benefits to the wider surrounding area, and will:

- Significantly contribute to local regeneration, including local employment opportunities;
- Create new jobs through both the construction and operational phases;
- Have the ability to increase the supply of high-quality housing;
- Facilitate the development of affordable housing in the borough;
- Improve the provision of local retail and community facilities;
- Improve and enhance public realm, particularly open space in the area, providing new opportunities for recreation, community interaction and enjoyment;
- Increase permeability of the site, facilitating improved pedestrian movement and access within the local area;
- Create active and engaging street frontages which improve the local environment and streetscape, and encourage a feeling of safety, particularly at night; and
- Provide a mix of uses to facilitate the delivery of this strategic site, resulting in local benefits including job creation and a series of new public green spaces.

Proposed Land Uses

Residential (Class C3)

7.11 The NPPF sets out that Local Planning Authorities should:

- Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;
- Promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained, and available sites could be used more effectively;
- Use their evidence base to ensure the Local Plan meets the needs for market and affordable housing;
- Identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites that are sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing. These are to have a recommended buffer of:
 - 5% to allow choice and competition in the market place;
 - 10% where the local planning authority wishes to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable sites through an annual position statement or recently adopted plan; or
 - 20% where there has been significant under delivery.

7.12 The NPPF requires that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

7.13 Local Plan Policy H1 states that provision will be made for at least an additional 15,433 homes (averaging 671 homes per annum) in Reading Borough for the period 2013 – 2036. Local Plan Policy C11a identifies the Site as a strategic site that has the ability to deliver 380-570 dwellings. The supporting text to the policy notes that Reading is very tightly defined urban area and provision for new housing therefore involves a heavy reliance on previously developed land, and the supply of such sites constrained the amount of housing that can be delivered in the Borough.

7.14 Local Plan Policy H4 states that planning permission will be granted for development of self-contained, private rented homes which:

- Are secured in single ownership providing solely for the rental

market for a minimum 30 year term with provision for clawback of affordable housing contributions should the covenant not be met; and

- Provide tenancies for private renters for a minimum of three years with a six month break clause in the tenant's favour and structured and limited in-tenancy rent increases agreed in advance; and
- Provide a high standard of professional on-site management and control of the accommodation; and
- Meet Reading Borough Council's Rent with Confidence Standards; and
- Provide for a mix of unit sizes in accordance with Policy H2 or CR6; and
- Meet the standards of design set out in Policy H5; and
- Provide 30% on-site affordable housing, either in accordance with Policy H3 and any relevant Supplementary Planning Document; or in the form of Affordable Private Rent Housing as defined and set out in a relevant Supplementary Planning Document.

7.15 The Proposed Development seeks permission for the ability to provide up to 750 new dwellings as part of the outline element of the scheme. These can be delivered as private units for sale or build to rent, similar to what is being delivered on the South Site. The outline parameter plans identify that these units can be delivered in Plots A, B and/or D.

7.16 The Proposed Development will provide a significant quantum of much needed residential accommodation to meet the needs of the local area. The vision for the scheme is to create a new urban community which reflects the local character of the area and the community that lives within in.

7.17 The Proposed Development differs from the previously consented schemes on Station Hill in the fact that it seeks to introduce residential accommodation into the North Site. This was previously only achievable in the South Site. The introduction of residential aligns with RBC's Local Plan objectives to deliver additional housing in Reading, to meet their current and future housing need.

7.18 The provision of a significant quantum of residential development therefore accords with planning policy at all levels including Local Plan CR11 and H1.

Residential Mix

7.19 Local Plan Policy H2 states that where possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing in particular for family homes of three or more bedrooms.

7.20 Reading Area Action Plan Policy RC9 and Draft Local Plan Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) state that all proposals for residential development within

the central area will be required to contribute towards a mix of different sized units within the development. This will be measured by the number of bedrooms provided within individual units. Ideally, a mixture of one, two and three bedroom units should be provided. As a guide, in developments of 15 dwellings or more, a maximum of 40% of the units should be 1 bed/studios, and a minimum of 5% of units should be at least three bed, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable.

- 7.21** The residential mix for the Proposed Development will be based on the following which aligns with the approved mix for Phase 1 (South Site) and broadly aligns with Policy DR6. The proposed mix is reflective of the site's central location.

	Studio	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3+ bedroom
Overall	10%	46%	42%	2%

- 7.22** The precise mix of units within the Outline Component will be determined at Reserved Matters application stage and will conform with the mix ranges set out in the table in the Development Specification. The proposed mix provides sufficient flexibility to respond to changing market conditions over the period of construction of the Site.

Affordable Housing

- 7.23** The affordable housing offer will be a function of development viability and established accordingly during the course of the planning application being determined.

Residential Density

- 7.24** Local Plan Policy H2 (Density and Housing Mix) notes that appropriate residential densities will be informed by a number of factors including: accessibility, effective use of land and the character and mix of uses in the area. An indicative density for the Town Centre as set out in Policy H2 is above 100 dwellings per ha.

- 7.25** The scheme proposes a total of up to 750 dwellings, resulting in a potential residential density of 373 dwellings/ha.

- 7.26** It is considered that the proposed scheme optimizes the development potential of previously developed site in an area of Reading where land is at a premium, whilst delivering a scheme of exceptional architectural quality, providing up to 750 much needed residential units towards the Boroughs housing stock. As such, the scheme is considered acceptable in density terms.

Residential Standards

- 7.27** The Proposed Development has been designed to deliver a high-quality

residential environment. Notwithstanding the residential element of the scheme is within the Outline Component, a thorough analysis of the quality of the residential dwellings is included in the Design Code and are discussed below.

7.28 Local Plan Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) states that new building housing should be built to the following standards:

- All new build housing outside the Central Area as defined on the Proposals Map will comply with the nationally-described space standard.
- All new build housing will be built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations.
- All major new-build residential development should be designed to achieve zero carbon homes;
- All other new build housing will achieve at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in the 2013 Building Regulations.
- All new build housing will be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations where it is viable, unless it is built in line with M4(3) (see below).
- On developments of 20 or more new build dwellings, at least 5% of dwellings will be wheelchair user dwellings in line with M4(3) of the Building Regulations.

7.29 Local Plan Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) indicates that in the past the Council has sought the following minimum provisions for private or communal outdoor space for each type of accommodation, and they provide a useful guide for proposals:

- For Flats outside Central Reading:
 - 1 and 2 bedrooms: 25 sqm per flat;
 - or more bedrooms 40 sqm per flat
- Development in central Reading will not always be expected to comply with standards set above. Open space is nonetheless required, unless exceptional circumstances prevail, to accommodate modest sitting out areas and clothes drying facilities.

7.30 As set out in the Design and Access Statement, the Proposed Development will seek to comply with the abovementioned policy requirements.

7.31 As set out in the Design Code, the Outline Component will comply with design standards set out in the RBC Development Plan, which will come forward at Reserved Matters stage.

7.32 An Access Statement is enclosed in the DAS and states that 90% of residential units will be designed to Approved Document Part M, M4(2) Category 2. Additionally, 10% of residential units will be spatially designed to Approved Document Part M, M4(3a) Category 3. Split-level and duplex apartments are not user-friendly for people with mobility difficulties, and therefore will not be designated for use as wheelchair adaptable units. The exact location of wheelchair adaptable units will be determined at the detailed stage. Designated wheelchair accessible residential units will be located so as to provide a variety of views and experiences.

7.33 It is therefore considered that the scheme provides an excellent standard of residential accommodation for all tenures, in accordance with relevant national and local standards.

Assisted Living for the Elderly (Class C2)

7.34 Local Plan Policy H6 states that provision will be made for at least an additional 253 residential care bedspaces for elderly people between 2013 and 2036, in addition to the overall housing need. Other specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will address the identified needs, which are primarily for accommodation that enables occupants to live as independently as possible, particularly for older people and people with physical disabilities.

7.35 The Policy notes that development for specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will fulfil the following criteria:

- Developments will, where possible, locate accommodation close to, or incorporate, relevant community facilities, such as healthcare services, or day care for elderly people;
- Where development would result in a loss of general housing, it must meet identified needs in the most up-to-date Housing Strategy and be able to accommodate at least an equivalent number of people;
- Larger developments will include adequate provision for ambulance access;
- Development will incorporate areas of green space, which are particularly important for many groups of vulnerable people;
- Developments within residential areas will be designed to respect the residential character of their surroundings; and
- Where a development requires a new physical link between buildings and where the gaps between buildings form part of the character of a street, the need for a linkage must be clearly demonstrated, and must avoid negative impacts on the character of the street.

7.36 The Policy goes on to note that development catering for people with limited mobility will fulfil the following criteria:

- Developments should be located within 400 metres of an identified district or local centre and a bus stop on a strategic bus route; and
- Development should include secure storage for mobility scooters.

7.37 The Proposed Development seek to provide up to 250 assisted living units for the elderly which will aim to meet Readings target of an additional 253 residential care bedspaces for elderly people between 2013 and 2036.

7.38 The Site is located within Reading Central Area which is a suitable location for assisted living units as it is located close to shops, services and transport links. The development itself will also provide a substantial retail offer, services and areas of open space and public realm for residents to enjoy.

7.39 It is clear that the proposed Class C2 offer is inherently appropriate for this established town centre location in accordance with Local Plan Policy H6.

Office Use (Class B1)

7.40 Local Plan Policy EM1 (Provision of Employment Development) notes that provision will be made for a net increase of 53,000-112,000 sqm of office floorspace and 148,000 sqm of industrial and/or warehouse space in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036.

7.41 Development that would exceed the levels of employment development set out in this policy, after existing permissions and allocations are accounted for, will need to either:

(a) demonstrate that it will not result in additional need for local housing; or

(b) mitigate its impacts on the need for local housing, either through the provision of additional residential or through contributions to affordable housing.

7.42 Local Plan Policy EM2 (Location of New Employment Development) states that major office development will take place in the centre of Reading and along the A33 corridor. Office development will also take place in the other centres in the network set out in Policy RL1, but should be of an appropriate scale to those centres.

7.43 Local Plan Policy RL1 (Network and Hierarchy of Centres) identifies Reading as a Regional Centre. The policy notes that central Reading will see the greatest levels of development and change.

7.44 The Proposed Development seeks to significantly increase the employment offer onsite in respect of appearance, efficiency and current market needs. It seeks to provide a maximum of up to 119,924 sqm (GEA) of Office (Class B1) accommodation across the Site (Phases 2 and 3), therefore meeting the requirements of Policy EM2 and RL1.

7.45 The Detailed Component will deliver 33,424 sqm (GEA) of Office (B1)

accommodation within Phase 2 which is anticipated to be delivered by 2023.

- 7.46** The Site is located within the Reading Office Core and the Reading Central Core which are identified under Policy RL1 as the key location for office development within Reading. The Site is also identified as an allocated site under Policy CR11 to deliver between 80,000 sqm – 100,000 sqm of office, retail and leisure floorspace. The Proposed Development has been designed to achieve this quantum of development.
- 7.47** The DAS provides an illustrative scheme for Plot C that has been designed to allow maximum flexibility for a range of occupiers. It is envisaged that Plot C will be the tallest building element on the North Site and will mirror the characteristics of Plot G which includes:
- To incorporate co-working, SME and incubator space;
 - Floor plates to be as open and flexible as possible.
 - Generous floor to ceiling heights allows natural daylight to penetrate the floor plate.
 - A relationship in design and materiality with Plot G which mark the entrance to Reading and the site from the Station.
 - Activated ground floor uses.
- 7.48** The floorspace is flexible in nature and has been designed to provide the flexibility to offer a range of units, including co-working, SME and incubator space at the lower levels. Importantly, the ability to divide floorspace into smaller units will ensure that the scheme is able to provide entry space for new business start-ups.
- 7.49** The HCA Employment Densities Guide (2015) (“HCA Guide”) provides a robust and widely accepted measurement for assessing job density.
- 7.50** The Proposed Development seeks to provide a range of employment opportunities and it can be estimated, that 7,670 FTE net construction jobs and between 4,399 – 9,085 FTE net operational jobs will be created.
- 7.51** In addition to the direct effect of additional employment and housing on Site there are likely to be indirect spending effects on the local economy as a result of the completed development.
- 7.52** ONS data estimates that the average weekly household spending on comparison and convenience goods and retail services in the South East is £449.6 per week. Therefore, under the Completed Development Scenario, the additional 538 to 1,300 residential units are estimated to generate spending of between £12.6 and £30.3 million per year.
- 7.53** Employees working on Site would also generate spending. Research shows that on average workers spend £12 per day on food and drink alone in the area local

to their place of employment. Therefore, as a result of the minimum and maximum commercial floorspace scenarios, local spending by employees could equate to between £12.4 and £25.6 million per year. It should be noted that some of this spending will be captured already as part of household spending if employees also live on Site.

- 7.54** Given the town centre location of this Site, it would be expected that a significant proportion of this spending would be captured locally. In the context of overall employee and household spending, the magnitude of change is assessed as medium.
- 7.55** The quantum and mix of uses across the Site have been reviewed to significantly increase the commercial offer. The Proposed Development provides a significant uplift in this type of floorspace from the existing situation and adds to the mix of uses for the regeneration of the Site. As such, the Proposed Development accords with the objectives of Local Plan Policy EM2 and RL1.

Retail, Office, Non- Residential Institutions, Assembly and Leisure Uses (Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1, D2)

- 7.56** The Proposed Development comprises a mixed-use development with a range of retail uses, non-residential institutions, assembly and leisure uses provided at ground and first floor level. In total the scheme comprises up to a maximum of 4,500 sqm (GEA) for a range of retail, office, community and leisure uses.
- 7.57** At national level, the NPPF sets out the Government's commitment to securing economic growth in order to create jobs. The planning systems should encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth, and local authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business. Planning policies should be positive and promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for management and growth of centres, including allocating a range of sites to meet needs for retail, leisure and other uses in full.
- 7.58** Reading Central Area Action Plan Policy RC6 (Definition of the Centre) notes that retail development will take place in the Primary Shopping Area as defined on the Proposals Map.
- 7.59** Reading Central Area Action Plan Policy RC10 (Active Frontages) notes that uses on the ground floor along the designated active frontages (illustrated on the Proposals Map) will be within one of the following uses classes: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1, D2 or related sui generis uses, unless it would be an entrance to upper floors.
- 7.60** Local Plan Policy RL2 (Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Cultural Development) notes that provision will be made for up to 34,900 sqm of retail and related facilities in Reading to 2036, together with new leisure facilities.

-
- 7.61** The Site is located within Reading Central Area, Central Core, Primary Shopping Area and Office Core.
- 7.62** It is clear that the proposed flexible retail Use Class A1/A2/A3/A4/A5/B1/D1/D2 is inherently appropriate for this established town centre location and will contribute towards maintaining and enhancing its vitality, viability and competitiveness
- 7.63** The proposed retail units will activate the new north south pedestrian route which runs through the site connecting the town centre with the station.
- 7.64** It is considered that the proposed flexible retail floorspace will enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre, and the Proposed Development is therefore considered acceptable

Hotel Use (Class C1)

- 7.65** The Proposed Development seeks permission for the creation of up to 26,000 sqm GEA of hotel floorspace (Use Class C1) to be operated as an up to 450 room hotel.
- 7.66** The application Site is located within the Central Core of Reading where Local Plan Policy CR6 supports hotel development. The policy notes that where proposals for serviced apartments and apart – hotels fall outside the C3 use class, they will be located within the Central Core. The proposed hotel land use is therefore acceptable in this central location.
- 7.67** The sustainability of the Site for a hotel is clear given its central location and excellent public transport accessibility, being located next to Reading Station. A Transport Statement and Travel Plan has been submitted to accompany the application which explains in greater detail how traffic flows will be managed.
- 7.68** The introduction of a hotel land use on the Site will contribute to the mix and variety of uses across the Site as well as aid in the creation of jobs, provide a level of service to the local community as well as helping to meet a recognised need for additional visitor accommodation in this part of Reading. Therefore, the Proposed Development fully accords with Development Plan policies.

Public Realm and Landscaping

- 7.69** The Proposed Development will create a rich mixture of public realm and landscapes over multiple levels of the site. This ranges from the busy city streets, an elevated plaza to private residential terraces. The Proposed Development has been designed to enhance the local area by opening up new connections, providing new facilities and developing an identity and character which celebrates the local history of the area.
- 7.70** The diversity of the landscape and the quality of both public and private space seeks to create a sense of place with an identity, sympathetic to the character of this unique area of Reading.

-
- 7.71** The Site is located within a central area of Reading that has limited public open space, green space and playspace. A significant benefit of the scheme is the amount of publicly accessible open space provided which has been designed to connect and link with these spaces through inherent design principles and a wayfinding strategy.
- 7.72** Overall, the scheme will provide a total of 10,620 sqm of public realm comprising:
- 4,380 sqm of landscaped public realm at Station Square / Pocket Park;
 - 2,100 sqm of landscaped public realm at Station Hill Plaza;
 - 430 sqm of landscaped public realm at The Rest;
 - A minimum of 1,500 sqm of landscaped public realm at The Station Hill Gardens;
 - 2,210 sqm of landscaped public realm along the surrounding pavements/footways that bound the Site.
- 7.73** The design principles for the public realm landscape is based on the rivers and their characteristics and how the features of the river can be translated into urban form. The river narrative also shapes the form of benches, as if they have been carved by the river, the flowing articulation of the paving and the literal connection with water through interactive water features.
- 7.74** The ‘banks’ are defined as the back of the lobbies, the station facade and the active frontages that gives the spaces definition and direct the ‘current’ or the flows of people. The ‘banks’ are purposely shown as the internal lobbies of the buildings to emphasise the importance of an inside/outside connection between the external public realm and the internal lobby spaces.
- 7.75** The ‘eddies’ are the active frontages, the spill-out from cafes and other ground floor uses that sit between the currents and the banks. These activities are critical to the success of the public realm and the placemaking. The ‘currents’ are the desire lines of people moving through the landscape and public realm to key entrances; the station, Garrard Street and Greyfriar Street. These desire lines need to be comfortable and natural so as not to block people’s journey from A to B. However, ‘currents’ should also feel like a sequence of enjoyable and intriguing experiences that slows the pace and encourages people to linger in the public realm.
- 7.76** The ‘boulders’ will be the spaces that people occupy in the landscape and public realm for lunch, socialising, relaxing and people watching. The movements of people flow around the ‘boulders’, so these are spaces to stop, linger and settle in the landscape and public realm. This also includes the Pocket Park overlooking the station and lower plaza, which will be a key green space for the new Station Hill community.
-

-
- 7.77** The ‘pools’ provide an opportunity for people to physically engage with the tactile quality of the water. The central interactive water feature will provide a day to day atmosphere and attraction into the heart of the development. The fountains can be turned off to allow the main space to host events, installations and cultural celebrations.
- 7.78** The ground level public realm is an extension of the streets that surround the Site. A combination of new streets and squares will create a series of new connections across the Site.
- 7.79** The vertical circulation will be an experience weaving between the layers. Due to the Site’s multi-level experience, a series of stairways and adjacent lifts are strategically positioned around the site to provide a highly visible and legible structure of accessible circulation.
- 7.80** The design of the public realm has been developed to meet the following objectives:
- Ensuring the new development becomes an integral part of the Town.
 - Improving connections into and through the development.
 - Defining a strong, identifiable entrance plaza and new public square that complements the existing spaces in the Town centre.
 - Creating a place where residents, workers, neighbours and visitors can spend time and feel they belong.
 - Providing a variety of spaces with different qualities and characters to suit all needs and desires – from quiet intimate spaces to have some time on your own, to bustling social spaces to meet your friends.
 - Building in flexibility for future development adjacent to the Site without compromising the current scheme.
 - Providing an accessible, safe and secure community in the heart of the Town.
 - Designing a beautiful, green and sustainable landscape to be enjoyed by all.
- 7.81** It is clear that the Proposed Development will provide a substantial quantum of varied public realm and landscaped space for the proposed residents, workers, visitors and the neighbouring community. The variations of public realm reflect the historic importance of the Site and its transition through time. Variations in landscaping strategies enable the opportunity for retreat, natural play and adventure. The Proposed Development will also encourage biodiversity and through the creation of different wildlife and habitats.
- 7.82** The majority of the provision for child play space will be located within the Station Hill Gardens area and within the private shared residential gardens.
-

However, other locations within the Site provide the opportunity for playable space which will be integrated with public realm furniture and design. This will come forward as part of the future Reserved Matters applications.

- 7.83** ‘Playable landscape’ is the approach taken through the open space to provide challenging and interesting opportunity for all ages which will help engage and encourage social acidity. An example of this is the inclusion of a scramble play bank within the Pocket Park.

Design

- 7.84** The need for a high quality of design of the Proposed Development is a key driver set out in the NPPF and RBC policy.
- 7.85** Section 12 of the NPPF advises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
- 7.86** A raft of policies at national level and at the local level are relevant to determining the design of the proposal and its contribution to the surrounding townscape.
- 7.87** Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development; creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 7.88** Paragraph 127 of the NPPF outlines that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
 - optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
 - create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote

health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

7.89 Reading Central Area Action Plan Policy RC5 (Design in the Centre) requires applications for development within Reading central to demonstrate architectural details and materials uses to be of high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in the area local to the development site.

7.90 The accompanying Design and Access Statement provides an analysis of the constraints and opportunities presented by the Proposed Development. It sets out the design objectives, principles and building evolution which have informed the design. It explains how the proposals contribute positively to the context of the Site and surroundings and how the proposals contribute positively to the streetscape.

7.91 In summary, the design of the proposal is considered to offer a number of significant benefits by:

- Delivering a mixed use scheme of the highest quality architectural standards, setting a benchmark for the local environs;
- Enhancing the character of the area with modern development that is complimentary to its surroundings in the use of materials.
- Consideration towards the Reading Central Area Action Plan which outlines the Council's ambitions for the area;
- Activating street frontages;
- Creating exceptional external landscaped areas, improving permeability and connectivity and creating public, semi-public and private spaces;
- Providing well designed, accessible scheme which promotes sustainable transport; and
- Creating an iconic, unique development of exceptional quality architecture inside & outside.

7.92 It is considered that the proposal provides a scheme of the highest architectural quality, in terms of appearance, layout and massing and will contribute positively to the townscape of the surrounding area. The design of the buildings have been influenced through detailed consideration of the surrounding local context and through discussions with the Council and the Design South East Panel.

7.93 Townscape and Visual Impact

- 7.94** A Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment ('TVIA') has been prepared by Watermans and can be found in Volume 8 of the Environmental Statement. The TVIA provides a thorough study of the history and current townscape status of the context in which the Proposed Development is located.
- 7.95** The TVIA assesses the likely significant effects of the development within Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) from 27 distinct viewpoints. These viewpoints have been chosen and agreed with the RBC through a period of pre-consultation.
- 7.96** During the demolition and construction works, there would inevitably be a visual intrusion to the local townscape and views as a result of large construction plant and machinery, including tower cranes, the presence of buildings being demolished and the partially completed built form of the Proposed Development. Whilst this is assessed to be a negligible to major adverse effect, it is unavoidable for the redevelopment of the Site and would only be temporary in nature.
- 7.97** Consideration of the visual effect of the Proposed Development, once completed, has been an integral part of the Applicant's design approach. The design of the Proposed Development has been developed to take account of the likely townscape and visual impact. The intention of the Applicant is for the Proposed Development to result in buildings of the highest architectural and urban design quality, which would contribute positively to the local townscape and provide a focal point within this important area of central Reading.
- 7.98** The Proposed Development would result in a beneficial effect on the townscape of the Site and the areas immediately surrounding the Site given that it is currently under-developed with vacant buildings. The effect on townscape character areas ranges from negligible to minor beneficial.
- 7.99** The majority of views would also experience negligible or beneficial effects once the Proposed Development is completed with adverse effects only occurring where the viewpoints are particularly sensitive and currently have a particularly rural outlook, devoid of tall buildings. These views include from St Peter's Church and Church Yard, a viewpoint approximately 4km to the north east of the Site off Dunstone Way, Caversham Bridge and a viewpoint within Christchurch Meadows. The effect on these viewpoints is considered to be major adverse due to the change in sky line from these viewpoints. However, the visual effects for people on Garrard Street, Greyfriars Road, Station Hill and other surrounding viewpoints is considered to be moderate beneficial and for users of Balmore Park is considered to be major beneficial.
- 7.100** Given the size of the Site, its central location within Reading and its policy designation for tall buildings, it is inevitable and appropriate that the Proposed Development will have a new townscape character of its own; one that continues
-

the pattern of large-scale development and tall buildings seen around the station. This is necessary in order to create a successful place, to make the most of the opportunities the Site has to offer, and in order to meet the many clearly set out objectives for the Site in the Reading Tall Building Strategy and Central Area Action Plan.

- 7.101** In conclusion, the Proposed Development is seen to be beneficial in townscape terms and accords with policy at national, regional and local level.

Transport, Accessibility and Waste

- 7.102** In accordance with planning policy a full assessment of the Proposed Development in traffic and transport terms is contained within the Transport Assessment (TA) and summarised within the Environmental Statement. The sections below summarise the findings of the Transport Assessment and any necessary mitigation measures.

Car Parking

- 7.103** The Proposed Development can deliver up to 835 car parking spaces, 122 of which will be delivered in Phase 2 as part of the detailed planning application with the ability to provide up to the remaining 713 spaces within Phase 3. The exact number and location of the Phase 3 car parking spaces will form part of the future reserved matters applications.
- 7.104** The proposals will deliver 6 blue badge spaces within Phase 2. The level of blue badge provision within Phase 3 will depend on the scheme that comes forward within the future reserved matters applications.

Cycle Parking

- 7.105** The Proposed Development will provide 300 cycle spaces for Phase 2. This is broken down in to 240 long-stay cycle spaces and 60 short stay cycle spaces. The short stay spaces will be located within the public realm areas as Sheffield stands.
- 7.106** The exact number of cycle spaces delivered in Phase 3 will be dependant on the scheme that comes forward. This will be set out within the associated Reserved Matters applications.

Delivery and Servicing Plan

- 7.107** The site-wide delivery and servicing strategy has been developed utilising a combination of on-street loading facilities and an internal service road and yard. It is proposed that three on-street loading facilities will be provided; one on Greyfriars Road adjacent to Plot A and two along Garrard Street, one adjacent to Plot B/D and one adjacent to Plot G.
- 7.108** The layby to the south of Plot G ('One Station Square') is proposed to be delivered within Phase 2 and is off carriageway. This will be used to provide deliveries to the Garrard Street entrance of Plot G (primarily Plot G will be

serviced from the adjoining servicing road and yard).

- 7.109** The layby on the western end of Garrard Street and layby on Greyfriars Road are proposed to be provided to support the uses within Phase 3. The western Garrard Street layby is proposed off carriageway while the Greyfriars Road layby is proposed on-street as was previously the case for Xafinity House. These facilities will serve the adjacent Plots A/B/D and provide a location for servicing, deliveries and refuse collection.

Environmental Considerations

- 7.110** The Proposed Development has been assessed in terms of its likely significant environmental impacts, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England & Wales) Regulations 2017, as amended.
- 7.111** The assessment of the Proposed Development is set out in the Environmental Statement (“ES”).
- 7.112** To ensure the assessment of the Proposed Development is robust, the ES assesses the complete Station Hill site which includes Phases 1, 2 and 3. This is different to the Planning Statement which assess the North Site (Phases 2 and 3). The scope of the ES assessment was agreed with RBC through Scoping.
- 7.113** The ES has considered the likely significant beneficial and adverse effects of the Proposed Development during the demolition and construction works, the interim scenario (Phases 1 and 2) and once the Proposed Development is complete and occupied. In line with legislative and best practice requirements, direct, indirect, cumulative, short-term, medium-term, long-term, permanent, beneficial and adverse effects have been addressed where applicable.
- 7.114** This section of the Planning Statement provides a summary of the findings from key assessments, including microclimate, flood risk, air quality, socio-economics, archaeology, noise, ground conditions, overshadowing, lighting and solar glare, and cross refers to the relevant sections of the Environmental Statement which provide further detail.

Socio Economics

- 7.115** Chapter 7 of the accompanying Environmental Statement considers the socio economics of the Proposed Development.
- 7.116** The socio-economic chapter of the Environmental Statement focuses upon the economic and social effects which may arise as a result of the Proposed Development. It sets out the potential effects of the Interim Development Scenario and Completed Development Scenario, when compared with the existing baseline. The assessment considers both temporary effects which would arise as a result of the construction phase, and the permanent effects which would be brought about by new households and commercial floorspace. These effects include the employment that would be created by the Proposed

Development, the impact on the area's population and housing supply, and the impacts on demand for social and community infrastructure including health and educational facilities.

- 7.117** The construction works will create jobs for construction workers. However, because construction workers are relatively mobile, the overall effect is assessed as negligible.
- 7.118** The Proposed Development is assessed to have positive effects on population, housing supply, employment, additional spending and open space. Under the Completed Development Scenario between 750 and 1,300 dwellings are proposed. Provision of new residential dwellings will have a moderate to major beneficial effect on the housing supply in the local area and the District. The additional dwellings are expected to be occupied by around 1,100 people under the Interim Development Scenario and between 1,870 and 2,590 people in the Completed Development Scenario; a minor to moderate beneficial effect respectively. The increased local population will increase household spending in local shops; a minor beneficial effect under the Interim Development Scenario and a moderate beneficial effect under the Completed Development Scenario.
- 7.119** Employment will be generated from the proposed commercial floorspace (offices and shops) of up to 2,553 full time equivalent jobs under the Interim Development Scenario and between 4,399 and 9,085 full time equivalent jobs under the Completed Development Scenario. This is considered to be a minor to moderate beneficial effect.
- 7.120** New open space will be provided by the Proposed Development incorporating a pocket park and informal children's play spaces. This is assessed as a minor beneficial effect.
- 7.121** The Proposed Development is assessed to have a potentially negative effect on community facilities (such as nurseries, schools and healthcare facilities). This will be dependent on the type and quantum of development that comes forward on the Site. However, financial contributions could be provided through the community infrastructure levy to mitigate the impact of additional demand for early years, primary school and GP capacity.

Archaeology

- 7.122** Chapter 9 of the accompanying Environmental Statement considers the effects of the Proposed Development on archaeology. The assessment concludes that there are no designated heritage assets, such as listed buildings or scheduled monuments within the Site although evidence of early medieval to medieval town defences and buildings, medieval Franciscan activity and post-medieval Civil War defences may be encountered during excavation works at the Site. The Site also has the potential to contain as yet unknown buried archaeological remains, especially those of medieval to post-medieval date which may be

related medieval town development or associated with post-medieval Civil War defences.

- 7.123** It is proposed that a programme of archaeological investigation and recording is undertaken throughout the demolition and construction phases. The results of this work will inform further appropriate investigations. The investigations could take the form of archaeological evaluations; however, the scope of such works would be agreed with Berkshire Archaeology prior to implementing.
- 7.124** The Proposed Development would not have a direct physical effect on designated or non-designated heritage assets within the study area although it would change the setting of these assets during construction works and on completion of the Proposed Development. This effect is considered to be minor adverse.

Air Quality

- 7.125** Chapter 10 of the accompanying Environmental Statement considers the effects of the Proposed Development on the air quality.
- 7.126** The Environmental Statement has assessed the impact on air quality that would occur as a result of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development in terms of traffic generation and the on-site energy centre emissions.
- 7.127** The assessment concludes that the demolition and construction works are considered to be high risk, in particular due to dust soiling and human health effects. Therefore, site-specific mitigation measures would be required to address these risks.
- 7.128** A range of environmental management controls would be developed with reference to the IAQM guidance. These would be detailed in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) with the objective to prevent the release of dust entering the atmosphere and/or being deposited on nearby receptors. Such measures, which would be adopted and secured through planning obligations and/or appropriate planning conditions.
- 7.129** Particular attention would be paid to operations that would take place close to the Site boundary due to their proximity to surrounding properties.
- 7.130** Construction traffic logistics would be agreed with RBC in advance of the works commencing. In determining construction traffic routing, consideration has been, and would be, given to the location of sensitive routes (i.e. residential roads etc.). Where practicable, use of roads during peak hours will be limited. Where possible, construction vehicles with low diesel emissions (i.e. the latest Euro Emission standards) would be used. It is anticipated that with appropriate construction logistics, the likely residual effect of emissions from construction vehicles entering and egressing the Site is not significant and no further mitigation is required.

-
- 7.131** Effects on local air quality associated with the Completed Development Scenario would likely result from changes to traffic flows.
- 7.132** In 2026 ‘without’ and ‘with’ the Proposed Development in place concentrations are predicted to meet the NO₂ annual mean objective value of 40µg/m³ at all receptor locations. ‘Without’ and ‘with’ the Proposed Development in place the highest predicted annual mean NO₂ concentration (of 37.4µg/m³ at Receptor 4 ‘with’ the Proposed Development) is much less than 60µg/m³ and as such the hourly objective is likely to be met.
- 7.133** The Proposed Development is predicted to result in an ‘negligible’ change in annual mean NO₂ concentrations at all receptor locations.

Ground Conditions and Contamination

- 7.134** Chapter 12 of the accompanying Environmental Statement considers the effects of the Proposed Development on the water resources, flood risk and drainage.
- 7.135** An assessment of the potential for ground contamination to exist at the Site has been undertaken based on information obtained from historical maps, geological maps and previous investigations. A further intrusive Site Investigation has also been recently undertaken on the North and South Site to provide further detailed ground conditions information.
- 7.136** Chemical analysis of environmental samples (soils and groundwater) collected as part of the intrusive Site Investigations did not identify widespread contamination of soils and groundwater. However, hotspots of hydrocarbon contamination in the soils and groundwater, were recorded. Additional investigation would be undertaken to further investigate the extent of the hotspots when the buildings are demolished. If necessary, the hot spots would be cleaned up (remediated) to ensure that they do not cause harm to humans or the environment. Remediation or removal of potentially contaminated soil and /or groundwater would be a minor beneficial effect.
- 7.137** All demolition and construction works would be undertaken in accordance with legal requirements and a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This would minimise the risk of spillages, creation of dust, uncontrolled run off or other activities which could cause or mobilise existing contamination. The resulting effect would be negligible to at worst, minor adverse.
- 7.138** On completion of the Proposed Development, the risk posed by any remaining residual contamination to future Site occupants, soil, groundwater, and flora and fauna would be very low. This is because, contamination would be remediated (where necessary), and also because the Proposed Development would be covered in hard surfacing, which would act as a physical barrier between the residual contamination source and potential receptors. Clean soils would be used in landscaped areas to reduce risks of exposure to soil contaminants and fuel storage tanks for backup generators, where required, would be stored on

hardstanding. The residual effect of the completed Proposed Development is therefore assessed to be negligible.

Wind

- 7.139** Chapter 13 of the accompanying Environmental Statement considers the effects of the Proposed Development on the microclimate. The Environmental Statement provides an assessment of the potential impact of the Proposed Development on the local wind microclimate at the Site and within the surrounding area.
- 7.140** Physical models of the existing Site and surrounds and seven different configurations of the Proposed Development were tested in a wind tunnel. Wind was blown across the physical models to see if the wind conditions at various locations within and around the Proposed Development would be suitable for the intended use of these areas, for example areas identified for sitting or entrances to buildings. Locations where strong winds would also occur, that have the potential to be a safety concern for pedestrians and / or cyclists were also identified. Where the conditions were identified as not being suitable for their intended use and / or where strong winds may occur, measures to reduce the wind speeds in these areas (mitigation measures) were identified and these were also tested in the wind tunnel to ensure that they would be effective in reducing the wind speeds.
- 7.141** Wind mitigation measures have been developed through a wind mitigation workshop to improve wind conditions in those locations where they are not suitable for their intended use and to reduce the occurrence of winds which would be a safety concern. With the landscaping scheme and these measures in place, wind conditions would become calmer and the effects would be negligible (not significant) to moderate beneficial (not significant) effect. Instances of strong winds would persist at the south-eastern corner of Thames Tower until the development of Phase 3.
- 7.142** Because Phase 3 is being submitted as an outline application, meaning that the details of the development are not currently known, three different Development Options were tested in the wind tunnel. These Development Options demonstrate ways in which Phase 3 could be built out within the maximum parameters and meant that ways of improving (mitigating) the wind conditions identified as being unsuitable for the proposed future use of certain areas and / or having potential safety concerns, within the maximum parameter scheme could be identified. Whilst these mitigation measures would need to be re-tested at the reserved matters stage when the design has been fixed, the testing aimed to demonstrate that there are ways in which the Proposed Development could come forward that would have acceptable wind conditions.
- 7.143** Wind conditions in Development Option 1 and Development Option 3 in the context of cumulative surrounding buildings and with mitigation measures implemented would be similar, with conditions being minor adverse at an off-

Site entrance on Station Hill and at the podium entrance to Plot A as well as at the Plot E terrace level. At other locations around Development Options 1 and 3, wind conditions would represent a negligible to moderate beneficial effect. There would be no instances of strong winds except at the Plot G roof space (in Development Option 1) and the Station Hill carriageway (in Development Option 3). The Plot G roof space would be inaccessible except to maintenance workers, so no further mitigation is required for this area. Further mitigation options would be considered at the reserved matters stage to address strong winds on Station Hill if Development Option 3 (or similar) is taken forward.

- 7.144** Development Option 2 in the context of the cumulative surrounding buildings and with mitigation measures implemented would have wind conditions that would represent a minor adverse effect at an existing entrance on Station Hill and at the podium entrance to Plot A. Effects on the Plot B roof terrace levels and on Plot A balconies would be too windy for their intended use, representing a minor adverse effect. Elsewhere, wind conditions would represent a negligible to moderate beneficial effect. Winds with the potential to be a safety concern for cyclists and more vulnerable pedestrians would occur to the north-west Site and at Plot A balcony levels.
- 7.145** It would be expected that further improvements to wind conditions and a further reduction to the occurrence of winds with the potential to be a safety concern to cyclists and pedestrians could be achieved during the Phase 3 detailed design. Please refer to Chapter 13 of the ES Addendum for the full assessment.

Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

- 7.146** Chapter 14 of the accompanying Environmental Statement considers the effects of the Proposed Development on daylight, sunlight and overshadowing. The Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the potential significant impacts of the Proposed Development in terms of the daylight and sunlight amenity to existing residential properties, overshadowing to existing amenity areas and light pollution. A solar glare assessment has also been undertaken to determine if the Proposed Development has the potential to cause effects to train drivers approaching Reading Mainline Station.
- 7.147** The technical analysis has been undertaken quantitatively via the creation of digital three-dimensional model of the Site and surroundings.
- 7.148** The daylight effects of the Proposed Development were assessed for a total of 1,212 windows serving 869 rooms within 63 existing residential buildings surrounding the Site. The sunlight effects of the Proposed Development were assessed for a total of 368 rooms within 26 existing surrounding buildings. Two future receptors were also assessed in terms of daylight. The receptors were identified using professional judgement, based on due diligence in terms of the existing uses, proximity to the Site, whether any windows face the Proposed Development and consideration of the scale of the Proposed Development.

-
- 7.149** In respect of overshadowing, one public open space, one communal terrace and 30 private gardens were assessed. One existing residential building and three future receptors were assessed for light pollution effects. Two rail tracks (east and west bound) were assessed for the solar glare assessment.
- 7.150** In relation to daylight, 27 of the 63 buildings identified would not experience a noticeable alteration in the levels of daylight that they receive with the completed Proposed Development in place; a negligible effect. The remaining 36 properties would experience noticeable effects with reductions in daylight levels in excess of the industry standard guidelines with respect to daylight availability with effects up to major adverse. These are clearly set out within the ES.
- 7.151** In relation to sunlight, 16 of the 26 buildings identified would not experience a noticeable alteration in the levels of sunlight that they receive with the Completed Development in place; a negligible effect. The remaining 10 properties would experience noticeable effects with reductions in sunlight levels in excess of the industry standard guidelines with respect to sunlight availability with effects up to major adverse.
- 7.152** Despite the above, it is widely accepted that the industry standard guidelines for daylight and sunlight should be applied with flexibility, particularly given that their original application was intended for developments within the suburban environment. In addition, the Proposed Development represents a revision of an existing scheme that already has planning consent. When comparing the effects of the Proposed Development with the scheme that already has planning consent, many properties do not experience any change in daylight and sunlight effects with small material changes experienced for the remainder.
- 7.153** The Proposed Development would have negligible overshadowing effects on the surrounding communal amenity area and private gardens. Whilst, Station Hill Square would experience an increase in overshadowing compared with existing conditions, with a moderate adverse effect assessed, this is a result of the tall building strategy intended for this Site.
- 7.154** By implementing mitigation such as an automated dimming system and occupancy sensors after hours, or automatic blinds, the Development would have negligible light pollution effects on the existing and future residential receptors assessed.

In terms of solar glare, the assessment considered the worst-case potential occurrence of solar reflections from the Proposed Development and proximity to a driver's line of sight. Short term effects were identified from solar glare for train drivers on tracks approaching Reading Mainline Station in both directions, resulting in an overall minor adverse effect. However, without the Proposed Development in place the tracks are exposed to the direct line of sight of the sun.

Energy and Sustainability

-
- 7.155** The planning application is accompanied by a Sustainability and Energy Strategy prepared by Hoare Lea.
- 7.156** An energy assessment has been undertaken in line with Reading Borough Council's Core Strategy and Draft Local Plan. A range of passive and active energy efficiency measures will be employed on the Proposed Development.
- 7.157** A detailed façade study into the most appropriate passive measures has been conducted for Plot G. This study looked at a plethora of façade options with the aim of limiting the amount of solar gain in summer and achieving the required number of BREEAM ENE 01 credits.
- 7.158** A decentralised Air Source Heat Pump network would be the optimum solution for Phase 2 due to the unbalanced heating and cooling load with the option of exploring both Air Source Heat Pump or Ground Source Heat Pump for Phase 3 to plug into the decentralised network.
- 7.159** When Phase 3 comes forward the scheme will be designed for the peak loads across the entire site and therefore when the system isn't running at peak capacity then there would be an opportunity to export or share on a wider network in line with Reading's aspirations. This would depend on how a wider heat pump network is designed and being able to make suitable commercial agreements across sites. A provision will be provided for connecting the Phase 2 Air Source Heat Pump network with the Phase 3 Energy network in the future, with the location of the Phase 3 Energy Centre to be agreed once the design is determined.
- 7.160** In line with the context of the report, detailed modelling has taken place for Phase 2, with target modelling for Phase 3. This detailed modelling shows that the non-domestic regulated carbon emissions for Phase 2 are approximately 12% below the baseline Part L 2013 compliant scheme. Alongside this the Applicant is committed to achieving a minimum 45% reduction for the domestic elements of Phase 3 which exceeds the minimum 35% target set in the emerging policy.
- 7.161** Assessing the modelling results in SAP 10 gives the same carbon reduction over Part L 2013, however there are considerably lower site wide CO2 emissions, due to the reduction in the carbon factor for electricity.
- 7.162** Local Plan Policy CC2 requires all major non-residential developments to achieve 'Excellent' standards where possible. Reading Borough Draft Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – All new build non-residential development of 1,000 sqm or more should achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' as a minimum or BREEAM 'Very Good' for smaller developments. As noted above, the Proposed Development will meet and where possible exceed the policy requirements, particularly in respect of Phase 3 where a commitment to achieve a minimum of 45% reduction for the domestic element is sought compared to the policy compliant 35% target.
-

-
- 7.163** Local Plan Policy CC4 notes that developments over 20 dwellings or 1,000 sqm shall consider the inclusion of a CHP plant, or other form of decentralised energy provision, within the Site, unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is not suitable, feasible or viable for this form of energy provision.
- 7.164** Overall, the Proposed Development makes a positive contribution to energy and sustainability targets and best practice and complies with Local Plan Policies CC3 and CC4.

8.0 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY AND PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 8.1** RBC adopted their borough CIL charging schedule on 1 April 2015. CIL is levied at variable rates across the borough and is also dependent on the nature of the proposed uses. Borough CIL funds will pay for a wide range of infrastructure, which includes, but is not limited to; parks, schools, community facilities, health facilities and leisure centres.
- 8.2** A CIL Additional Information Requirement form has been completed and is included within the planning application submission.

Planning Obligations for the Development

- 8.3** It is recognised that the Proposed Development will generate S106 obligations and contributions.
- 8.4** The RBC Planning Obligations SPD (2015) has been considered as part of this application and will be used in considering financial contributions to RBC. Further discussions are to be held with RBC Officers during the determination of the planning application to agree the contributions to be made.
- 8.5** The planning obligations will be discussed with officers during the consideration of the application, subject to viability. The final s106 Heads of Terms and amounts of contribution would be agreed prior to the determination of the application.

9.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The Proposed Development offers the opportunity to redevelop a Site of strategic importance. The Site is one of the largest regeneration opportunities in central Reading and will bring the Site back to life and provide significant regeneration to the surrounding area.

9.2 The Proposed Development provides an opportunity to deliver a sustainable and economically viable development to provide significant quantum of employment and business space, housing, the creation of a new retail street and a new elevated public realm.

9.3 In conclusion, the Proposed Development:

- Significant improvements to the public realm and setting for the area by providing generous, high quality publicly accessible spaces that are legible, permeable and accessible to all; and importantly improve safety and surveillance.
- Provides high quality new buildings of outstanding design quality, which addresses the policy requirements of RBC.
- The regeneration of a highly accessible brownfield site, identified at the local levels, as a major development opportunity for a mixed use, high density development.
- Represents a sustainable and energy efficient design, with carbon savings, which maximize carbon reduction.
- Delivers a maximum of up to 750 homes of the highest quality.
- The delivery of up to 119,924 sqm (GEA) of office floorspace. The space can accommodate a wide variety of occupiers, from local small-scale business start-ups to large multi-national corporations.
- The creation of up to 450-bedroom hotel on the Site.
- The creation of up to 6,346 sqm (GEA) of new retail floorspace, providing opportunities for local businesses to accommodate floorspace in a prime location.
- The provision of a mix of retail uses which enables activity throughout the Site connecting the station and Friars High Street. The retail strategy promotes a range of stores, which reflects the characteristics of the existing retail in the area.
- The creation of between 4,399 – 9,085 net FTE jobs across the predominately B1 office, hotel and retail uses.
- The creation of up to 750 residential units is estimated to generate spending of around £17.5 million per annum to the economy.

- Creation of 7,670 FTE jobs created during the construction phases, which will generate between £12.4 and £25.6 million GVA per annum to the economy.

9.4 In summary, the Proposed Development is consistent with planning policy at the national, regional and local levels. The regeneration of the Site, as set out within the Proposed Development would contribute towards the delivery of a number of policy objectives at all levels which will benefit the site and the surrounding area.

