

Planning Statement (incorporating Transport Statement and Draft Travel Plan)

6-8 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2EG

June 2020

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	6 – 8 Market Place – The Vision and Opportunity	5
3.	Site Location and Description	7
4.	Planning History	9
5.	Pre-application Discussions	11
6.	The Proposals	13
7.	Relevant Planning Policies	16
8.	Scheme Compliance with Policy	29
9.	Section 106 and CIL	46
10.	Conclusions	47
Appendix 1: Pre-Application Document		48
Appendix 2: Design Review Panel Document		49
Appendix 3: Design Review Panel Response		50
Appendix 4: Draft Travel Plan		51

Tim Burden
Tim.Burden@turley.co.uk

Client

Castleforge Partners

Our reference

FAIS3001

June 2020

Peter Davis
Peter.Davis@turley.co.uk

1. Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of Castleforge Partners to Reading Borough Council ('RBC') in support of a full planning application at 6 – 8 Market Place, Reading for the construction of high quality office development.

- 1.2 The proposal is described as follows:

“Internal and external refurbishment works to existing retained office building, including alterations to building frontage on Market Place and Abbey Square. Erection of side wing and 2 storey extension to increase B1(a) office provision (totalling 10,921 sqm GEA) with associated works, including infilling at ground floor, and servicing arrangements from Abbey Square. Retention of existing ground floor retail units on Market Place.”

- 1.3 The application site is allocated for development in the recently adopted Local Plan (November 2019) under policy CR14e 3-10 Market Place, Abbey Hall and Abbey Square. This states that:

“Development for retail and related uses on ground floor with residential and/or offices on upper floors, designed to enhance contribution of site to Conservation Area. Possible pedestrian link between Market Place and Forbury Square/Abbey Square. Rear servicing and preservation of historic building line. Development should:

- *Enhance the Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings;*
- *Reflect the prevailing height of Market Place;*
- *Take account of the high potential for archaeological significance;”*

- 1.4 This Planning Statement is intended to address all the relevant planning policy considerations associated with the proposed development and should be read in conjunction with the other documents and drawings submitted in support of the application, including:

- Application Forms and Certificates
- Application Plans and Drawings prepared by TP Bennett
- Archaeology Report prepared by Orion
- Covering Letter prepared by Turley
- Daylight and Sunlight Report prepared by XCO2
- Design and Access Statement prepared by TP Bennett
- Energy Statement prepared by The Design Collective

- Heritage Statement prepared by Turley Heritage
 - Sustainability Statement prepared by Turley Sustainability
- 1.5 This Planning Statement also provides a short Transport Statement and accompanying Draft Travel Plan.

Context

- 1.6 This Statement is intended to assist RBC in its determination of the application have regard to the requirements of the Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It evaluates the proposed development against local and national planning policies and carries out an overall planning balance.

Structure of Planning Statement

- 1.7 The remainder of the Statement is structured as follows:
- **Section 2:** provides an outline of the wider vision and rationale for the development
 - **Section 3:** an overview of the site context and surroundings including reference to any site specific designations
 - **Section 4:** sets out the planning history for the site
 - **Section 5:** provides a summary of the pre-application discussions with Reading Borough Council prior to submission of the planning application
 - **Section 6:** a summary of the proposed development including land uses, building height and design
 - **Section 7:** a review of relevant planning policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Development Plan to the consideration of the proposals;
 - **Section 8:** an assessment of the schemes compliance with planning policy in terms of principle and proposed land uses.
 - **Section 9:** a summary of the draft 'Heads of Terms' and CIL considerations; and
 - **Section 10:** summary of scheme and conclusions

2. 6 – 8 Market Place – The Vision and Opportunity

- 2.1 RBC has long possessed an ambition to transform Reading into a city. The adopted Local Plan (which covers a period to 2036) has sought to reinforce and extend this vision through to 2036 and beyond to 2050. Although the upgrades to Reading Railway Station have been delivered and a number of sites have been redeveloped/ regenerated, there is still a long way to go to achieving RBC's on-going vision and to achieve City Status. This serves to highlight the importance and impetus on RBC to positively consider planning applications which contribute towards achieving the Council's vision.
- 2.2 The Reading 2050 Vision seeks to establish Reading as '*an internationally recognised and economically successful city region*' which will be smart and sustainable with a range of objectives including '*delivering a real sense of place and identity*'. This is captured within the Local Plan objective which seeks to '*strengthen the role of Reading, including Central Reading, as the hub for the Thames Valley, providing an accessible focus for development*'. Such an approach demonstrates RBC's positive approach to planning within the Borough.
- 2.3 Within this context, RBC has always recognised the pertinent role that the Central Area will play in securing the Vision. RBC published the Reading City Centre Framework in 2008 to guide development in this crucial part of the town, through which development is highlighted as integral to the realisation of this vision, on account of the area's proximity to Reading Station and the opportunity to make it flourish "*through the promotion of development which supports the continuation of Reading's urban renaissance*" and the creation of a mix of land uses.
- 2.4 This 2008 document recognises that the site sits within the central core and acknowledges that the central area is "*still evolving from a historic country town to a vibrant city, which will reinforce its image and status as the capital of the Thames Valley*". The document was, therefore, adopted as a mechanism to provide a spatial and design overview to guide development and ensure that the inherent character and historical value of Reading is maintained, whilst meeting the demand for further growth.
- 2.5 Reading is widely recognised as the economic hub of the Thames Valley, and is a major centre of employment operating as one of the most economically dynamic regions in the country. Reading is a hub for a variety of businesses and professional services, with the M4 and A4 corridors as well as the Great Western Mainline and Reading to London Waterloo line playing an important role in linking Reading, Maidenhead, Wokingham and Bracknell in connecting the wider south-east workforce.
- 2.6 Reading Borough Council have recently identified that the site is in need of regeneration, having allocated the site for redevelopment within its recently adopted Plan (November 2019).

- 2.7 The proposal sought through this planning application will deliver the regeneration of a key town-centre site through the sustainable regeneration of an existing office building and the revitalisation of an under-appreciated asset in Reading's town centre so as to provide a well-designed contemporary office and co-working space and enhance the overall offer of employment space in the economic hub of the Thames Valley.

3. Site Location and Description

Site Context

- 3.1 The site is located within a prime area of central Reading, located within Market Place, within Reading Town Centre. The site is situated on a key public transport and pedestrian route through the town centre and has a strong presence on the streetscape of Market Square.
- 3.2 The site is occupied by a single building of multiple heights, straddling a storey height level change between Market Place and Abbey Square to the rear of the site.
- 3.3 The building was constructed in the 1960's-70's and features a brutalist concrete façade and active ground frontage. The remaining façade elevations revert to simple brickwork with punched windows that appear to sit in floor to ceiling height bays.
- 3.4 The building presents ground plus 3 storeys, with a setback floor and roof terrace. On Abbey Square, to the rear, it presents a height of ground, plus 5 storeys plus 2 storeys at the south end. In addition to this, there is a single storey plant room in the centre of the scheme which projects above the office levels.
- 3.5 Overall it is considered that the site contains a number critical issues that detract from the site and wider Market Place, including:
 - Dated façade treatments
 - No clear entrance to existing building
 - No building identity as a prime location in Reading town centre
 - Lacking 'connection' to public square to the rear onto Abbey Square
 - Inefficient massing configuration and inefficient building layouts following multiple extensions and alterations
 - Lack of height on less sensitive frontage
 - Blank concrete wall needs replacing to enhance office space
- 3.6 Given the location and positioning of 6-8 Market Place within the Central Core area, it is considered that the site forms an important and integral part of delivering the vision for the town and contributing towards the longer term transformation of this area. The need for the regeneration of this site is widely recognised, including by Reading Borough Council who have allocated the site for redevelopment within the recently adopted Development Plan (November 2019).

Surrounding Area

- 3.7 Market Place accommodates a broad mix of town centre uses, with retail shops, restaurants, cafes, bars, offices and other services being commonly found at street level in the vicinity to the site.
- 3.8 The surrounding context of Market Place Square includes many buildings of townscape merit that are rich in architectural value. Whilst the site itself has no specific listing designations, the Site is located within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. A number of heritage assets are located within close proximity to the Site, including the Grade II Listed Buildings at 1 & 2 Market Place located directly south of the Site and, the former National Westminster Bank at 13 16 Market Place to the north of the Site and the Grade II* Simeon Monument directly opposite.
- 3.9 The Church of St Laurence to the north of the site is one of only a few Grade I listed buildings in Reading. The site is also located within an area of archaeological potential and the designated 'Abbey Quarter'.
- 3.10 Accordingly, the Applicant has identified a number of opportunities to enhance the site through the proposed development. Full details of the application are provided in Section 6 of this Planning Statement but a summary of the benefits to the development are set out below:
- Opportunity to enhance Reading's office core provision with the provision of a flexible workspace format, with the inclusion of a new social hub space for tenants;
 - Enhancement of Market Place streetscape with a new architectural façade treatment with the activation of a second entrance off Abbey Square to the rear;
 - Introduction of a network of landscaped roof terraces created to improve the amenity of the workplace,
 - Retention of the existing active frontages at ground floor level whilst improving office reception presence fronting onto Market Place
- 3.11 The current proposals for the application site are now brought forward with commitment by the applicant, who is also the developer, to deliver the proposed development and fully realise the potential of the site.

4. Planning History

4.1 A review of RBC's online planning register identifies that the site has been subject to a number of planning applications relating to the redevelopment of the site for a number of proposed developments over the years.

4.2 These are summarised in reverse chronological order below:

- **Application Ref. 171756** - External alterations to the part of the building also known as Market Place House to include 1.1m high railings to enable use of the rear second floor roof area as outdoor amenity space.
 - *Granted December 2017.*
- **Application Ref. 101041** - Alterations between B1 and A1 class 1 use with associated changes to shop frontage.
 - *Granted July 2010*
- **Application Ref. 100604** – Discharge of conditions 2 [Details of materials] and 3 [Programme of archaeological work] of planning consent 09/00741/FUL (090793).
 - *Discharged March 2010.*
- **Application Ref. 091332** - Replacement of access gates to the rear of the property from Abbey Square.
 - *Granted July 2009*
- **Application Ref. 090793** - Replacement access gates to the rear of the property from Abbey Square.
 - *Granted July 2009*
- **Application Ref. 960541** - Change of use of private 59 space car park to public use.
 - *Refused October 1996.*
- **Application Ref. 960570** - Change of use of ground floor to restaurant/wine bar.
 - *Granted September 1996*
- **Application Ref. 940274** - Demolition of temporary Link Bridge between Market Place and Abbey Hall at second storey level to the rear of the premises. The openings to be bricked up to match existing. Circular 18/84.
 - *Observations sent January 1995. No online documents.*

- **Application Ref. 910033** - One projecting sign and one flat sign (Circular 18/84).
 - *Observations sent March 1991. No online documents.*

4.3 None of the above is considered to preclude the proposed development.

5. Pre-application Discussions

- 5.1 The Applicant has been fully committed to engaging with RBC early in the pre-application process, recognising the benefits this can provide to the application process for both parties, and to contribute towards the evolution of the proposals by resolving issues at the pre-application stage (in accordance with paragraph 41 of the Framework).
- 5.2 Prior to the application submission, a pre-application meeting had been held with Matthew Burns at Reading Borough Council via videoconference on 14 May 2020. To inform the pre-application meeting, an initial design document was submitted to RBC to inform discussions (enclosed at **Appendix 1**).
- 5.3 The pre-application proposal included the conversion of the ground floor units from an existing dentist to be made into a communal work/café space to serve the tenants of the building, as well as adding additional blocks of massing of numerous heights and density to different sections of the building. It is noted that the conversion of these units do not form part of the submitted application and subsequently will remain in situ through the development of the site.
- 5.4 Officers advised that the opportunity for redevelopment of the site is acceptable in principle and the retention of active frontages accords with the existing development plan. It was noted that the Council envisaged that the application site be demolished and then rebuilt, rather than being redeveloped, as the existing building does not make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.
- 5.5 During the pre-application process, the Conservation Officer at RBC highlighted that the forward projection of the existing building is a negative element and contrary to the existing building line in Market Place. Following a structural survey of the building, it has been confirmed that the existing frontage is of structural importance to the building and that it would be very difficult to alter the existing building form. The Conservation Officer also commented that the existing building is *“not of any architectural or historic interest and, in fact, detracts from the Market Place Conservation Area”*.
- 5.6 Some concerns were raised over the building height of the proposed development being above the prevailing building height in Market Place and impact on the setting of the listed buildings on either side of the application site. The applicant acknowledges that whilst the development would lead to change, it is considered that this change is not harmful to either the setting of the listed building nor the conservation area in which the building is located. Further detail on this aspect is set out in the accompanying documents, and particularly the Heritage Impact Assessment which should be read alongside this Planning Statement.
- 5.7 With regard to the rear of the building and the proposed massing along the Abbey Square frontage, Officers acknowledged there is scope for additional massing to the rear of the building, located away from the listed buildings but have reservations as the site is still located in a conservation area. It is recognised that there is a rise in topography from Market Square to Abbey Square to the east (and subsequently rear of

the site) and the proposals as a whole would present better the street to the rear of the site as the rear section is less sensitive and can take more height. To accurately address these issues, including the sites location in an area of archaeological importance the applicant is submitting a Heritage Statement and Archaeological Impact Assessment with the planning application.

- 5.8 Due to the proposed height of the building, Officers requested that the development take account of the window positions and the building's relationship with neighbouring properties, including the hotel rooms at the neighbouring Market House building to the south, as well as the recent residential development permitted at Jacksons Corner further south within Market Place. To account for these issues, a daylight and sunlight report prepared by XCO2, who have previous knowledge of the Jacksons Corner development has informed the submitted development proposals and is submitted alongside the application material.
- 5.9 Further to Officer's advice, Castleforge Partners engaged with the Design Review Panel ('DRP') with the submission of an updated proposal. A copy of the revised document submitted for DRP review is enclosed in **Appendix 2**. A virtual presentation was held on the 11 June 2020 with the DRP. Whilst a summary of DRP response is set below, a copy of the full DRP statement is enclosed in **Appendix 3**.
- 5.10 The DRP acknowledged and appreciated the efforts of the design to utilise difference façade types on the main frontage so as to effectively split the Market Place elevation into two separate vertical planes from ground to third floor level. With regard to the Abbey Square elevation to the rear of the site, the DRP Panel understood the rationale behind the different façade treatments to the Abbey Square but had reservations over the proposed central element which has an element of retained brickwork beneath the new curtain wall glazed roof extension. The Applicant recognises has identified the rear elevation as an opportunity harmonise the existing collection of existing façade types across the plot frontages and thus create a more transformational identity to the street as the existing façade types on this elevation are of little architectural merit and are considered to detract from the public realm of Abbey Square.
- 5.11 With regard to the recessive fourth floor level of the proposed development, the DRP commented that options should be explored with the notion of continuing the aspect of verticality to the building and further distinguish between the building lines across this section of Market Square. In response to these comments we refer to the Design and Access Statement which considers the design evolution in detail, and the architect's response.
- 5.12 Overall, the DRP welcomed the re-appropriation and re-purposing of the existing building and the overall desire to increase the sustainability of the site. The Applicant has sought to retain the buildings natural ventilation through the design process and this has subsequently informed the location of additional massing to building and increase building height rather than building depth across the site.
- 5.13 As such, throughout this Statement we seek to evidence the policy support for the proposals, supported by the Design and Access Statement which forms part of the application material.

6. The Proposals

- 6.1 The proposed development seeks to deliver the comprehensive redevelopment of the existing site so as to be in-keeping with the wider Market Place area. Accordingly, full planning consent is sought for the following development:

“Internal and external refurbishment works to existing retained office building, including alterations to building frontage on Market Place and Abbey Square. Erection of side wing and 2 storey extension to increase B1(a) office provision (totalling 10,921 sqm GEA) with associated works, including infilling at ground floor, and servicing arrangements from Abbey Square. Retention of existing ground floor retail units on Market Place.”

- 6.2 The key development objectives for this refurbishment will be to deliver an office building suitable for modern day multi-occupancy. Internally, this is to be achieved by providing first-class, well designed flexible spaces, alongside contemporary amenity areas. Externally, the building retains the existing structure but it is proposed that a number of different façade types be employed on different parts of the building to enhance the building pattern and associated extensions.
- 6.3 At basement level, it is proposed that the existing parking area be partially infilled and reformatted so as to provide additional shower and changing facilities, alongside increased secure cycle storage so as to promote sustainable travel to and from the building given its location in central Reading. An ancillary gymnasium is proposed at this level to increase the level of amenity that Clockwise can offer to attract prospective tenants to relocate to the Reading Area. A total of 42 vehicle car parking bays are retained at this level, including the existing vehicle access off Abbey Square, with a new refuse collection point incorporated near the existing vehicle entrance.
- 6.4 At ground floor, the existing retail units comprising the dentists to the north and Tesco Express to the south will remain in situ throughout the development and fall outside the scope of this planning application. The proposed development includes a revised reception area to enhance the arrival experience to the site, with the provision of a new lift core at the centre of the building to facilitate central circulation across all floors and allow the building to be used by multiple occupiers and diversify the office provision within central Reading with the addition of adaptable and flexible office space that caters for a diverse range of prospective tenants.
- 6.5 The ground floor level also seeks to provide a secondary pedestrian access to the building from the Abbey Square frontage. Additional landscaping is to be provided along Abbey Square with rejuvenation of the central courtyard space that is linked to the Clockwise co-working hub at ground floor level. It is considered that the reconfiguration of the ground floor will reconnect the office floors with the street level, and greater animate the street frontage with active and legible arrival points front and back.
- 6.6 As a result of level changes across the site, the current upper deck of car parking space at ground floor level along Abbey Square is to be infilled and reconfigured to produce additional office space, making a much larger presence at ground level for office space

than currently exists. Whilst this will result in the loss of approximately 48 no. vehicle parking bays, the re-purposing of this space is considered to make more efficient use of building space and further the compatibility of the building to service a multi-user co-working space.

- 6.7 The upper office levels of the site are to be adapted so as to introduce the capacity of the building to accommodate shared working spaces, with the centralisation of WC's and lift facilities creating a breakout space at each level to encourage business interaction.
- 6.8 To complement the internal refurbishment, external works will be necessary to improve the overall appearance and operation of the building. The overarching aim for this development is to produce an external appearance commensurate with the sites location at the heart of Reading town centre and the setting of the Market Place conservation area.
- 6.9 At present, the exterior of the building incorporates a concrete façade on Market Place that is in poor condition and is a noticeable eyesore on historical setting and character of Market Place.
- 6.10 Accordingly, the objectives for this development are to reintegrate the building within the conservation area, addressing the jarring elements of scale, massing and appearance whilst creating a characterful, healthy and efficient office environment that is attractive to occupiers and ensures the long term economic use of the site.
- 6.11 To achieve this, it is proposed that the existing façade facing Market Place Square and elements of the façade facing Abbey Square be replaced by a more distinctive and contemporary aesthetic that both harmonises the massing of the proposed building and respects the historical character of the surrounding area. Additional massing is proposed so as to increase the density to the office accommodation and improve the overall efficiency of the building given its central location.
- 6.12 The new massing proposes to increase the height of numerous sections of the building floorplate in a manner that is respectful of the identified constraints that affect the application site.
- 6.13 Along the western elevation fronting Market Place, it is proposed that an additional storey be implemented so as to match the existing 4th storey building line. This is to be accompanied by a new two storey extension along the main wing of the building but set well back from the existing building façade so as to minimise the visibility of this block from eye-level at Market Place and mitigate any impact this development might have on the neighbouring listed buildings. The recessive nature of the built form at the fourth floor and the above creates a new terrace space that can serve as an outdoor amenity area for prospective tenants and subsequently raise the profile of the building.
- 6.14 At the rear of the site, along the Abbey Square frontage, it is considered that the existing building is of very little, if any, architectural merit. With this area of the site set back from listed buildings that front onto Market Place, this area is less sensitive to development and is therefore considered more suitable to take additional development through the increase in building height to match that along the eastern

frontage. The Applicant has seen this as an opportunity to rejuvenate what is considered a poor frontage with the proposed development providing an overall betterment to the existing character of Abbey Square.

- 6.15 Overall the proposed development will deliver a high quality office building (Category A) suitable for modern day multi-occupancy. Internally, this is to be achieved by providing first-class well designed flexible spaces, alongside modern amenity and communal areas on a site allocated for such use. Externally, this is to be accomplished through the provision of a new brickwork façade that is reflective of the architectural vernacular of historic built environment in Reading, and additional vertical massing that respects sensitivity of the conservation area, whilst maximising the building's central location at the heart of Reading.

Scheme Delivery

- 6.16 The Applicant is fully committed to bringing forward the proposed development as soon as planning permission is achieved and is seeking to retain a long term interest in the building. The site is located at key feature within Reading Town Centre and is in urgent need of regeneration to assist in meeting the Council's aspirations for an urban renaissance within the 'Core' area.

Clockwise Office Model

- 6.17 Clockwise is the co-working brand and serviced office platform that has been built up by Castleforge Partners in response to the fact it has become increasingly clear that, in order to flourish, modern businesses require the ability to expand and contract in the same location - saving them cost, time and disruption to their operation - rather than being tied into long and onerous traditional leases. Clockwise provides well-designed contemporary offices, workspaces and meeting spaces in convenient, city centre locations. The business aims to provide a mix of flexible workspace solutions that target predominantly local, small and growing businesses rather than larger more corporate occupiers. It is precisely these smaller developing businesses that need the benefits that flexible occupation offers, and are increasingly dependent on this to ensure their business grows and thrives. By creating this mix of spaces and varying sizes of office our aim is to become embedded in the local business community, contribute to its development and be part of its success.
- 6.18 As such, in line with paragraph 38 of the Framework, the proposed development will dramatically improve economic, social and environmental conditions on and surrounding the site, with commitment from the applicant to bring forward a high quality development which will be of very significant benefit to Reading town centre.

7. Relevant Planning Policies

- 7.1 This section outlines the key planning policy considerations relevant to the proposed development at a national and local level.
- 7.2 It follows Section 54(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990), as amended by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.3 The Local Development Plan comprises the recently adopted Local Plan (November 2019). The Local Plan supersedes all previous existing development plans in Reading. This means that the Core Strategy (adopted 2008, amended 2015), Reading Central Area Action Plan (adopted 2009) and Sites and Detailed Policies Document (adopted 2012, amended 2015) cease to be used now that this Local Plan is adopted.
- 7.4 At a national level, relevant planning policy and guidance is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework ('the NPPF') published 2019 and the Planning Practice Guidance ('the PPG') in 2014 and updated as an online resource. These form a further material consideration.
- 7.5 There are a number of documents that are SPD's/SPG's the determination of this planning application, these are as follows:
- Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (January 2017)
 - Employment, Skills and Training Supplementary Planning Document (April 2013)
 - Employment, Skills and Training SPD (April 2013);
 - Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (October 2011);
 - Planning Obligations under Section 106 (April 2015); and
 - Sustainable Design SPD (July 2011).
- 7.6 In addition, the City Centre Framework (March 2008), Berkshire Functional Economic Market Area Study (February 2016), Reading Local Transport Plan, 2011-2026 (April 2011) and Reading Borough Council Cycle Strategy 2011-2026 are adopted as a technical documents produced by RBC which underpin the adopted Development Plan, and are considered material considerations to the determination of this applications.

Local Plan Designations

- 7.7 For the purposes of the adopted Development Plan, the Adopted Proposals Map is shown below. The Proposals map identifies the site as:
- An Area of Archaeological Potential (encircled by black dotted line);

- Within a Conservation Area (area highlighted by spots);
- Designated primary frontage in Central Reading (green line);
- Located within the Office Core (blue line) and
- Within a site identified for development/ change (area shaded grey)



Figure 1 Extract of RBC Adopted proposals map

7.8 Within this section, we set out the adopted and emerging policies that are relevant to the determination of this application. Sections 8 this Statement will consider the justification for the proposed development in light of these policies.

Adopted Local Plan

7.9 We have set out the relevant policies of the adopted Local Plan (November 2019) to the proposed development below:

- **Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development** – states that a positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- **Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction** - requires all major non-residential developments to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible.

- **Policy CC3: Adaption to Climate Change** – all developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change
- **Policy CC4: Decentralised energy** – any non-residential development of over 1,000 sqm shall consider the inclusion 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.
- **Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage** – Development should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management, including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts and designs that provide adequate, well-designed space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.
- **Policy CC6: Accessibility and Intensity of Development** - The scale and density of development will be related to its level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities, with the densest and largest scale development taking place in the most accessible locations
- **Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm** - requires all development to be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area, taking account of urban layout; density and mix; scale: height and massing; and architectural detail and materials.
- **Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity** - seeks to ensure that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties
- **Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment** - All proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located.
- **Policy EN2: Areas of Archaeological significance** - Applicants should identify and evaluate sites of archaeological significance by consulting the Historic Environment Record. This will require an assessment of the archaeological impacts of development proposals to be submitted before the planning application is determined. Planning permission will not be granted in cases where the assessment of the archaeological impacts is inadequate.
- **Policy EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas** - The special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Positive consideration will be given to proposals which take opportunities to enhance the character of conservation areas.

- **Policy EN6: New Development in Historic Context** - In areas characterised by heritage assets, the historic environment will inform and shape new development. New development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development
- **Policy EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network** - On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. For some types of development, including all major schemes, an ecological survey report and/ or bat survey will be required.
- **Policy EM1: Provision of Employment Development** - Provision will be made for a net increase of 53,000-112,000 sqm of office floorspace and 148,000 sq m of industrial and/or warehouse space in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036.
- **Policy EM2: Location of new Employment Development** - 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
- **Policy EM4: Maintaining a variety of premises** - A range of types and sizes of units should be present in the Borough, and proposals should maintain or enhance this range. In particular, the overall level of start-up and grow-on space should be maintained and, where possible, increased, and any loss of small units should be offset by new provision
- **Policy TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy** - Planning permission will not be granted for major development proposals unless there is a commitment to implement measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities, such as through provision to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; and through agreed travel plans, safe routes to local facilities and services, including schools and parks, and similar measures.
- **Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking** - Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.
- **Policy RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres** – Reading is identified as a Regional Centre within the adopted Local Plan. Central Reading will see the greatest levels of development and change.
- **Policy CR1: Definition of Central Reading** - The Central Area boundary as shown on the Proposals Map will mark the edge of the town centre other than where specified. Major office development of over 1,000 sq m will take place in the Office Core.

- **Policy CR2: Design in Central Reading** - Applications for development within Central Reading should, amongst other things, build on and respect the existing grid layout structure of the central area; provide appropriate, well designed public spaces; architectural details and materials used in the central area should be high quality; and should be designed with consideration of adjacent development sites, and should not prevent or cause unreasonable burdens on the future development of those sites.
- **Policy CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading** - Proposals for new development will need to make a positive contribution towards the quality of the public realm of the central area
- **Policy CR7: Primary Frontages in Central Reading** - Uses on the ground floor along the designated primary frontages as shown on the Proposals Map will be within one of the following use classes: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1, D2 or related sui generis uses, unless it would be an entrance to upper floors.
- **Policy CR14: Other Sites for Development in Central Reading** - The following sites will be developed according with the principles set out in this policy (this policy is specific to the application site):
 - **CR14e 3-10 Market Place, Abbey Hall and Abbey Square**

Development for retail and related uses on ground floor with residential and/or offices on upper floors, designed to enhance contribution of site to Conservation Area. Possible pedestrian link between Market Place and Forbury Square/Abbey Square. Rear servicing and preservation of historic building line. Development should:

 - *Enhance the Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings;*
 - *Reflect the prevailing height of Market Place;*
 - *Take account of the high potential for archaeological significance;*

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2019) ('The Framework')

7.10 The Framework was updated in 2019 and its content is a material consideration in the determination of this application. The relevant sections of the Framework are identified below:

Achieving Sustainable Development

- **Paragraph 7** of the Framework sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- **Paragraph 8** of the Framework reiterates that the planning system has three overarching objectives:

- *an economic objective* – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth
 - *a social objective* – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - *an environmental objective* – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land.
- **Paragraph 10** states that at the heart of the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
 - **Paragraph 11** sets out that, for decision-taking, this means:
 - approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - (i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - (ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Decision Making

- **Paragraph 39** of the Framework sets out that that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.
- **Paragraph 41** of the Framework states that, for their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process.
- **Paragraph 41** reiterates that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Building a strong, competitive economy

- **Paragraph 80** of the Framework highlights 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.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

- **Paragraph 85** of the Framework emphasises that planning decisions should *“support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation”*.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

- **Paragraph 91** states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other– for example through mixed-use developments and strong neighbourhood centres.
- **Paragraph 92** requires planning policies and decisions to:
 - (a) *plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments*
 - (b) *take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;*
 - (c) *guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*
 - (d) *ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and*
 - (e) *ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services*

Promoting sustainable transport

- **Paragraph 102** states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
 - (a) *the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
 - (b) *opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
 - (c) *opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
 - (d) *the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities*

for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and

- (e) Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.*
- **Paragraph 103** states that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.
- **Paragraph 109** stipulates that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- **Paragraph 110** of the Framework notes that, within this context, applications for development should:
 - (a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport*
 - (b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility*
 - (c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards*

Making effective use of land

- **Paragraph 117** emphasises that planning policies and decisions should “*promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses*”. This includes accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.
- **Paragraph 118** expands on this, stating that planning policies and decisions should:
 - (a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes;*
 - (b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, or flood risk mitigation*
 - (c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs;*
 - (d) 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*
- **Paragraph 122** asks that Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- (a) *the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
- (b) *local market conditions and viability;*
- (c) *the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
- (d) *the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
- (e) The importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

Achieving well-designed places

- **Paragraph 124** of the Framework reiterates that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.
- **Paragraph 127** of the Framework asks that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
 - (a) *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;*
 - (b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - (c) *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);*
 - (d) *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;*
 - (e) *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*
 - (f) *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.*
- **Paragraph 131** states that, in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- **Paragraph 148** of the Framework sets out that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- **Paragraph 184** states that heritage assets are identified as an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations
- **Paragraph 189** reiterates that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- **Paragraph 192** emphasises that, in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
 - (a) *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
 - (b) *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
 - (c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*
- **Paragraph 193** states that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).
- **Paragraph 194** of the Framework emphasises that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.
- **Paragraph 200** highlights that Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 7.11 We have set out the scope for each SPD/ SPG below and the key parts of each document relevant to the proposals which will be referenced within Section 8 of this Report.

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (December 2019)

- 7.12 This document aims to promote high standards of Sustainable Design and Construction, and provide further guidance on the sustainability policies in the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Employment, Skills and Training SPD (April 2013)

- 7.13 This SPD sets out obligations which will be sought from developers within the context of the construction of the scheme. The purpose of which is to mitigate the impacts of development to ensure that local people can better access job opportunities arising from new development. This is particularly pertinent against a backdrop whereby there are vast disparities in education across the town.

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (October 2011)

- 7.14 The SPD sets out that within Zone 1, there will be a maximum provision of 1 space per 250sqm for offices. With regard to disabled parking, Section 6 of the SPD sets out that 'when establishing the required level of parking for disabled users it must be remembered that some of these motorists could have the option to switch mode, particular where they have access to high quality bus corridors and routes which tend to feature low floor access buses and other benefits'.
- 7.15 With relation to the location of the site, the 'Zone 1/Central Core Area' (within which the site sits) consists primarily of retail and commercial office developments, with limited residential properties. The area is characterised as having the best transport hubs, located near both the main railway station and bus interchanges. As with the majority of urban area centres, the centre of Reading is well served by public transport, cycle and walking facilities and public car parking.
- 7.16 Where comprehensive and mixed-use development schemes are likely, developers are encouraged to provide shared parking for facilities which are likely to generate peak parking levels during different periods of the day. For cycle parking, if no individual secure facility such as a store or garage is associated with property, dedicated and secure parking is required. This can be in the form of communal cycle parking provision.
- 7.17 With regard to cycle parking, there is a minimum parking requirement for the following:
- 1 space per 200 sqm - Offices (B1a)

Planning Obligations under Section 106 (April 2015)

- 7.18 The SPD sets out that contribution will be required to the following, considered on a site by site basis and should be considered against RBC's adopted CIL (January 2015).

RBC CIL Charging Schedule (January 2015)

- 7.19 There is not CIL payment required for office provision outside of the Central Core.

Other Material Considerations

Reading City Centre Framework (2008)

- 7.20 In 1999, Reading Borough Council published its Reading City 2020 Vision. The objectives for the City Centre Framework are a progression of the Reading 2020 vision and its key themes, which focus on the creation of a vibrant urban heart to Reading. The framework provides a spatial and design overview for the central area both to guide forthcoming developments and to provide reference in the consideration of planning applications.

Berkshire Functional Economic Market Area Study (February 2016)

- 7.21 This report establishes the various functional economic market areas that operate across the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership ('TVBLEP') and the six Berkshire authorities of Bracknell Forest, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham.
- 7.22 It is recognised that Berkshire has recorded strong job growth in recent years, outperforming the regional and national average with clusters of professional services activity are accommodated predominately within Reading and Bracknell Forest. Furthermore the scale of employment in Berkshire authorities is generally higher than many adjoining areas, with Reading and West Berkshire representing the largest economies in employment terms.
- 7.23 The report notes that the M4 and A4 corridors as well as the Great Western Mainline and Reading to London Waterloo line play an important role in linking Reading, Maidenhead, Wokingham and Bracknell in travel to work terms, whilst also recognising that that Reading accommodates the largest resident and workplace workforce and has the highest levels of labour self-containment in the sub-region.

Reading Local Transport Plan, 2011-2026 (April 2011)

- 7.24 The Reading Local Transport Plan (LTP) highlights objectives towards achieving improved transportation systems, promoting sustainable travel choices, providing safe and accessible travel options through localised targets.
- 7.25 In 'Our Transport Vision: Connecting Reading', in alignment with the wider context of national and local policy, the overarching themes can be summed within People, Place and Prosperity: "Transport in Reading will better connect people to the places that they want to go: easily, swiftly, safely, sustainably and in comfort. We will meet the challenges of a dynamic, low-carbon future to promote prosperity for Reading."
- 7.26 The LTP encompasses four main strategic objectives under this vision, "inclusion, infrastructure, innovation and intervention": 'Inclusion' focuses on providing accessible and safe choice of public transport for all needs and 'Infrastructure' involves changes in transport provision, including increases in network capacity. 'Innovation' is considered essential in reducing carbon emissions for transport, securing energy and improving air quality and 'Intervention' includes promoting sustainable transport choices, offering viable alternatives to private transport option and improving mobility and information accessibility.

Reading Borough Council Cycle Strategy 2011-2026

- 7.27 As one of the key strategies of the Local Development Framework, Reading Borough's Cycle strategy aims to build upon the achievements since 2008. These included the development of a network of colour-coded cycle routes and the provision of cycle route maps, including the network map of 'Cycling in Reading'.
- 7.28 The strategy outlines the next steps which cover aims to provide new and improved cycle infrastructure, increase cycle parking facilities and promote the benefits of cycling and cycle awareness initiatives and campaigns. Many of the infrastructural aims have already been achieved by 2014. Further to the future aims of the strategy, some of the core objectives relating to infrastructure are as follows:
- *We will aim to increase the number of people cycling to the town centre as outlined in our Corporate Plan and other local destinations including schools and neighbourhood centres. (P. 12)*
 - *We will build on our branded cycle routes by investigating the use of other forms of traffic signs and way-finding to make people more aware of the network and each other. (P. 25)*

8. Scheme Compliance with Policy

- 8.1 As set out previously, Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that development proposals are considered against the relevant provisions of the Development Plan, and other material considerations. Proposals are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.2 The Framework is predicated on the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. The scheme has evolved specifically with these dimensions in mind. The delivery of a high quality scheme will deliver the requirements under paragraph 8 which states that 'economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities'.
- 8.3 This section of the Planning Statement demonstrates that the proposals fully accord with the adopted and emerging Development Plan and as a result in line with paragraph 11 of the Framework the proposals accord with an up-to-date development plan and should be approved without delay.

The Principle of Development

- 8.4 The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. Policy CC1 of the Reading Local Plan states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Reading Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.5 The site currently comprises a single building of conjoined blocks at various heights, straddling a storey height level change between Market Place and Abbey Square. The building was constructed in the 1960-70's in a brutalist architectural style incorporating a concrete façade on Market Place that is widely acknowledged to detract from the character of the surrounding area and the streetscape of Market Place. At present, the building provides active ground floor frontage includes a retail store and a dental practice, separated by the main office entrance which is recessed from the projecting façade of the building.
- 8.6 The site is located within Market Place within the historic centre of Reading, within the Market Place/London Street conservation area which accommodates a number of Grade II Listed Buildings are in proximity to the site including 1 & 2 Market Place located directly south of the Site, the former National Westminster Bank at 13 -16 Market Place to the north of the Site and the Grade II* Simeon Monument directly opposite. Quarter'. The site itself has no specific listing designations.
- 8.7 Reading Borough Council have acknowledged that the site is in need of regeneration and subsequently allocated the site for redeveloped through Policy CR14e (3-10 Market Place, Abbey Hall and Abbey Square) in the Reading Local Plan. This policy requires the development of retail and related uses at ground floor with offices on upper floors with a design that will enhance the contribution of the site to Market

Place / London Road conservation Area and take account of the potential for archaeological significance in this area.

- 8.8 The proposed development sought this application directly responds to the criteria set out in development plan above by retaining the existing retail units in situ at ground floor level, and proposing the internal and external refurbishment of the building so as to raise the profile of the building to provide high quality (Category A) office space with an external appearance befitting of the historical character of the surrounding area. As detailed in subsequent sections of this Planning Statement, the historic and archaeological importance of this area has been a driving factor behind the proposed design, with the application supported by a Heritage Statement and Archaeological report respectively.
- 8.9 Policy RL1 (Network and Hierarchy of Centres) categorises that Reading as the regional centre in the borough with it being by far the dominant centre in the Borough and for much of the surrounding area. In this context, it is recognised that central Reading will see the greatest levels of development and change, acknowledging the need to develop and adapt to market circumstances to maintain its position as a regional centre. In addition to this, the site is located within the central area boundary as shown in the extract of RBC adopted proposals map shown in Figure 1 of this document. In addition to this, Policy CR1(Definition of Central Reading) identifies that the site is situated within the 'Office Core' in Reading which states that major office development over 1,000sqm will take place in this area of Reading. The proposed development seeks an additional 5,206sqm GIA of additional office space on a site allocated for such use, and has been optimised through the necessary infilling and extensions to the existing building and thus complies with local plan policies RL1(Network and Hierarchy of Centres) and Policy CR1(Definition of Central Reading) respectively.
- 8.10 As set out above, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development meets the criteria for development as stated within the sites allocation through Policy CR14e (3-10 Market Place, Abbey Hall and Abbey Square), and local plan policies RL1 (Network and Hierarchy of Centres) and Policy CR1 (Definition of Central Reading) and as such the principle of development in this location is accepted.

Design, Layout and Visual Amenity

- 8.11 The adopted local plan emphasises that the key to the design approach in the town centre is achieving a high quality built environment and public realm. To match this, it is acknowledged that *"much of the development that takes place in the centre will be high density, to help meet the needs for new development as well as to provide a high-quality area that capitalises on its excellent accessibility by public transport"*.
- 8.12 Policy CR2(Design in Central Reading) requires that development within central Reading provide architectural details and materials that are of high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in areas local to the development site. In similar fashion, Policy CR3(Public Realm in Central Reading) states that the public realm should conserve and enhance the historic environment of the town centre including the significance of heritage assets therein and their setting.

- 8.13 In adhering to the policies CR2 and CR3 noted above, it is considered that the proposed design and layout of the proposed development is of an architectural vernacular that is more representative of the historic style found within the conservation area. The proposed development seeks to utilise the existing structural framework of the façade whilst introducing a distinctive and contemporary aesthetic that provides an identity that is currently lacking in the existing building. Further detail on the design journey and heritage implications of the proposed development can be found later in Design and Access Statement and within the Heritage Statement submitted alongside this application.
- 8.14 The proposals aim to add density to the office accommodation, respecting the sensitivity of the conservation area, the key location within the Market Place Square and exploring its adjacency to Abbey Square. Following constructive pre-application discussions with RBC and stakeholders, the proposed development reflects the prevailing height of Market Place by maintaining the fourth storey parapet lines of buildings on western side of the building along Market Place and introducing smooth transition in mass by locating the more extensive additions to the rear fronting Abbey Square. Accordingly, the design responds to the sensitive location of the building by visually splitting the Market Place frontage vertically with a central break and horizontally with a step back and uneven height. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with CR2 (Design in Central Reading) and CR3 (Public Realm in Central Reading) respectively by actively introducing a softer frontage onto the conservation area that better respects the historical context of the building and the surrounding heritage assets.
- 8.15 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. Whilst this includes taking account of density, layout, and scale: height and massing, development will also be assessed on its ability to reinforce local character and distinctiveness by being visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces. The proposed building mass has been sculpted to respond to all aspects of urban mass and grain around it, by stepping back to the west, building up and enclosing space to the west and creating a stepped roofscape seeking to unify the blocks currently within the Site.
- 8.16 This is in keeping with paragraphs 117 and 118 of the Framework, that seek to promote an effective use of land by promoting and supporting the development of under-utilised land and buildings by giving substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements. As evidenced throughout this statement and the suite of supporting technical documents the design of the building has centred around the desire to introduce a building that is sympathetic to local character and history, with the proposed development representing a significant increase in the standard of design across the site including in accordance with Paragraph 127 and 131 of the Framework.

Active Frontages

- 8.17 Policy CR7 (Primary Frontages in Central Reading) requires the provision of A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1, D2 or related sui generis uses along designated active frontages at

ground floor level. The proposal seeks to retain the existing Dental Surgery (Use Class D1) and Tesco (Use Class A1) active frontages at ground floor level, with only minor changes proposed through this application to the ground floor entrance to the building. The accompanying plans demonstrate how the design seeks to raise the profile of the existing entrance off Market Place, which currently provides little visual connection to the inside of the building, will be renovated to provide a more legible and inviting arrival into the building, and there will be no loss of frontage of retail frontage in accordance with adopted Policy CR7 (Primary Frontages in Central Reading).

Office Use

- 8.18 This scheme responds to the requirements of Policy EM1(Provision of Employment Development) and Policy EM2(Location of new Employment Development) that requires a net increase of 112,000sqm of office floorspace for the period up to 2036. The supporting text to these policies identifies that this is reliant upon the development of offices in Central Reading so as to be well served by a choice of transport options and continue the town's recent economic success at the heart of Berkshire. The refurbishment of this building through both infilling and corresponding extensions will provide approximately an additional 5,200 GIA of B1(a) office to Reading's employment space on a site allocated for such uses. In this regard the proposed development accords with the adopted Development Plan. As set out in detail below, this development seeks to diversify the office space within central Reading so as to attract prospective tenants and occupiers befitting of Reading's stature within Functional Economic Area within Berkshire and the wider South East.
- 8.19 Policy EM4 (Maintaining a Variety of Premises) states that a range of types and sizes of commercial units should be present in the Borough, and proposals should maintain or enhance this range. The development proposed through this application is a direct response to the requirement to enhance the overall level of start-up and grown on space in borough. As previously identified earlier in this statement, the Clockwise working model seeks to provide a mix of small private office spaces for business between 2 and 14 people, allowing occupiers to grow their space as their business expands; with a dedicated desk offer allowing individuals to occupy their own allocated desk in an open plan communal, collaborative and buzzy environment.
- 8.20 Furthermore, Paragraph 80 of the Framework emphasises that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, with significant weight being placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. As evidenced through the supporting Design and Access Statement and the accompanying plans, the internal layout of the building is to be reconfigured so as to greatly enhance the capacity of the building to accommodate this flexible, co-working space. The centralisation of the new lift core and WC provision allows for a breakout space at each level and clearer circulation as you move throughout the building whilst alterations at ground floor level seek to raise the arrival experience onsite through an enhanced reception area, with the community hub also located at ground floor to greater facilitate entrepreneurial, collaborative and supportive culture active engagement and raise amenity levels for prospective tenants.

- 8.21 The redevelopment of this site will deliver high quality office space (Category A) that is appealing and appropriate for small businesses but is also a practical and efficient workspace. In accordance with Policy EM4 (Maintaining a Variety of Premises), the proposed development will allow for a diversification of Reading's office space and ensure a healthy and balanced local economy by providing sufficient space for small- and medium-sized enterprises

Heritage and Archaeology

- 8.22 As part of this submission, due consideration has been given to adopted policies EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment), EN2 (Areas of Archaeological Significance), EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) and EN6 (New Development in a historic context), all of which require that consideration be given to historic areas and areas of historic importance with regard to the significance of heritage assets and their setting within the context of the development proposals.
- 8.23 As such, a Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Turley Heritage which considers the relationship of the site to neighbouring listed buildings and any potential impact on the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area, in which some of the identified heritage assets are located.
- 8.24 This report identifies the existing building of not having any landmark quality, with it having *"at best only a neutral effect on the architectural interest / qualities of this historic urban space"*. The brutalist design is not reflective of the style, form or local materials of the surviving historic buildings within this part of the conservation area and in some ways detracts from the special qualities that define this designated heritage asset. Similarly, it does not contribute positively to the significance of nearby listed buildings as a part of their settings and this shared townscape.
- 8.25 This view was shared by consultees during the pre-application process as identified in Section 5 of this Planning Statement. These comments have influenced the final design proposals for this development, with the principal frontage of the building maintaining the existing four storey parapet line, alongside the introduction of quality materials and detailing that better relates to the historic buildings in the area providing a "heritage benefit" that would enhance and better reveal the significance of the conservation area. It is therefore considered that the proposed development accords with Policy EN1(Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) that expects development proposals to protect and where possible enhance, the significance of heritage assets and their settings and meets the tests of Paragraph 192 of the Framework which requires local planning authorities to take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 8.26 The progressive stepping back and also narrowing of the width of further storeys into the depth or rear of the Site ensures that this line remains clearly legible within local views within and across the square. Recognising the overall height and scale of the existing building would increase as a result of these proposals, this approach helps to reduce the visual impact of the uppermost storeys. Whilst it is acknowledged that the scale of built development on Site would increase as a result of this scheme; and so the

character and appearance of this part of the conservation area and setting of nearby listed buildings would also change, the Heritage Statement concludes that the character and quality of key views and landmark features within this historic space would not be adversely affected by these proposals.

- 8.27 Accordingly, proposed development can demonstrate that it meets the requirements of Policy EN3(Enhancement of Conservation Areas) and EN6 (New Development in Historic Context) in that the character and architecture of Market Place / London Street conservation areas the influenced the design proposals through the choice of materials and detailing on the façade making an a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraphs 193 and 194 of the Framework set out that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. As set out above, and within the Heritage Statement that accompanies this submission, the development proposed when viewed overall would not lead to harm and that the designated assets in close proximity to the site will each be conserved and their significance either sustained or unaffected as a result of these proposals.
- 8.28 The site's location within a sensitive area of historical importance has been thoroughly considered throughout the conceptualisation and design and of the proposed development. The site has been identified as being situated within the Abbey Quarter and an area of archaeological significance, accordingly this planning application submission is accompanied by an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment, which demonstrates compliance with Policy EN2 (Areas of Archaeological significance), including a review of the Berkshire Historic Environment Record.
- 8.29 The Archaeological Desk Based Assessment concludes that even though the presence/absence and state of preservation of archaeological remains within the site is unknown, the construction of the existing buildings on the site will have resulted in widespread damage to any remains that may survive. This, combined with the limited groundworks for the proposed development, mean that the potential impact on archaeological remains that may survive within these areas will be very limited, or possibly non-existent.
- 8.30 In any event, it is proposed that a programme of archaeological watching brief works be undertaken on the areas of groundworks so as to enable the recording of archaeological remains that may be revealed. This is considered appropriate given the site's location and demonstrates how the development has complied with adopted Policy EN2 (Areas of Archaeological significance).

Daylight and Sunlight

- 8.31 Policy CC8(Safeguarding amenity) sets out that new development must not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, including having regard to access to sunlight and daylight.
- 8.32 A daylight / sunlight and overshadowing assessment has been undertaken by XCO2 consultants in accordance with BRE guidance. This report follows constructive

discussions with Officers at RBC at pre-application stage and the validation requirements expected for this proposal. This assessment has concluded that the vast majority of the surrounding properties are of commercial use and not sensitive for daylight and sunlight impacts assessment. Accordingly, it is considered that the recently consented scheme at 1 – 9 Kings Road to the south of the site at Jackson's corner is the only neighbouring building that would be impacted by this proposal.

- 8.33 The daylight, sunlight and overshadowing analysis indicates that there will not be a significant impact on surrounding properties arising from the proposed development at 6-8 Market Place, Reading so as to accord with Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Reading Local Plan. The vast majority of windows and rooms that will s reduction in daylight levels will still retain levels of light commensurate with those experienced in such a constrained site and therefore these effects are considered acceptable.

Highways, Parking and Servicing

- 8.34 The site is advantageously located to make full use of the frequent and direct public transport services provided by the local bus services and the national rail network in accordance with the requirements of Policy TR1(Achieving the Transport Strategy) and TR5(Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charing). The site is located in Reading Town Centre within Market Place. The site is located in the midst of retail properties to its west and to its north and is located some 500m to the southeast of Reading Railway Station.
- 8.35 National and local policy guidance sets out that development should be sustainable in transport terms, i.e. easily accessible by a range of modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport and situated within convenient distances to local facilities. Adequate levels of cycle parking should be provided, and access arrangements should be safe. Fundamentally, development should not be prevented from coming forward for transport reasons where the residual impacts are not severe.
- 8.36 It is generally accepted that walking and cycling provide important alternatives to the private car, and should also be encouraged to form part of longer journeys via public transport. CIHT's document 'Planning for Walking' (2015) states that for journeys shorter than one mile (approx. 1,600m) walking is the dominant mode and that walking neighbourhoods are typically characterised as having a range of facilities within an 800m walking distance. In addition, the guidance in Manual for Streets (MfS) states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly for journeys under 2km.

Sustainable Transport

- 8.37 It is generally accepted that walking and cycling provide important alternatives to the private car, and should also be encouraged to form part of longer journeys via public transport. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the Institute of Highways and Transportation (IHT) has recently published updated guidance that provides advice with respect to the

provision of sustainable travel in conjunction with new developments. Within these documents it is suggested that:

- Most people will walk to a destination that is less than one mile (approx. 2km) (*Planning for Walking, 2015*);
- The bicycle is a potential mode of transport for all journeys under five miles (approximately 8km) (*Planning for Cycling, 2015*); and
- Walking distances to bus stops should not exceed 400m, whilst people are prepared to walk twice as far (800m) to rail stations (*Planning for Walking, 2015*).

Walking Facilities

- 8.38 The application site is located within a well-established network of pedestrian routes that encourage safe pedestrian activity in the local vicinity and throughout the wider town.
- 8.39 Market Place is largely pedestrianized, with buses being allowed through it to serve bus stops on the road fronting the site. There are restrictions on access to buses, taxis, occasional servicing vehicles and pedestrians in a one-way southbound direction. Northbound access from the adjacent side of the triangular route restricts access to pedestrians only. High Street across Market Place provides a northbound walking route across Friar Street to Reading Railway Station.
- 8.40 Abbey Square to the rear is street lit and is subject to a speed limit of 30mph. It has an anticlockwise one-way system in order. There are footways of 2.4m width and 1.7m width on its east and west sides respectively. Duke Street to the south is also a street-lit carriageway that is subject to a speed limit of 20mph.

Cycling Facilities

- 8.41 Although the proposals will include secure cycle provision, as explained in the Design and Access Statement, public cycle parking facilities are present on King Street's western and eastern ends (six cycle parking spaces) which equate to a total 12 spaces.
- 8.42 Reading Borough Council (RBC) operate a cycle hire scheme 'ReadyBike'. The closest ReadyBike docking station (containing 10 bicycles) is located towards the entrance of Broad Street on the western end of King Street. 16 cycle stands for public use are also situated here.
- 8.43 Reading Central library is located near to the site facing Abbey Square's exit and provides three public cycle stands. RBC suggest a number of designated local cycling routes and denotes cycle parking facilities, provided in the Reading Network Map 2014.
- 8.44 Given the site's location in the town centre, the Central Reading Cycle Map located on the website (<http://www.reading-travelinfo.co.uk/cycling/central-reading-cyclemap.aspx>) highlights town centre cycling routes.
- 8.45 National Cycle Routes are also present near the site. Route 4 can be accessed via Duke Street across London Street. The route follows the length of River Kennet and provides access to the further northeast and southwest of Reading. Route 5 can be accessed (approximately 800m to the north of the site) via The Forbury, across Vastern Road.

These routes connect to multiple local cycle routes and link the site to places such as Royal Berkshire Hospital and Reading College.

Bus Services

- 8.46 The site is well served by an extensive bus network that provides high frequency services throughout the day, including evening and school services.
- 8.47 Bus stops are located close to the site on King's Road and Market Place. These stops are sheltered and provide seating and timetable information for users. Additional bus stops located opposite Abbey Square and on Duke Street to the south, are bus stops from which the westbound services operate from. The stops are well located within 400m walking distance of the site, as recommended by the guideline document 'Planning for Walking' (2015).
- 8.48 The buses offer more than a combined 20 services per hour in the immediate vicinity of the site. This demonstrates that the site location in the centre of Reading provides it with the benefit of being highly accessible by public transport.

Rail Services

- 8.49 Reading Railway Station is situated circa 400m walking distance to the north-west of site (approximately five minutes' walk). Trains operated by Great Western Railway, South West Trains and Cross Country provide direct connections to key destinations such as London (Paddington and Waterloo), Gatwick Airport, Oxford, Maidenhead, Basingstoke, Guildford and Swindon. Direct trains are also available to destinations further afield including Bristol, Southampton, Exeter and Birmingham.

Delivery and servicing

- 8.50 The delivery and servicing for users of the building will be located at the rear of the site, through the existing entrance on Abbey Square. By continuing the existing approach to servicing the building, this ongoing servicing strategy will always maintain appropriate access to the rear with deliveries having the potential to be managed to minimise conflict with other users as they will be off the public highway.
- 8.51 The arrival of Crossrail at Reading, timetabled for 2019, will further enhance the accessibility of the area, particularly as Reading station is one of the busiest stations outside London. Crossrail is expected to provide high speeds trains to the centre of London. It is anticipated that four trains an hour at peak times will run from Reading into central London.

Draft Travel Plan

- 8.52 A draft Travel (see **Appendix 4**) has been prepared for the site to help manage accessibility and to promote sustainable travel and reduce where practicable single occupancy private car trips. This includes target measures and monitoring for the ongoing management of the site.
- 8.53 Further discussions with the council on the proposed approach are requested and can nonetheless be secured by planning condition.
- 8.54 This includes target measures and monitoring for the ongoing management of the site.

- 8.55 In summary, review of existing conditions has demonstrated that the site is in a highly accessible town centre location. The local pedestrian and cycling environment is of very good standard and the site is located within convenient proximity to Reading Railway Station which has fast and frequent services to a wide range of destinations. The site is situated in close proximity to a number of bus stops that provide a large number of services to destinations within Reading and further afield.
- 8.56 Given the location of the site within Reading Town Centre, there are a high number of local services and facilities within a short walking and cycling distance of the site. In summary, with reference to the key transport principles set out in the NPPF, this chapter demonstrates that:
- The site is located in a suitable location in transport terms – in that it meets the tests of the NPPF as it is in location that provides genuine opportunities for sustainable travel options to be taken up;
 - The proposals fully accord with Policy CC6 (Accessibility and Intensity of Development); Policy TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy; Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking;
 - Safe and suitable access to the site will be achieved for all people; and
 - Will not result in an increase of vehicle movements over the course of a typical day; and therefore the residual cumulative impacts of the development will certainly not be 'severe'.
- 8.57 The proposed development accords with the local and national transport planning policy background. On this basis, the proposal is acceptable in highways and transport terms.

Energy and Sustainability

- 8.58 The adopted Local Plan at policies CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction), CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change), CC4 (Decentralised Energy) and CC5 (Waste Minimisation) provides the policy requirement in relation to energy generation and waste. An Energy Statement prepared by The Design Collective has been submitted with this application which identifies that the development will deliver an estimated 24% betterment with regards to CO₂ emissions. The Energy Statement has assessed and considered a range of energy sources so as to comply with Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) and has identified that there is scope to accommodate solar photovoltaic (PV) panels at roof level to further the sustainability of this building in line with planning policy.
- 8.59 In addition, it is noted that additional measures to reduce energy use and carbon emissions have been incorporated into the design, including through the retention of the existing structure of concrete frame and floor slabs to achieve a high thermal mass to assist of control of the internal temperatures, whilst also incorporating mixed mode ventilation strategy, utilising natural ventilation within perimeter areas and providing mechanical ventilation boosts to internal areas to meet CIBSE Guide AM10. These measures demonstrate how the building has been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change in accordance with CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change).

- 8.60 With regard to waste minimisation at Policy CC5, appropriate measures will be put in place to ensure more sustainable approaches to waste management in relation waste storage and recycling. Measures will be agreed with the occupiers of the proposed development, prior to occupation.
- 8.61 In relation to the construction phase, a site waste management plan will be prepared. This will set out how waste will be managed, reduced, reused or recycled.
- 8.62 A Sustainability Statement has been prepared by Turley Sustainability so as to fully address the requirements of Policy CC2(Sustainable Design and Construction) and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. This policy states that all major non-residential developments are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible.
- 8.63 Turley Sustainability has undertaken BREEAM Excellent Pre-assessments by implementing the two methodologies; New Construction (NC) 2018 and Refurb and Fit Out (R&FO) 2014 methodologies to ensure that both new build and refurbished elements of the development are assessed using a suitable method. As detailed within the accompanying document, applying BREEAM New Construction criteria to a refurbished scheme is not suitable as it would mean the refurbished areas would need to achieve already challenging criteria intended for new buildings, such as energy performance. Similarly, the New Construction criteria is therefore unlikely to be feasible for a refurbished building.
- 8.64 At this stage in the development process, the pre-assessments indicate how the both aspects of the development can go beyond the minimum 70% score required for BREEAM 'Excellent' whilst including relevant mandatory requirements in accordance with the requirements of Policy CC2(Sustainable Design and Construction). A detailed summary of credits targeted through each assessment is provided within the Sustainability Statement.

Ecology

- 8.65 This application is supported by a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment prepared by John Wenman Ecological Consultants to demonstrate the schemes compliance with adopted policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network). The report identifies that the built up habitats in the immediate surrounding area provides poor quality habitat for commuting and foraging bats.
- 8.66 A full survey of the building has been undertaken with the findings documented within the Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment. The baseline survey concluded that the site offered features of very limited suitability for use by crevice-dwelling bat species with there being no evidence of the presence of roosting bats was found inside or on the exterior of the tank rooms during a close inspection. It is therefore considered that the building is of negligible bat roost potential and it is considered highly unlikely that the building supports roosting bats.

Overall conformity with development plan policy

- 8.67 For ease of reference, in the following pages we summarise how the proposals accord with the adopted development plan policies.

Local Plan Policy	Development Objective	Scheme Compliance
Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).	The Applicant and Council have worked proactively throughout the development process. This Statement identifies that the application accords with all relevant policies in the development plan and should be approved without delay.
Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction	All major non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible	The Applicant is proactively seeking to attain credits to achieve 'BREEAM' status as detailed within technical reports that accompany the submission.
Policy CC3: Adaption to Climate Change	All developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change.	The Applicant seeks the refurbishment of an existing derelict building and bring it up to modern occupancy standards, with commitments to meet identified BREEAM standards.
Policy CC4: Decentralised energy	Any non-residential development of over 1,000sqm shall consider the inclusion 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.	The Applicant has identified assessed and considered potential areas for renewable energy within the development, including provision of PV panels at roof level.
Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage	Development should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings	A site waste management plan will be prepared. This will set out how waste will be managed, reduced, reused or recycled.
Policy CC6: Accessibility and Intensity of Development	All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.	The site is located within an identified regional centre that is widely recognised within the Borough and wider South East region with strong connections by public transport
Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm	All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the	Introduction of a localised colour and material palette that corresponds with the

	character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located	surrounding historic context, including architectural improvements at Abbey Square to the rear of the site.
Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity	Ensure that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties	The Daylight and Sunlight report that is submitted alongside this application identifies that there will be limited impact resulting from the development on the amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings.
Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment	All proposals expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located.	The Heritage Statement that accompanies this application identifies how the proposed development will greater reveal the historical context of the area. It is recognised that whilst the proposed development will lead to change in the setting of listed heritage assets, they will not amount to harm.
Policy EN2: Areas of Archaeological significance	An assessment of the archaeological impacts of development proposals to be submitted before the planning application is determined	The Application is supported by an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment which has consulted the Berkshire Historic Environment Record. It is considered that the construction of the existing buildings on the site will have resulted in widespread damage to any remains that may survive but it is proposed a programme of archaeological watching brief works be undertaken on the areas of groundworks.
Policy EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas	The special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced	It was agreed at Pre-Application Stage that Officers and consultees found that the existing building detracts from the setting of the conservation area and the proposed development provides a betterment in this regard.

Policy EN6: New Development in Historic Context	In areas characterised by heritage assets, the historic environment will inform and shape new development.	It is acknowledged that the scale of built development on Site would increase as a result of this application; and so the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area and setting of nearby listed buildings would also change. However it is considered that that the character and quality of key views and landmark features within this historic space would not be adversely affected by these proposals.
Policy EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network	All major scheme will require an ecological survey report and/ or bat survey	The Bat Survey that is submitted in conjunction with this application has concluded that there is no evidence of roosting bats.
Policy EM1: Provision of Employment Development	Provision will be made for a net increase of 53,000-112,000 sq m of office floorspace	The proposed development seeks to provide an additional 5,206sqm GIA of flexible co-working space at the heart of Reading.
Policy EM2: Location of new Employment Development	Major office development will take place in the centre of Reading	The site is located within a central location with an existing employment use. The increased density will help diversify the existing office stock in Reading.
Policy EM4: Maintaining a variety of premises	A range of types and sizes of units should be present in the Borough, and proposals should maintain or enhance this range. In particular, the overall level of start-up and grow-on space should be maintained.	The internal layout of the building is to be reconfigured so as to greatly enhance the capacity of the building to accommodate flexible, co-working space with a communal hub at ground floor.
Policy TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy	Support sustainable transport and the Council's strategies.	The site is highly accessible located in close proximity to a number of sustainable modes of transport. Enhanced Cycle parking provision and lockers/shower/changing facilities will be provided to promote sustainable travel.

Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking	Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.	The development makes provision for electric vehicle charging points at 10% of the proposed spaces. The site is highly accessible by all forms of sustainable transport given its central location.
Policy RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres	Reading is identified as a regional centre with central Reading accommodating the greatest levels of development and change.	The site is allocated for regeneration within the adopted Local Plan and retains and enhances the buildings existing use.
Policy CR1: Definition of Central Reading	Major office development of over 1,000 sqm will take place in the Office Core.	The Site is located within the Office Core as defined by the Proposals Map. The proposals seek to retain and enhance its existing use.
Policy CR2: Design in Central Reading	Development will build on and respect the existing grid layout structure of the central area and use high quality detail and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials	The design has been informed by a historical appraisal of the surrounding area with the proposed development retaining the fourth floor parapet line with sympathetic increase in mass at less sensitive locations across the site.
Policy CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading	Proposals for new development will need to make a positive contribution towards the quality of the public realm of the central area	The proposed development seeks to replace an existing elevation that actively detracts from the historical setting with a design that enhances the built environment in a sensitive location
Policy CR7: Primary Frontages in Central Reading	Requires ground level floorspace along the designated primary frontages to be within one of the following use classes: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1, D2 or related sui generis uses. Frontages should be of a high visual quality.	The retail units at ground floor will remain in situ throughout the development with service requirements being retained for retail units. There will be no loss in active frontage, with the proposal actively seeking an enhanced reception space and strengthen the building's connection with the street

CR14e 3-10 Market Place, Abbey Hall and Abbey Square	Enhance the Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings and reflect the prevailing height of Market Place	The historic context of the surrounding area has informed development proposals with the introduction of a new façades. The proposals seek to increase density of the existing office use to create a more efficient use of land in a highly sustainable location.
---	--	--

9. Section 106 and CIL

- 9.1 The Applicant is committed to agreeing appropriate and proportionate Heads of Terms with RBC at the appropriate time once the contributions required associated with the application proposals are understood. It is acknowledged that adopted policy CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) requires that appropriate contributions are sought to allow the appropriate infrastructure to be secured to mitigate the proposed development.
- 9.2 The Applicant is happy to comply with such a requirement, subject to each contributions demonstrating compliance with CIL Regulations 2010 (122 and 123).
- 9.3 In line with the CIL Charging Schedule the applicant considers that there will not be any additional CIL charges as a result of the development as it fall outside the central core area.

Use	Charging Zone Location	Charge £/m ²
Offices	Central Core	£30

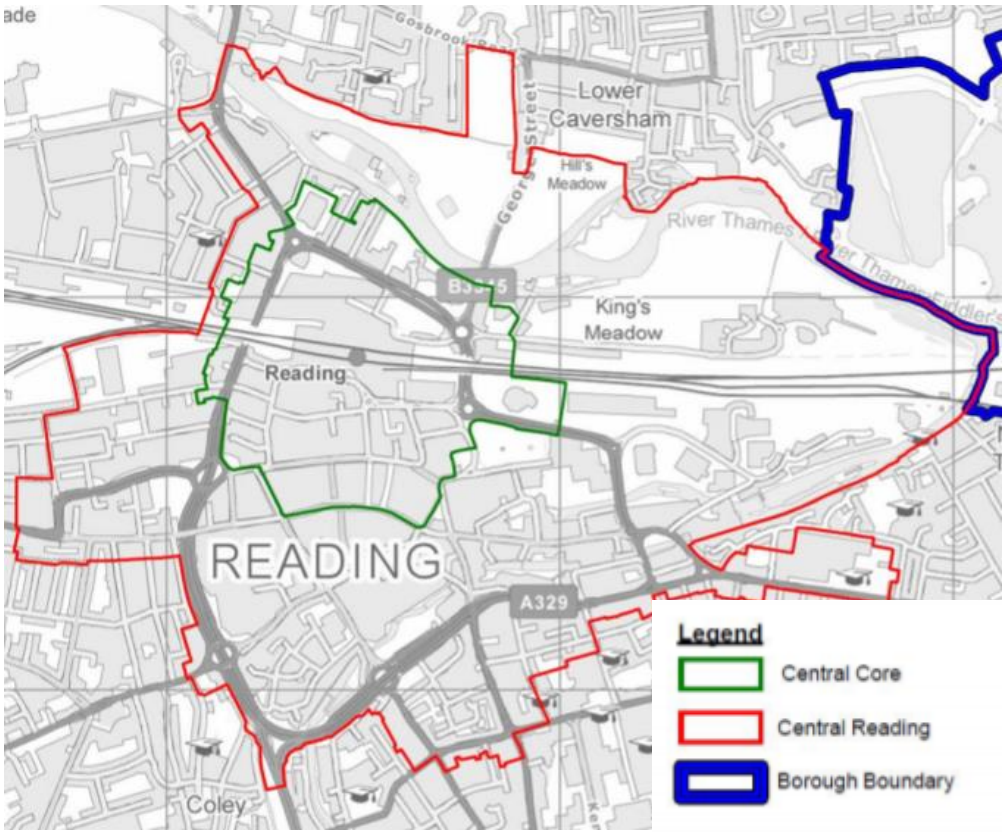


Figure 2 RBC CIL Charging Zones

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 The submission of this full planning application is made on behalf of Castleforge Partners in relation to the regeneration of 6-8 Market Place within Reading Town Centre. The site is within a prime location within central Reading and fronts the main pedestrian thoroughfare of Market Square.
- 10.2 The site has long been underappreciated and detracts from the historical setting in which it is situated in a key location at the heart of Reading. The proposed development will see new and optimised use of the existing building would contribute positively to the characteristic mix of uses, vibrancy and vitality of the Market Place and surrounding conservation area. The new elevation design and use of high quality, taking account of the local pallet with regards to materials and detailing that will greatly improve its external appearance within the conservation area and the local streetscape with the setting of nearby listed buildings. As demonstrated throughout this document, the site is allocated for redevelopment, with proposed development complying responding the existing site constraints whilst making efficient use of land to raise the profile of the existing building.
- 10.3 This application has been prepared and submitted in light of pre-application discussions with Reading Borough Council and relevant engagement with stakeholders. Reflecting on comments during the pre-application process, the applicant has altered the design of the scheme to mitigate the visibility and subsequent impact of the rooftop extensions on the setting of conservation area in which it sits. The proposal has been robustly assessed within this Statement against the current development plan and is supported by a robust suite of technical documentation.
- 10.4 This proposed developments has been designed on the basis of the inherent opportunities to optimise the site capacity given it is a previously development site with a high level of accessibility and within a main opportunity area for the town centre. The positioning of the site entrance and the façade treatment from ground to the top floor has been carefully considered such that the high quality design will ensure that a landmark building is delivered, greater revealing the historical characteristics of the Market Place conservation area and strengthening the quality of the built environment in Reading .The proposals have been balanced with a number of technical considerations which have not identified any adverse impacts. The submitted scheme is considered to fully align with the requirements of relevant policies of the Development Plan on such matters.
- 10.5 Overall, the application accords with the adopted Local Plan and the Framework at Policy CC1 and the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Within the policy state that ‘a positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken’ with planning permission ‘determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise’. It is considered that the proposals have been wholly developed in line with both adopted policies contained within the development plan, and the guidance set out within the Framework, which is supported by the relevant technical evidence.

Appendix 1: Pre-Application Document



6-8Market Place

Pre Application Submission

A11831 BR0005 P4

24/03/2020



tp bennett

Contents

Introduction

1.0 Site Context

2.0 Client & Brief

3.0 Design Principles

4.0 Design Proposal

5.0 Façade Study

Appendix: Existing Building Plans

Introduction

This pre-planning report introduces the proposal for the refurbishment and development of 6-8 Market Place, Reading.

The applicant land owners are Castleforge Partners.

It is proposed to redevelop the Site to provide a high quality office development which response to current market demand.

The proposals are compliant with the Site's allocation for office development in the recently adopted local Plan (Policy CR14e).

The proposals primarily comprise the provision of additional massing sensitively placed to provide an uplift of office floorspace.

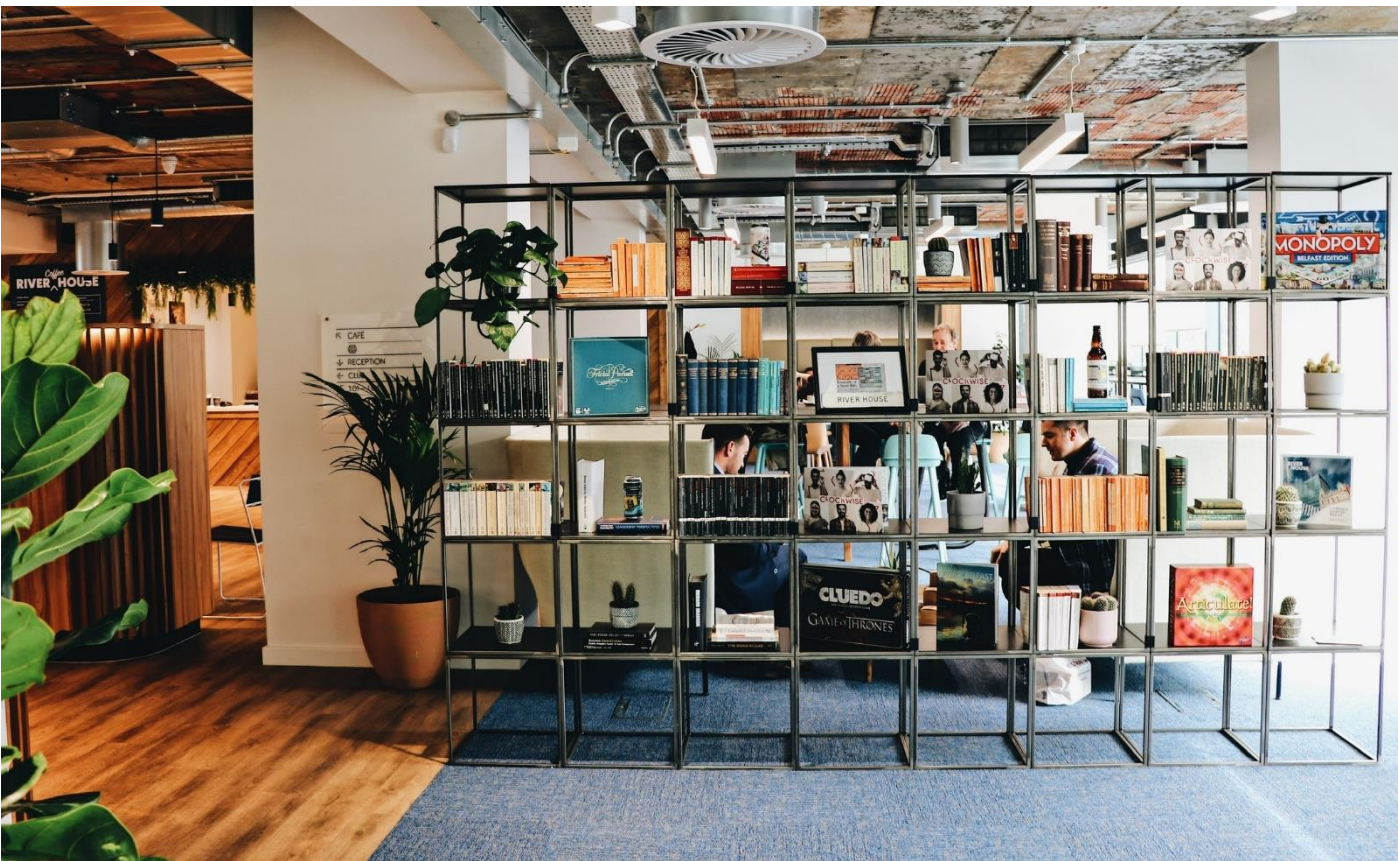
The proposals seek the internal refurbishment of the existing building and will also provide enhancements to the west facade which is currently of little visual merit and detracts from the Conservation Area within which 6-8 Market Place is situated.

As demonstrated in this document, the proposals, which relate to an allocated site, will result in a high quality office development appropriate to its central location in Reading.

It will be demonstrated that the proposals accord with the Development Plan, which allows for intensification in sustainable areas and directs office development to within the urban area, and the NPPF which is underpinned by the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for the planning system to support the economy by providing a mix of different workspaces.

Advice is sought on the proposal in order to be developed in line with current planning policy, responsive to local context and formed corroboratively from resulting feedback.

The design will provide a high quality solution to the improvement of the specified site to meet the requirements set out in various local, regional and national standards.



I.0 Site Context

I.0 Site Context

I.1 Site Location

The Site, 6-8 Market Place, is located on Market Place opposite Market Place square within Reading town center.

Market Place Square consists of variety of architectural styles which generally extend to four storey's in height (generally comprising ground floors and three floors above).

6-8 Market Place is situated in a highly sustainable location in Central Reading and benefits from access to a range of sustainable modes of transport. Reading train station is located approximately 300m north west of the site. A number of bus stops are located along Market Place including one directly in front of Soane Point.



- | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| ① Thames Tower | ③ St Laurence Church | ⑤ 6-8 Market Place | ⑦ Central Library | 👉 👈 pedestrian route |
| ② Town Hall | ④ Forbury Gardens | ⑥ Market Place | ⑧ Oracle Shopping Centre | 👉 👈 vehicular route |

1.0 Site Context

1.2 Existing Building

The site is occupied by a single building of multiple heights, straddling a storey height level change between Market Place and Abbey Square.

The building presents ground plus 3-storeys, with a set back floor and roof terrace. On Abbey Square, to the rear, it presents a height of ground, plus 5-storeys plus 2-storeys at the south end.

In addition to this, there is a single-storey plant room in the Centre of the scheme which projects above the office levels.

The building was constructed in the 1960's-70's and features a brutalist concrete façade and active ground frontage.

The remaining façade elevations revert to simple brickwork with punched windows that appear to sit in floor to ceiling height bays. In addition, a series of concrete columns support a 1.5-2.0m overhang beginning from the 1st floor up to the 3rd.

A summary of the key issues with the existing building are as follows:

- 1) Dated façade treatments
- 2) No clear entrance to existing building
- 3) No building identity as a prime location in Reading Centre
- 4) Lacking connection to public square
- 5) Inefficient massing configuration
- 6) Lack of height on less sensitive frontage
- 7) Blank concrete wall needs replacing to enhance office space



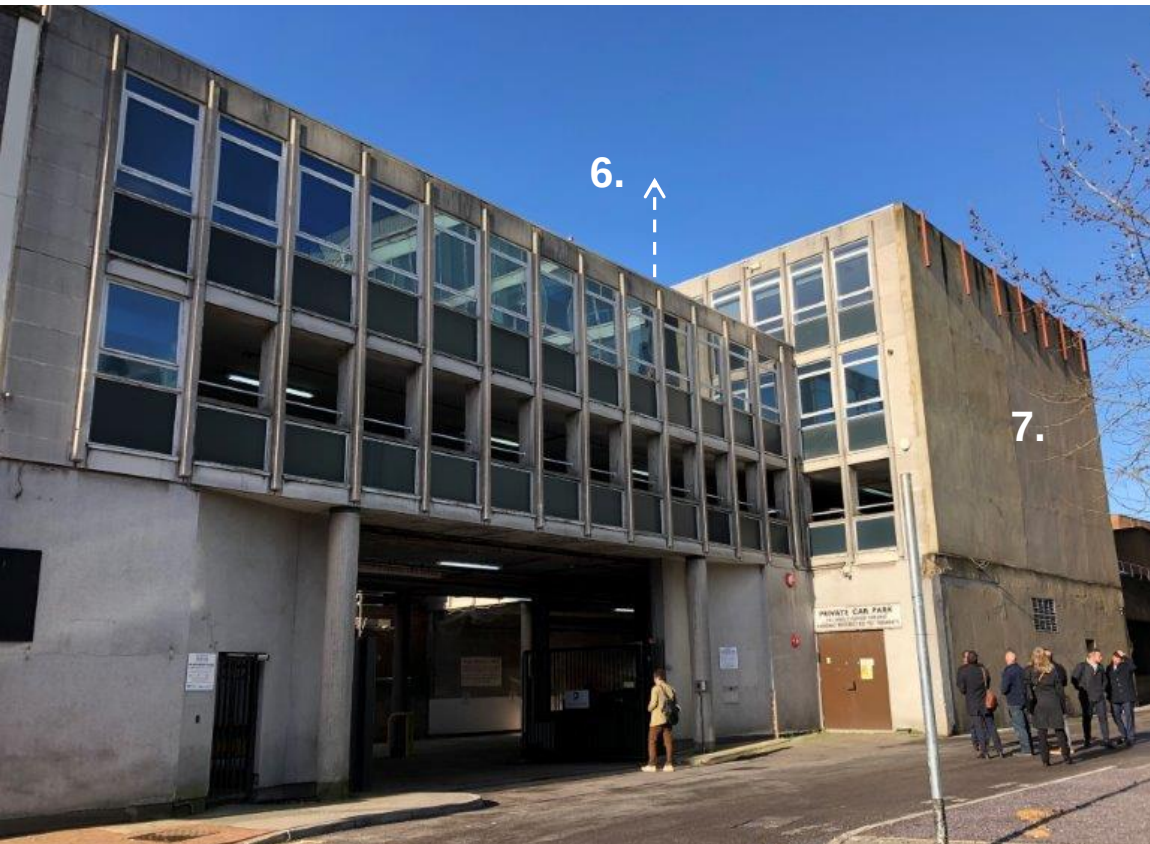
West Facing Façade onto Market Place Square



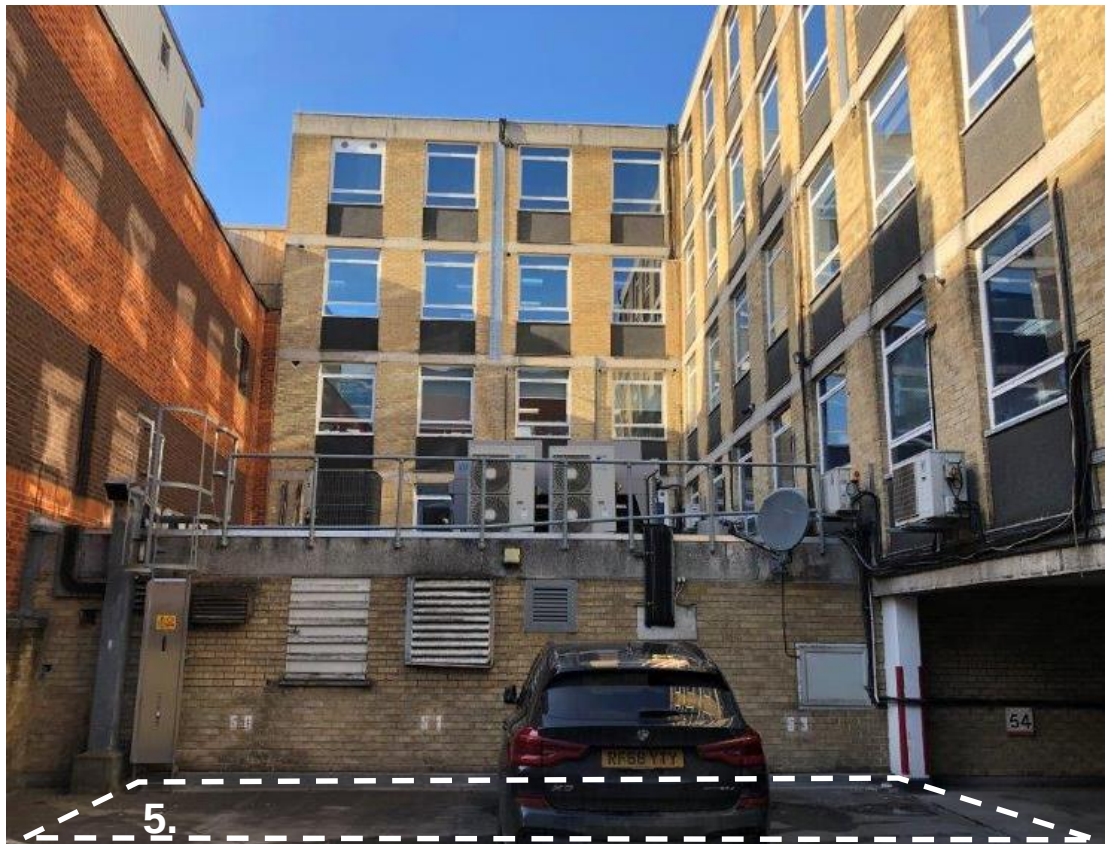
Rear Façade facing the Regus Building



End of Loading Bay



Entrance to Loading Bay/Basement Car Park from Abbey Square



Internal courtyard Façade on Ground Floor Car Park Level

I.0 Site Context

I.3 Historical Context

The Site is located within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area.

A number of Grade II Listed Buildings are located in proximity to the Site including 1 & 2 Market Place located directly south of the Site, the former National Westminster Bank at 13 -16 Market Place to the north of the Site and the Grade II* Simeon Monument directly opposite.

The Church of St Laurence to the north of the site is one of only a few Grade I listed buildings in Reading and its setting and any impact will be of paramount importance to the design.

The site is also located within an area of archaeological potential and the designated 'Abbey Quarter'. The site itself has no specific listing designations.

- Conservation Area —
- Views ...>
- Listed Buildings ■
- Buildings of Townscape Merit ■
- Site □
- Public Open Space ▨
- Landmark Buildings ★



Historical Context Map

I.0 Site Context

I.3 Historical Context



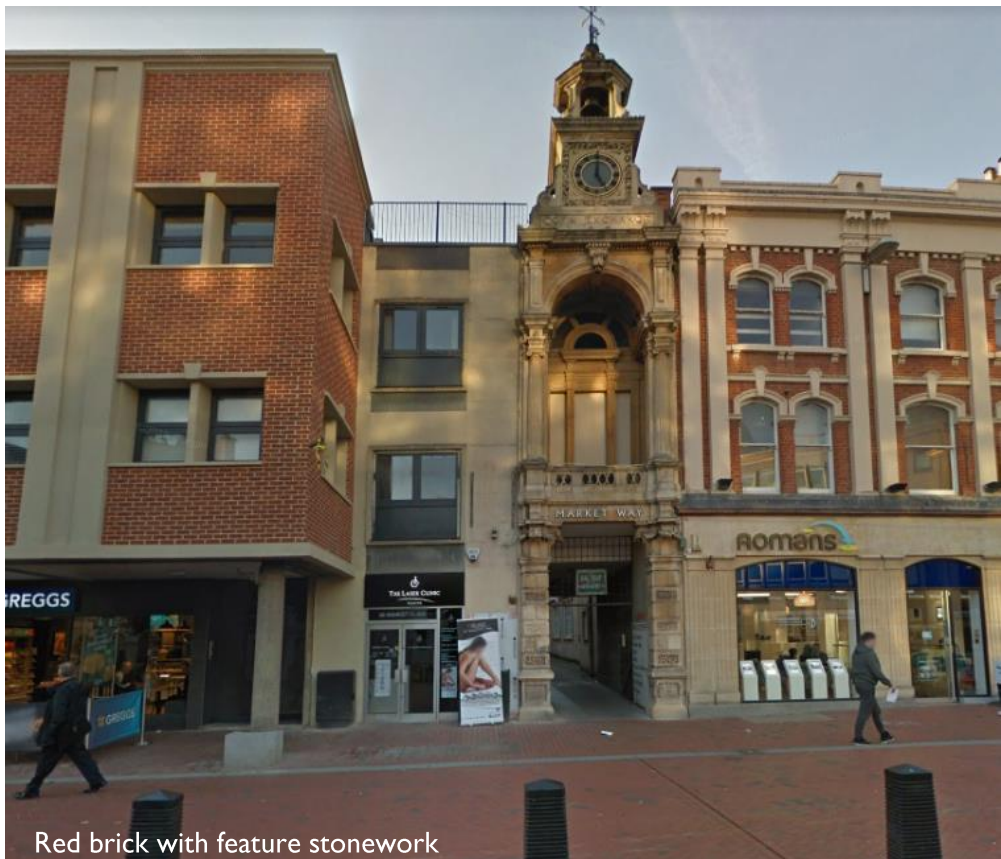
1. Reading Townhall: 3-4 storey high listed building



2. 173 Friar Street: Façade Detail



3. NatWest Bank



4. 37-42 Market Place

The surrounding context of Market Place Square includes many buildings of townscape merit that are rich in architectural value. Many of the listed buildings feature a combination of red and grey brickwork, while some offer a mixture of brickwork and stone. There is a steady regimented rhythm to the streetscapes with a clear, defining order to window heights and alignment.

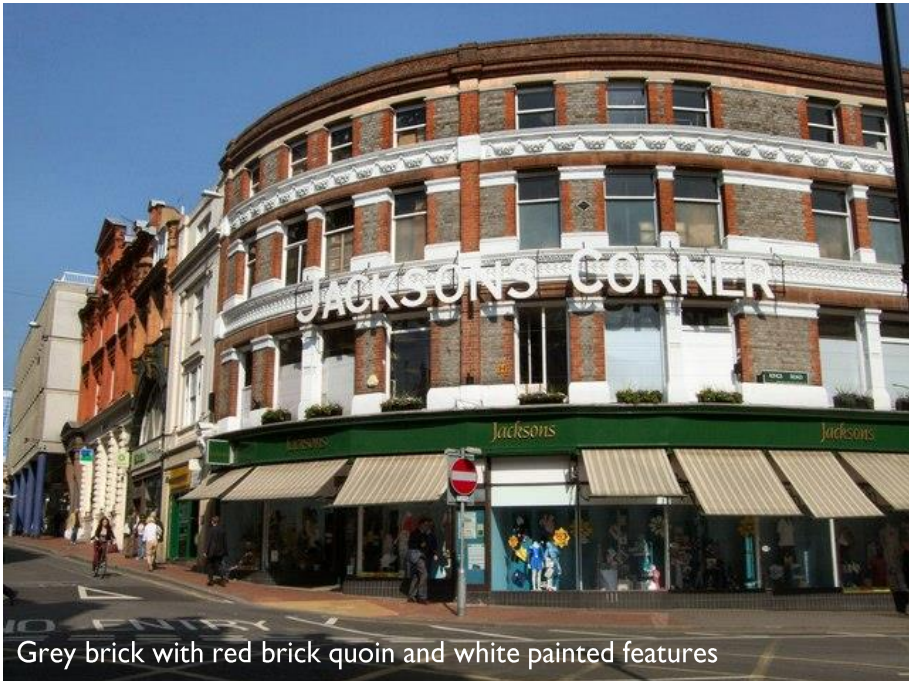
When approaching the redesign of the existing façade, keeping this sense of materiality and order will both ground, and enhance the scheme within this very sensitive area.



Key Map



5. Market House: 3 storey listed Building



6. Jackson's Corner: 4 storey listed building

I.0 Site Context

I.4 Opportunities & Influences

- + Opportunity to enhance Reading's office core provision
- + Enhancement of market place square
- + Improve entrance & appearance of the existing building
- + Potential to activate Abbey Square
- + Rich Architectural Context
- + Enhancement of active frontage

Active Frontage

Access

Stepped Back Mass

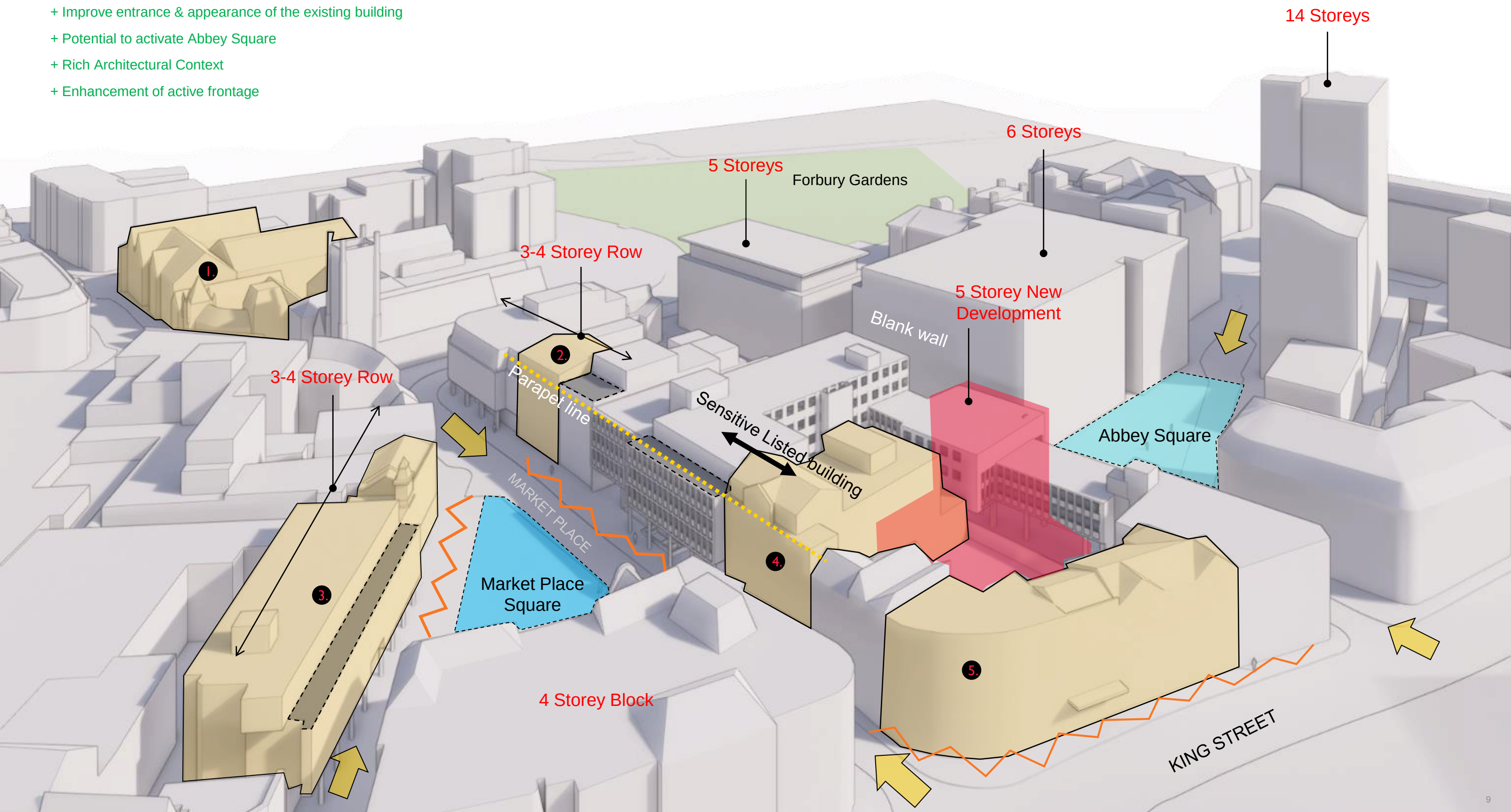
1. Reading Townhall

2. NatWest Bank

3. 37-42 Market Place

4. Market House

5. Jackson's Corner



I.0 Site Context

I.5 Planning Policy & Context

The Development Plan comprises the recently adopted Local Plan (November 2019). On the adopted Proposals Map (November 2019), the Site is allocated as a 'Site for Development' (residential/office development with retail uses at ground floor) (Policy CR14e).

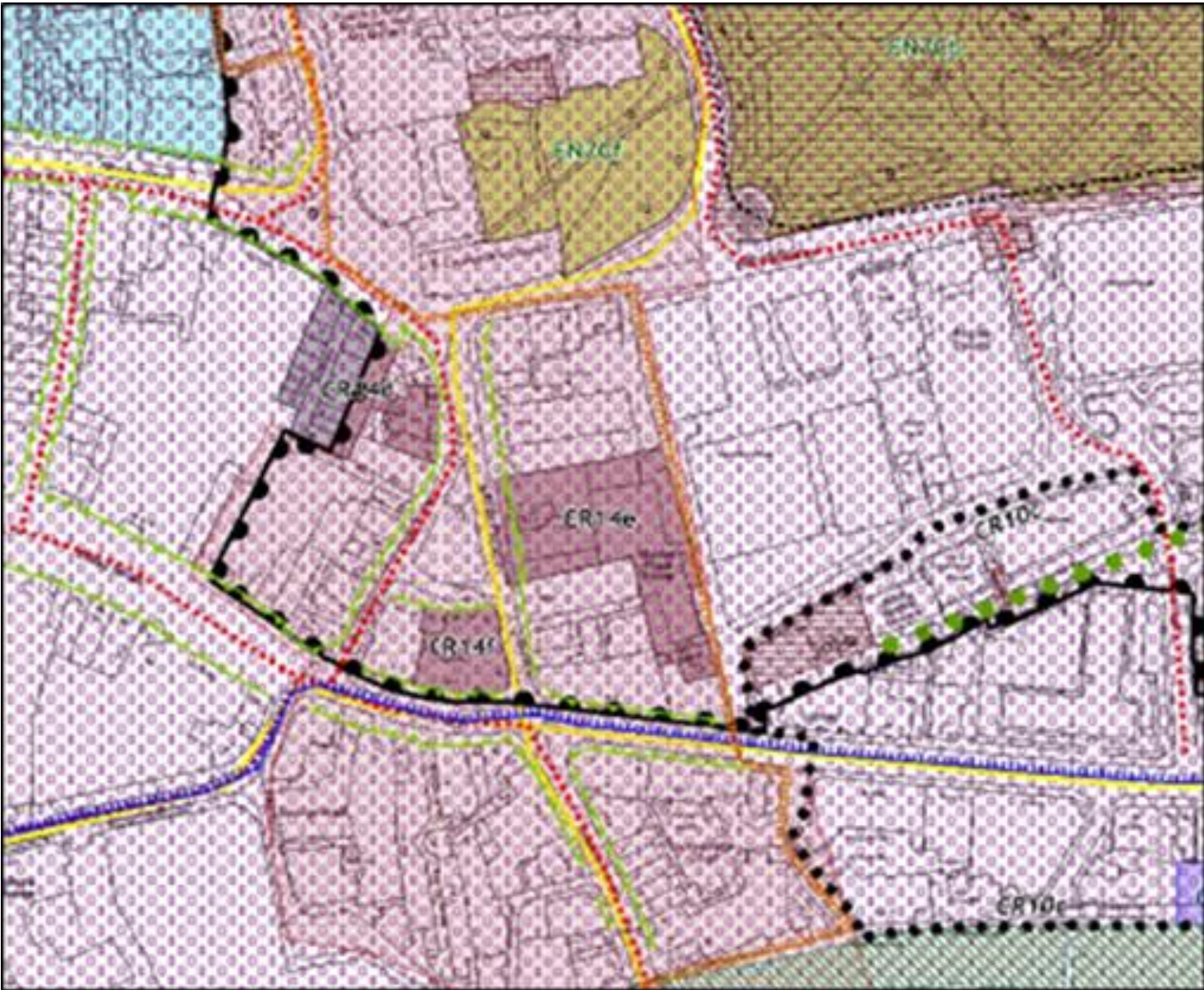
It is also located within the:

- Primary Shopping Area
- Office Core
- Central Core (Policy CR1);and
- Proposed designated primary frontage (Policy CR7).

Of particular relevance to the proposals is Policy CR14e, which relates the Site specifically, states:

'Development for retail and related uses on ground floor with residential and/or offices on upper floors, designed to enhance contribution of site to Conservation Area. Possible pedestrian link between Market Place and Forbury Square/Abbey Square. Rear servicing and preservation of historic building line. Development should:

- Enhance the Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings;*
- Reflect the prevailing height of Market Place;*
- Take account of the high potential for archaeological significance;*
- Address noise impacts on residential use; and*
- Address air quality impacts on residential use.*
- Site size: 0.29 ha 46-70 dwellings plus ground floor town centre uses'*



PROPOSALS MAP KEY	
	Reading Borough boundary
	Conservation area* (see policies EN1, EN3)
	Boundary of Article 4 Direction* (see policies EN1, H7)
	Scheduled Ancient Monument* (see policy EN1)
	Historic Park or Garden* (see policy EN1)
	Area of archaeological potential (policy EN2)
	Local Green Space and Public Open Space (policy EN7)
	Area of identified biodiversity interest* ¹ (see policy EN12)
	Existing or proposed Green Link (policy EN12)
	Major Landscape Feature (policy EN13)
	Boundary of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty* (see policy EN13)
	Ancient Woodland* (see policy EN14)
	Air Quality Management Area* (see policy EN15)
	Core Employment Area (policy EM2)
	Major Transport Project ² (policy TR2)
	Area safeguarded for Crossrail* (see policy TR2)
	M4 Smart Motorway project* (see policy TR2)
	Classified Highway Network* (see policy TR3)
	Cycle Routes* (see policy TR4)
	Boundary of Identified centre ³ (policy RL1) (also shows boundaries of inset maps)
	Key frontage in district and local centres (policy RL3)
	Major Hazard Sites* (see policy OU2)
	Primary Shopping Area (policy CR1)
	Office Core (policy CR1)
	Central Core (policy CR1)
	Designated primary frontage in Central Reading (existing) (policy CR7)
	Designated primary frontage in Central Reading (proposed) (policy CR7)
	Terraced housing in Central Reading (policy CR9)
	Tall buildings cluster (policy CR10)
	Major Opportunity Area boundary (policies CR11-13 and SR1-3)
	Site identified for development or change (policies CR11-14, SR1-4, WRT-3, CA1, ER1)
	Abbey Quarter (policy CR15)
	North of Friar Street and East of Station Road (policy CR16)
	Leisure and recreation use of the Kennet side areas (policy SR5)
	Caversham Park (policy CA2)
	Whiteknights Campus, University of Reading (policy ER2)
	Royal Berkshire Hospital (policy ER3)

Extract from Reading's Local Plan proposals map

I.0 Site Context

Local Plan Policy	Design/Land Use Objectives	Scheme Compliance
CR14e	Development for retail and related uses on ground floor with residential and/or offices on upper floors, designed to enhance contribution of site to Conservation Area. Possible pedestrian link between Market Place and Forbury Square/Abbey Square. Rear servicing and preservation of historic building line. Development should: · Enhance the Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings; · Reflect the prevailing height of Market Place; · Take account of the high potential for archaeological significance; · Address noise impacts on residential use; and · Address air quality impacts on residential use.	– Retail and related uses will primarily be retained at ground floor level – Office development proposed on upper floors – New faced treatment proposed to enhance appearance within Conservation Area – Historic building line will be preserved in Market Place
CC2 (SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION)	All major non-residential developments to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible.	– Proposals will seek to achieve highest level of BREEAM possible.
CC3 (ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE)	All developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change.	– Proposals will be designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change.
CC7(DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM)	All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.	– Massing is sensitively designed and reflects prevailing of immediate area – Architectural detail and materials proposed to imitate and enhance historic context – New statement entrance will strengthen commercial character of the area – Internal refurbishment will ensure the building is capable of adaption over time
EN1(PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT)	All proposals expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located.	– Elements of historic features of surrounding area will be included e.g. materials
EN3(ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS)	Development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.	– Improved west façade proposed to enhance setting within Conservation Area
EN6 (NEW DEVELOPMENT IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT)	New development should respect and enhance architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage in design of new development.	– High quality materials which reflect that of the surrounding context will be used to ensure a more visually pleasing and contemporary aesthetic that compliments the historic built fabric
CR2 (DESIGN IN CENTRAL READING)	Architectural details and materials used in the central area should be high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in areas local to the development site.	– Materials chosen to reflect key historic buildings within surrounding area
CR7 (PRIMARY FRONTAGES IN CENTRAL READING)	Requires ground level floorspace along the designated primary frontages to be within one of the following use classes: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1, D2 or related sui generis uses. Frontages should be of a high visual quality.	– Improved shop fronts will be installed. – Units will provide active frontages.
CR14e(OTHER SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL READING)	Enhance the Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings and reflect the prevailing height of Market Place	– Historic context forms basis of façade enhancements – Building line & height of the immediate fronting Market Place retained
TR1 (ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY)	Major development proposals should demonstrate a commitment to implement measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities, such as through provision to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; and through agreed travel plans.	– The site is sustainably located in proximity to a number of sustainable modes of transport. – Cycle parking and lockers/shower/changing facilities will be provided. – Travel Plan will be implemented.
TR5 (CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING)	Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport. Non-residential development should provide 10% of spaces at EVCPs.	– Adequate car and cycle parking will be provided considering the site's central and accessible location. – EVCPs will be provided.
EM1 (PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT)	Sets out the requirement to provide for a net increase of 53,000-112,000 sq.m of office floorspace over the plan period to 2036.	– Proposals will results in c. 3210 sqm of new, high quality office floorspace.
EM2 (LOCATION OF NEW EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT)	Major office development will take place in the centre of Reading.	– The Site is located within Central Reading as defined on the Proposals Map.
EM4 (MAINTAINING A VARIETY OF PREMISES)	A range of types and sizes of units should be present in the Borough, and proposals should maintain or enhance this range. In particular, the overall level of start-up and grow-on space should be maintained and, where possible, increased.	– The proposals seek to provide a suitable mix and range of office floorspace to attract a wide range of users particularly start up and small businesses.
CC6 (ACCESSIBILITY AND THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT)	Allows for more dense development in accessible areas.	– The Site is located in a high accessible location where intensification of development is considered acceptable.
CR1 (DEFINITION OF CENTRAL READING)	Major office development of over 1,000 sq m will take place in the Office Core.	– The Site is located within the Office Core as defined by the Proposals Map.

2.0 The Client & Brief

2.0 The Client & Brief

2.1 Clockwise

Castleforge Partners is a UK real estate investor that specialises in the refurbishment and repositioning of buildings across a variety of sectors and geographies.

Clockwise is the co-working brand / serviced office platform that has been built up by Castleforge in response to the fact it has become increasingly clear that, in order to flourish, modern businesses require the ability to expand and contract in the same location - saving them cost, time and disruption to their operation - rather than being tied into long and onerous traditional leases.

Clockwise provides well-designed contemporary offices, workspaces and meeting spaces in convenient, city centre locations.

The business aims to provide a mix of flexible workspace solutions that target predominantly local, small and growing businesses rather than larger more corporate occupiers. It is precisely these smaller developing business that need the benefits that flexible occupation offers, and are increasingly dependent on this to ensure their business grows and thrives.

There are 3 main elements to the Clockwise offer:

- A mix of small private office spaces for business between 2 and 10 people, allowing occupiers to grow their space as their business expands
- A dedicated desk offer allowing individuals – often self-employed workers - to occupy their own allocated desk in an open plan communal, collaborative and buzzy environment
- A club area that provides a high quality café with breakout seating where occupiers can drop in to hot-desk, relax, meet new people or swap ideas.

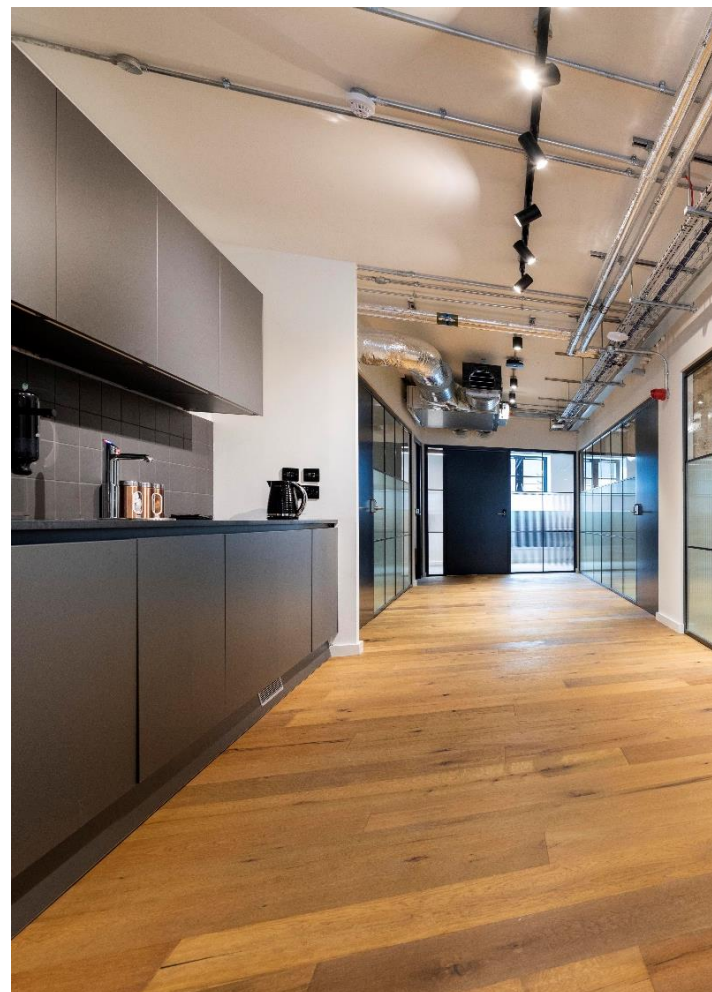
Clockwise is expanding throughout the UK with sites open in major regional cities across a diverse range of buildings from UNESCO heritage sites to modern office properties, and is excited about bringing the offer to Reading.

The proposals, and in particular, the Clockwise offer, help to achieve two of the Council's primary economic objectives of:

- Providing an increase in office floor space (Local Plan Policy EM1; and
- Providing a range of types and sizes of employment space, including for start-up and grow-on space (Policy EM4)



Café/Club Space – Breakout Spaces



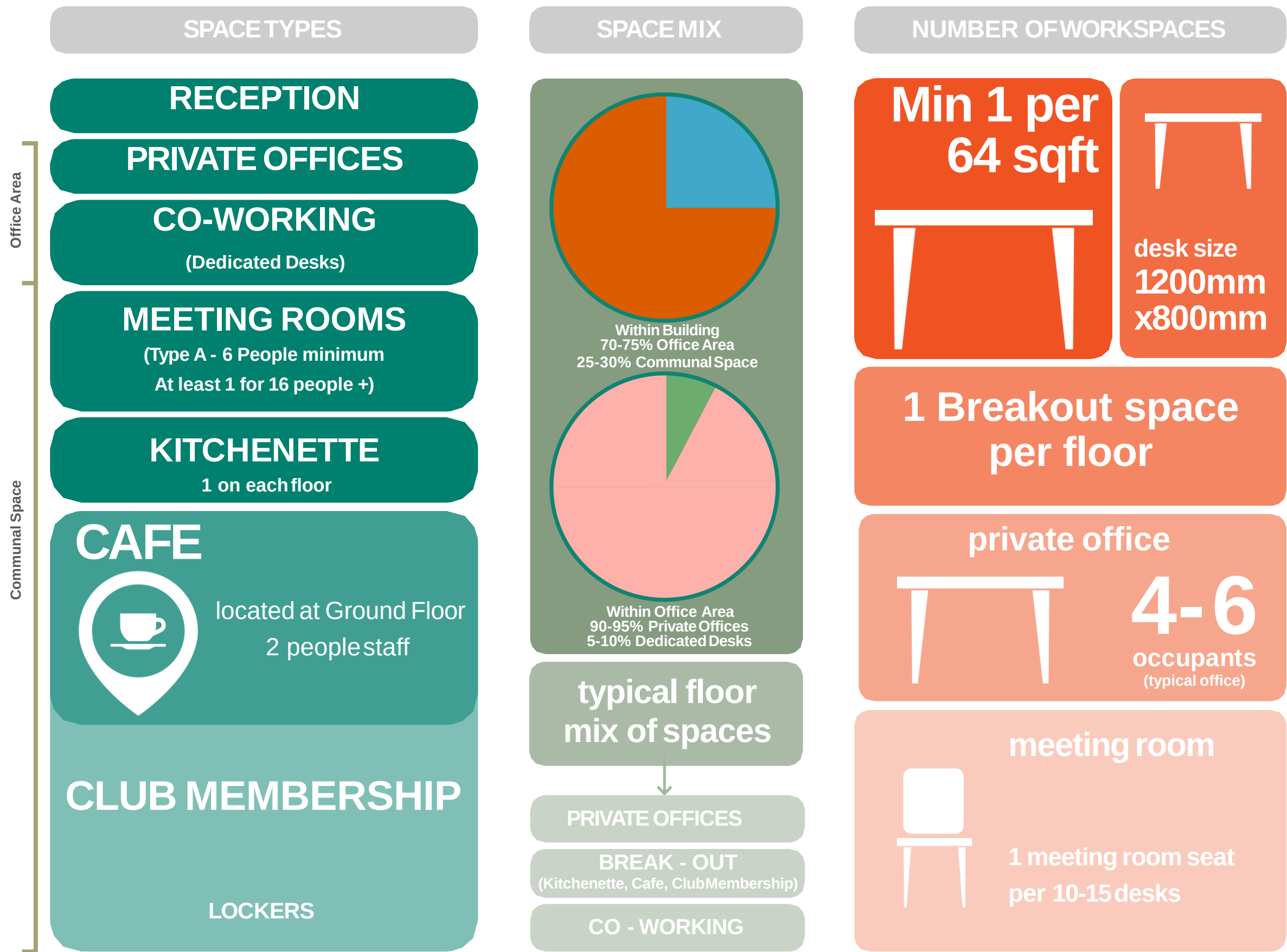
Tea points – Communal Spaces



Varying Office Space

2.0 The Client & Brief

2.2 The Brief



3.0 Key Design Principles

3.0 Key Design Principles

3.1 Proposal Overview

The refurbishment of this building retains the structure and the majority of the facades for the building but proposes to refurbish the interior, extend the floor plates where possible and create a new and fresh image for the exterior of the building facing Market Place Square.

The proposed development comprises of 4 key design principles:

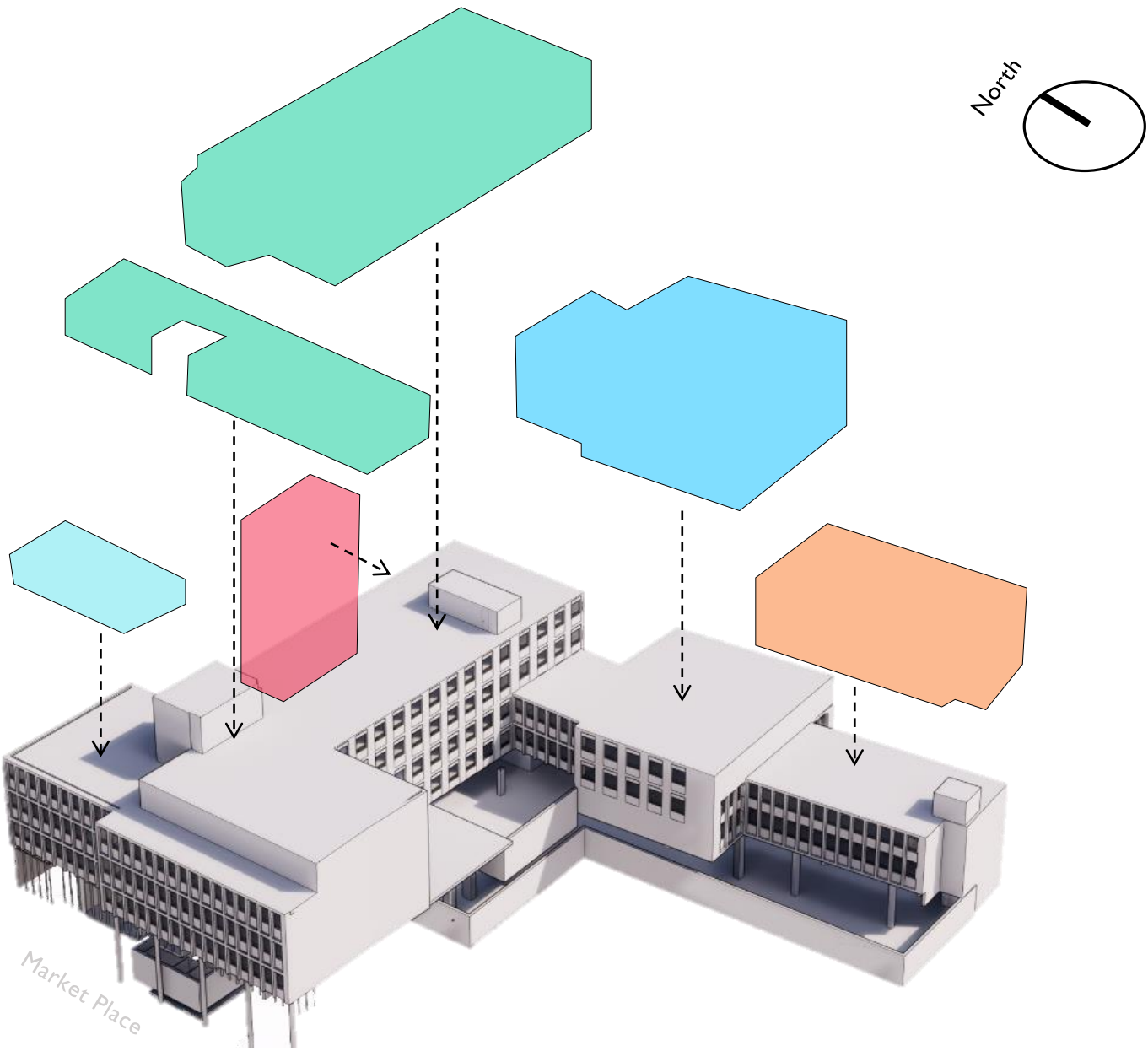
1 Mass

Additional mass has been added based on several studies keeping in mind local and site specific policy.

Due to the constraints of the existing building with the low floor to ceiling heights and the narrow widths to allow natural ventilation strategy, it will be difficult to widen the floor plates. This would reduce light levels, introduce a full mechanical vent system in an already compromised headroom space, and create central dead spaces with the cellular approach of the Clockwise model of accommodation.

The Approach therefore has been to add mass as additional height where possible and appropriate and to create extension wings without compromising the existing accommodation. We are also proposing to infill the existing upper ground car park and create more office space .

The site comprises an existing office development (Class B1(a) Use), which is situated in an accessible, sustainable and predominantly commercial location being located within Central Reading and the defined 'Office Core' where such uses are considered acceptable.



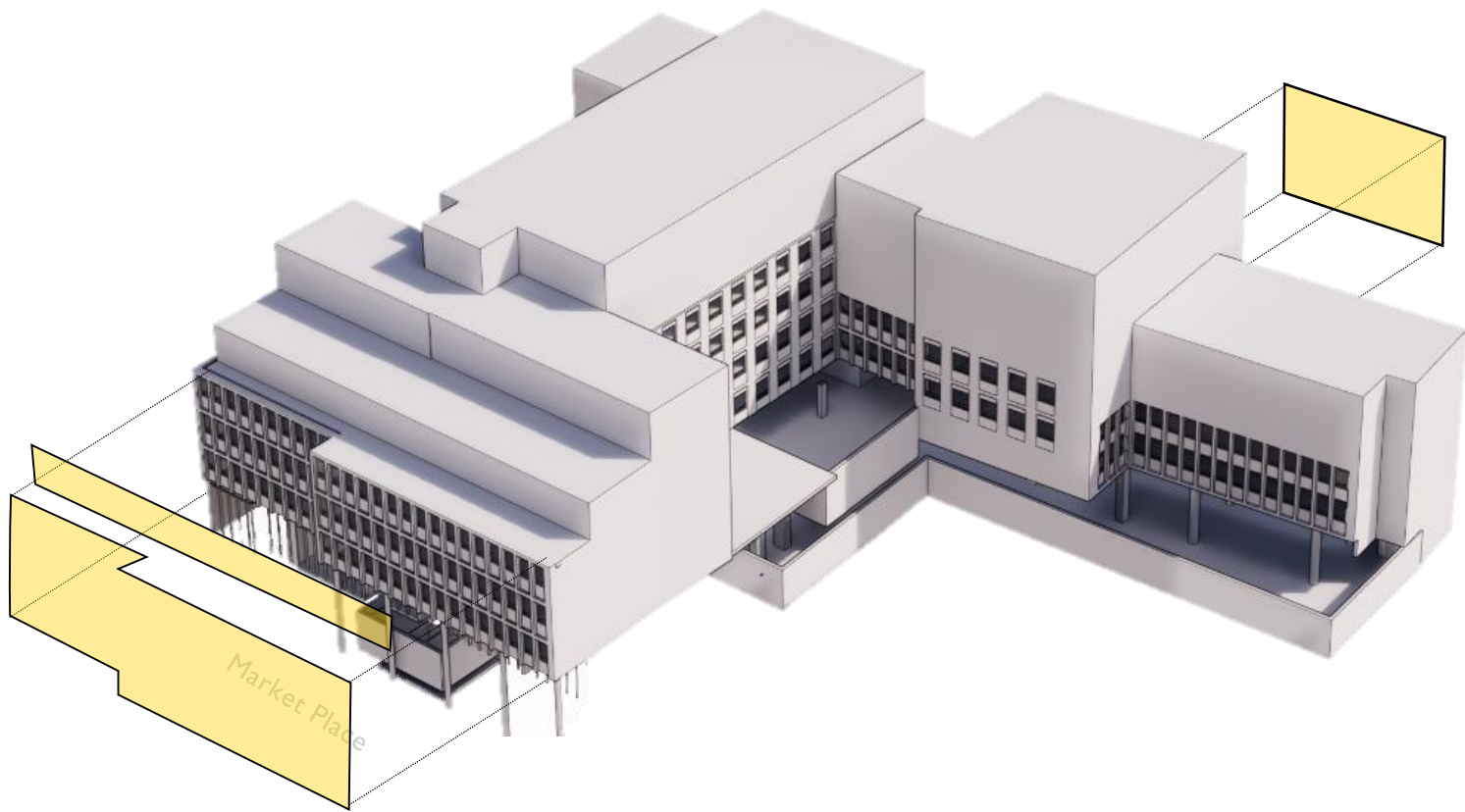
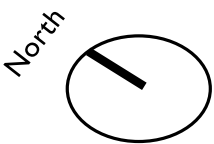
I. Massing

3.0 Key Design Principles

3.1 Proposal Overview

2. Façade

To create a fresh image for the building it is proposed to replace the façade facing Market Place Square and elements of the façade facing Abbey Square. The new areas of mass will also have a light weight façade to unify the whole building. The redesign of the façade will be in keeping with and reflect the immediate context of Market Place Square.



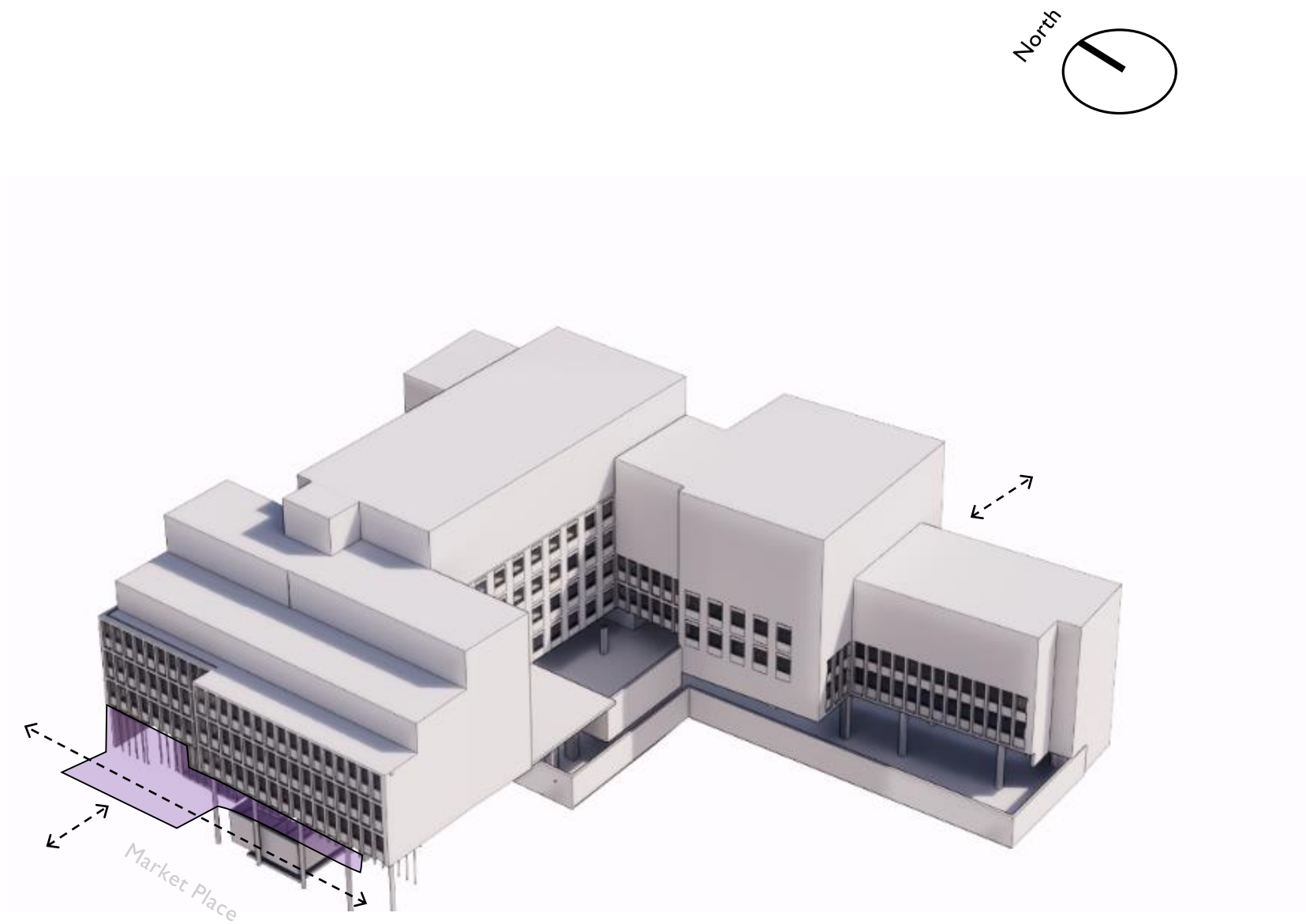
2. New Façade & Identity

3.0 Key Design Principles

3.1 Proposal Overview

3 Ground Floor Activity

The proposals are to retain the existing retail frontage and the existing Tesco's but to widen the office entrance and make a more engaging contribution to the activity of the street front with a café style entrance to the office which is a vibrant buzz of activity. At the rear of the building, we are looking at creating a secondary entrance on to Abbey Square, to make the space more vibrant, however we are mindful of the existing delivery bay which will need to be retained. The majority of existing ground floor uses will be retained in line with requirements of Policy CR7 and CR14e.



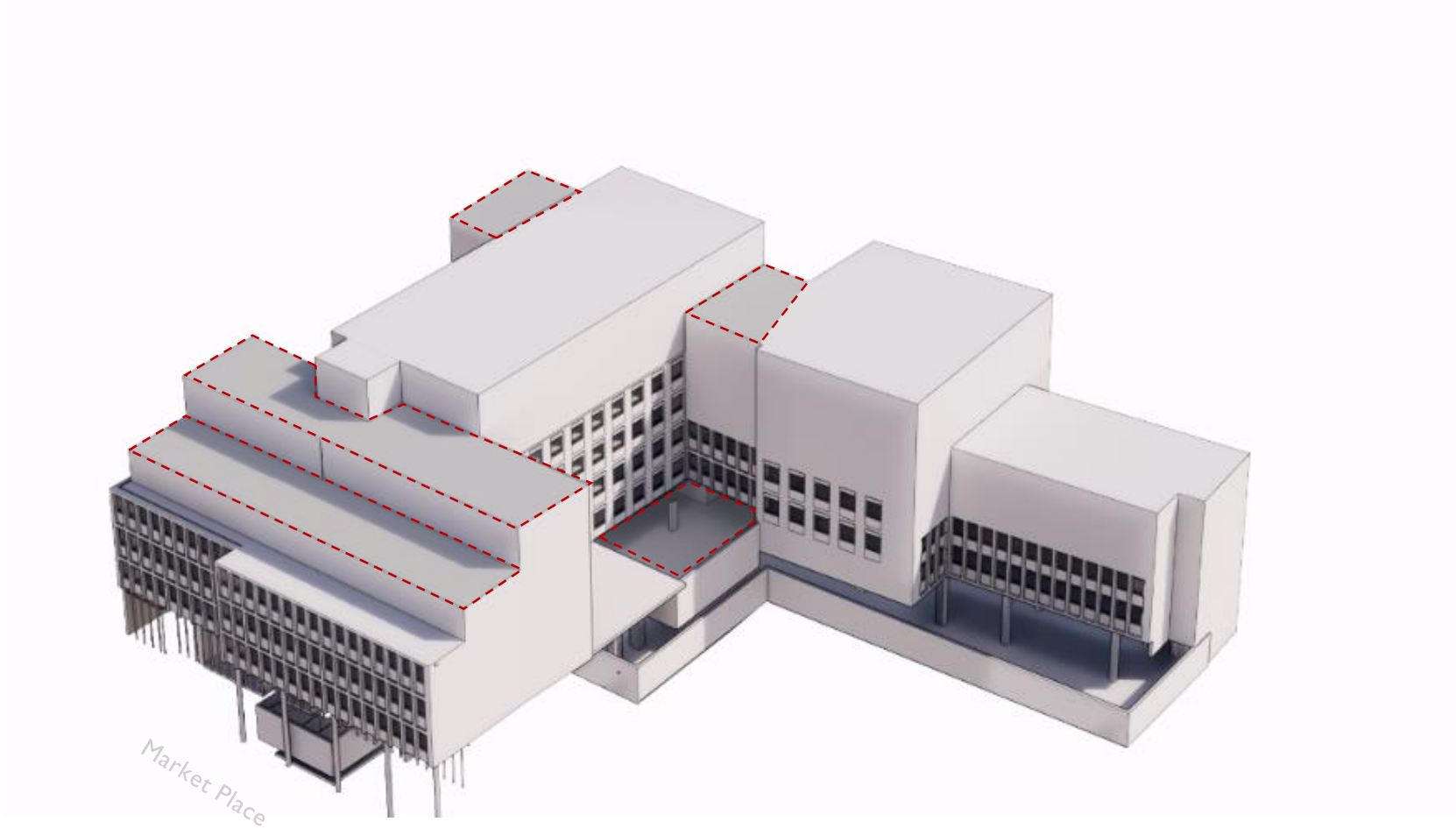
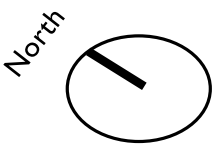
3. Ground Floor Activity

3.0 Key Design Principles

3.1 Proposal Overview

4 Roof top terraces

For the wellness of occupants and to benefit from the great roofscape that is preserved in the centre of Reading, it is proposed to make more of the external and creating a series of terraces on the new mass & internal courtyards at ground level.

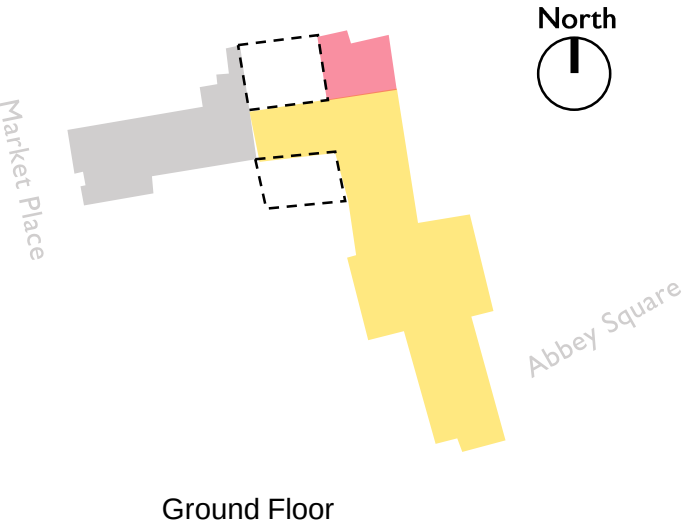


4. Utilising Exterior Space

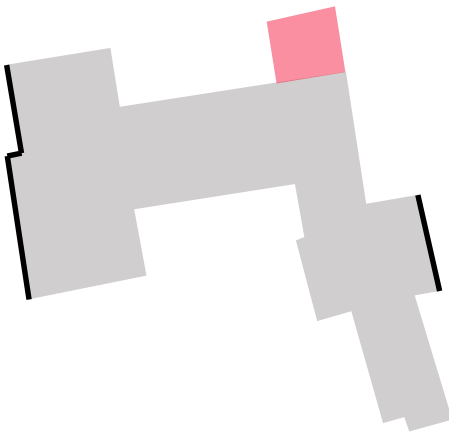
4.0 Design Proposal

4.0 Design Proposal

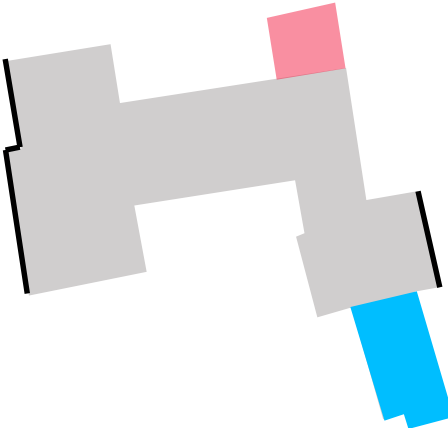
4.1 Proposed Layout Overview



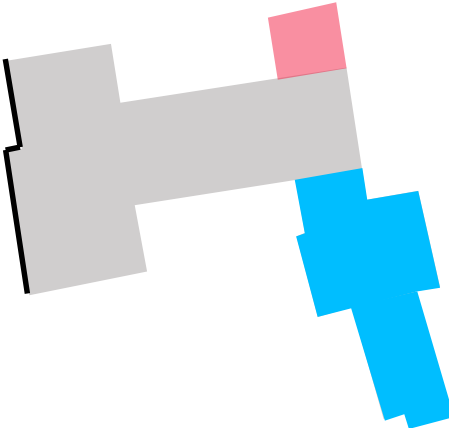
Ground Floor



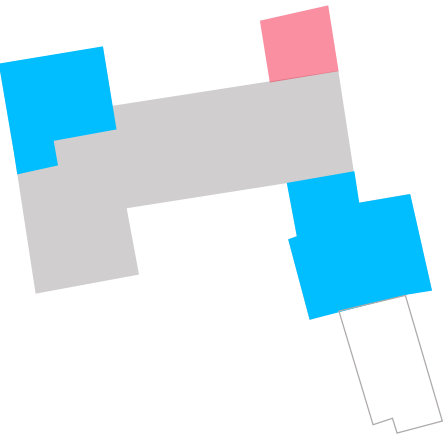
First Floor



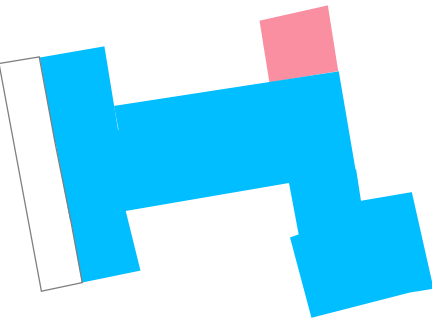
Second Floor



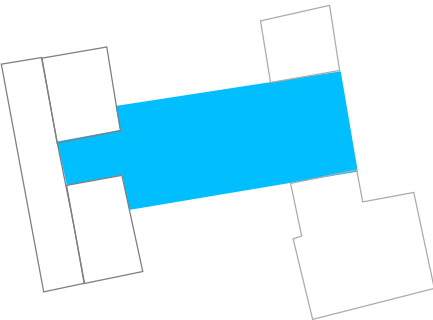
Third Floor



Fourth Floor



Fifth Floor



Sixth Floor

- Existing Building
- Conversion of GF car park to office space
- New Build
- New floor on top of existing
- New façade treatment
- Courtyard

4.0 Design Proposal

4.1 Ground Floor

The proposed ground floor highlights the following design moves:

Primary:

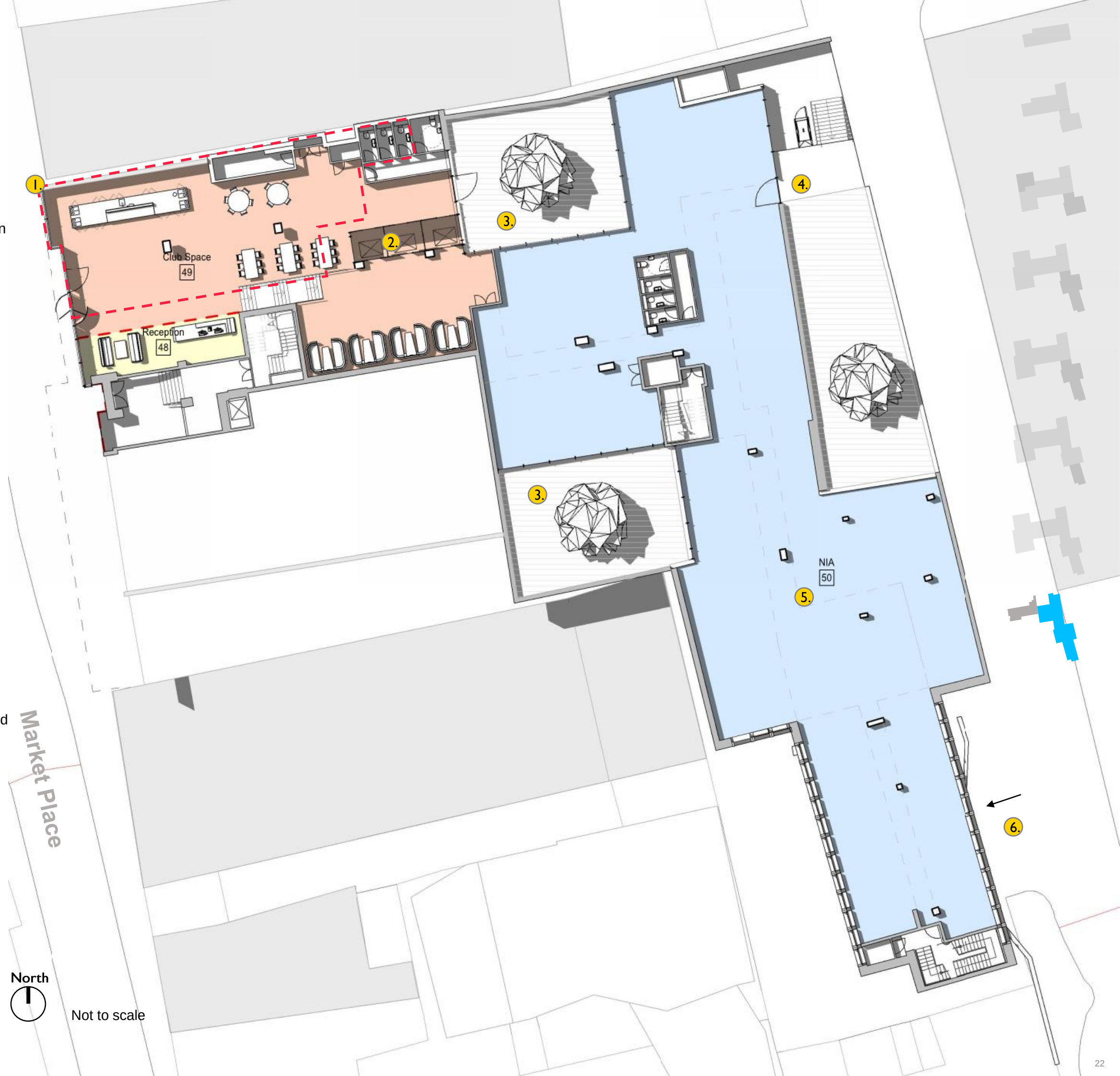
1. Conversion of the existing dentist unit to be made into a club/café space

Conversion of the existing dentist unit to be made into a club/café space

- As the Site is located within the proposed 'primary frontage', and in line with the requirements of Policy CR14e, the proposals seek to retain active frontage (primarily comprising the uses set out in Policy CR7) at ground floor level. One existing ground floor unit (currently a dentist) will be incorporated into the office development to provide a clear entrance which is currently lacking. This is an important element in modern day offices which will also help to retain an active and open frontage in line with the essence of Policy CR7.

Secondary:

2. New lifts
3. Two internal courtyard spaces
4. Secondary entrance to the rear
5. Alteration of ground floor car park to office
6. Car parking entrance at basement level will be retained



4.0 Design Proposal

4.1 Typical Upper Floor Plan

The typical upper floor plans highlight the following design moves:

- 1. New Lifts
- 2. New central arrival point with breakout space
- 3. Retention of existing floor plate
- 4. Relocation & distribution of sanitary provision



4.0 Design Proposal

4.2 Massing in Context

The proposals aim to add density to the office accommodation, respecting the sensitivity of the conservation area, the key location with in the Market Place Square and exploring its adjacency to the Forbury Square developments.

A series of studies from key views have been undertaken to develop the design of the massing particularly in relationship to Market Square and Jacksons Corner, which have both been identified as key view in other applications.

Following policy CR14e, which requires development of the site to ‘*Reflect the prevailing height of Market Place*’, the proposed additional massing aims to mitigate the impact on market place by maintaining the building line & height of the immediate context towards the front (Market Place) and pushing higher massing to the rear (Abbey Square).

Below is a summary of the massing to be proposed for the enhancement of the base proposal for Market Place.

- Block A1:

It is proposed to add 1 storey to in fill the existing terrace area with the height to match the existing 4th storey roof. This has been set back so as not to rise above the adjoining building and to reduce the impact to Market Place Square.

- Block A2:

2 new storeys to be added along the main wing of the building perpendicular to Market Place, extending the existing stairwell but set well back from the main elevation. The Regus building height has been used as precedent at the rear.

- Block B:

3 new storeys to be added with proposed floor to ceiling heights to match existing. The existing stepping down in massing has been preserved here and this proposal needs to be tested against the structural limitations of the existing structure.

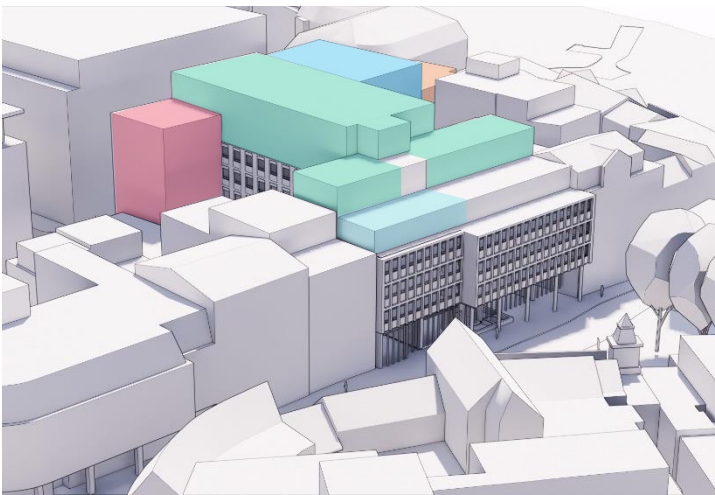
- Block C:

2 new storeys to be added to the block facing Abbey square with proposed floor to ceiling heights to match existing.

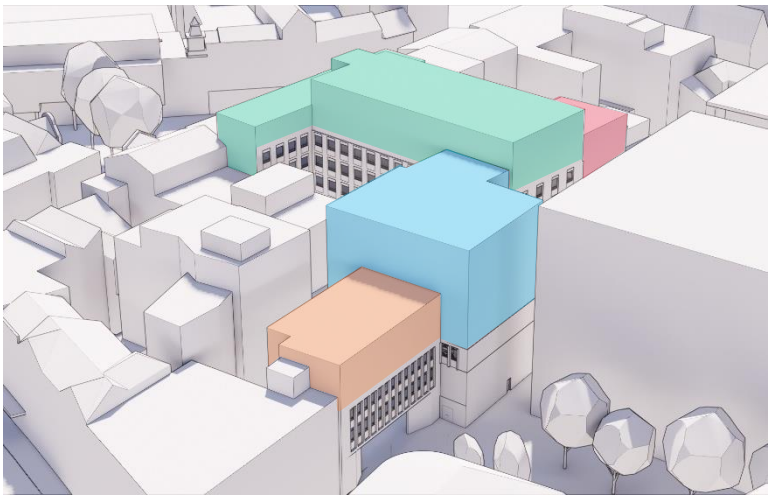
This will give the building more prominence on the square and will play down the existing service entrance to the site. These two floors will be adjacent to the new development at 1-9 Kings road and will be subject to a daylight sunlight analysis.

Block D1:

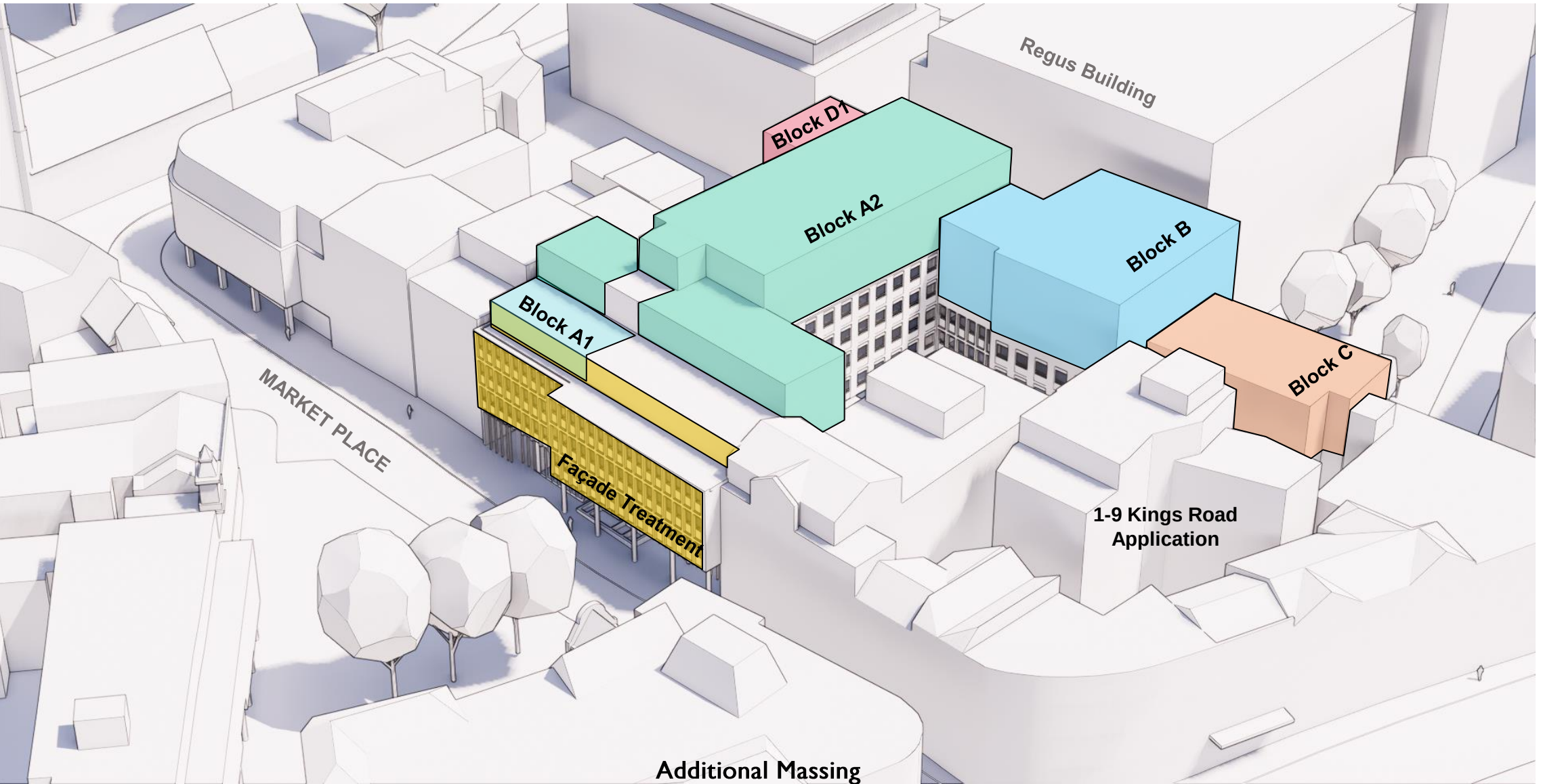
Ground + 5 storeys to be added as a new wing on to the existing. All floors will be made to match existing floor to ceiling heights. Again, the Regus building has been used as precedent for height. A step down has been incorporated to provide a small terrace area to overlook Forbury Gardens.



View 1



View 2



Additional Massing

4.0 Design Proposal

4.2 Massing Studies

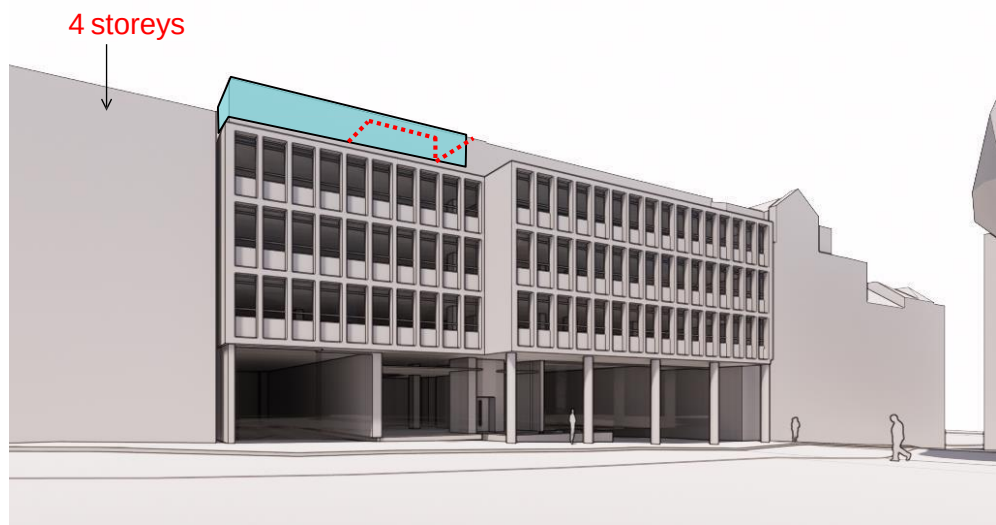
A series of massing studies have been undertaken to inform the final proposed addition to the existing.

To keep in line with planning policy CR14e, in particular, '*Reflect the prevailing height of market place*', the proposed massing option ensures the most efficient use of the site whilst respecting the surrounding character of the area.

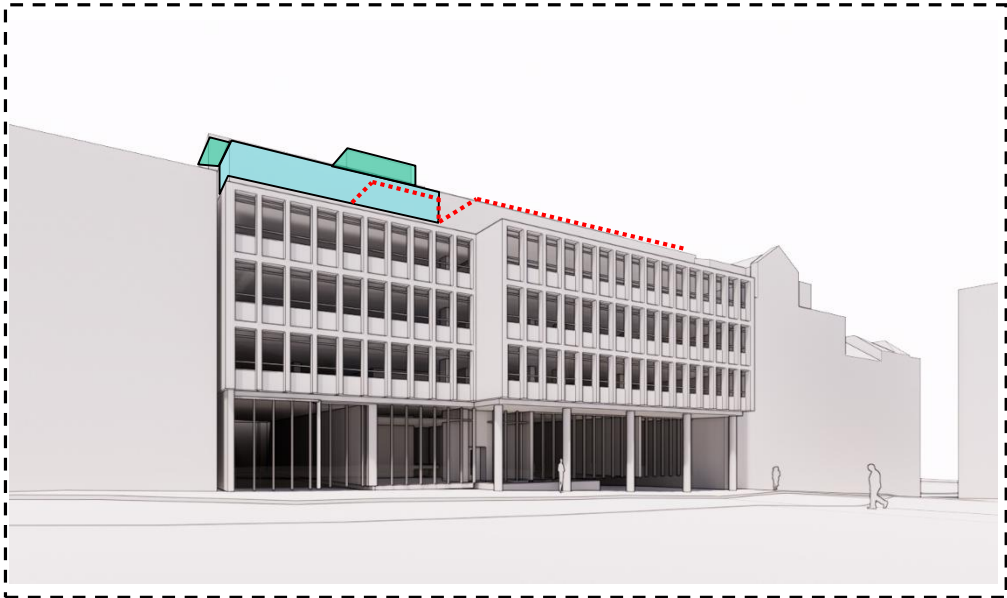
Illustrated Scheme

- Reflects prevailing height of Market Place
 - Most efficient footprint for office use
- Allows for substantial addition of mass with least impact to surrounding context
- Reduces impact of new façade on surrounding context

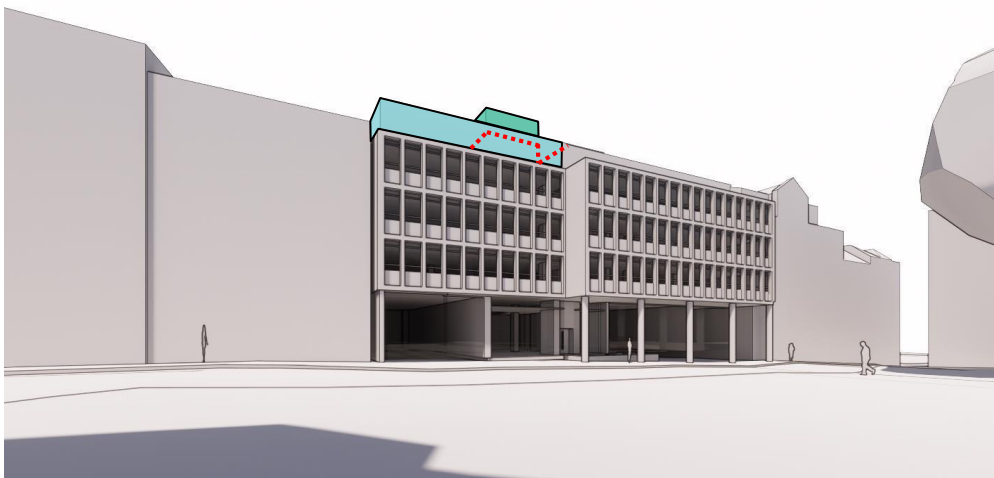
..... Extent of Existing
—— Extent of Proposed



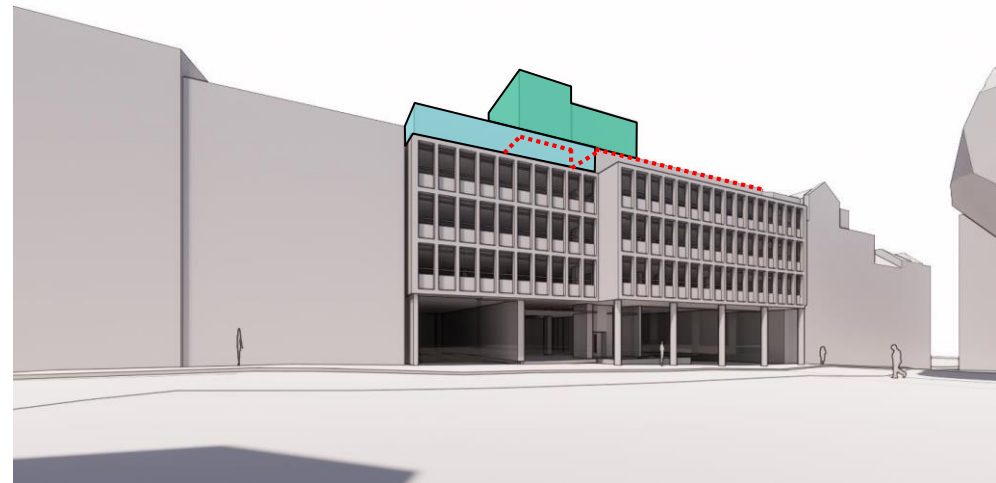
Massing Study 1



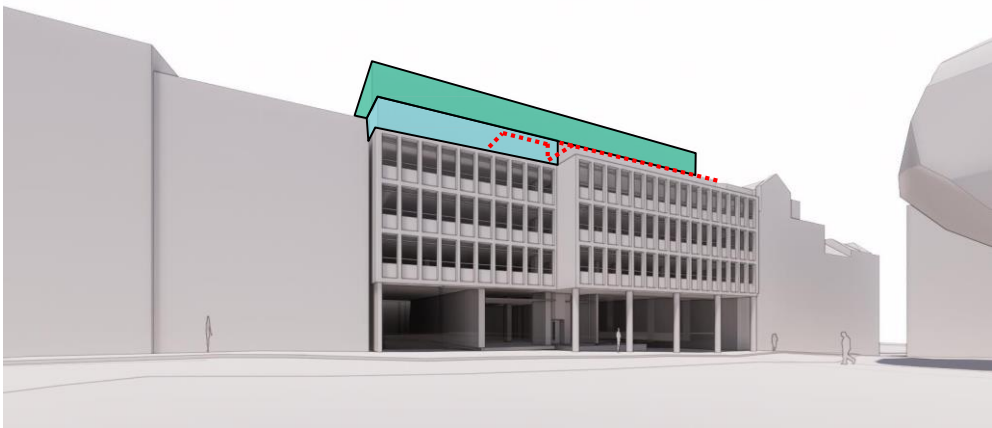
Massing Study 2



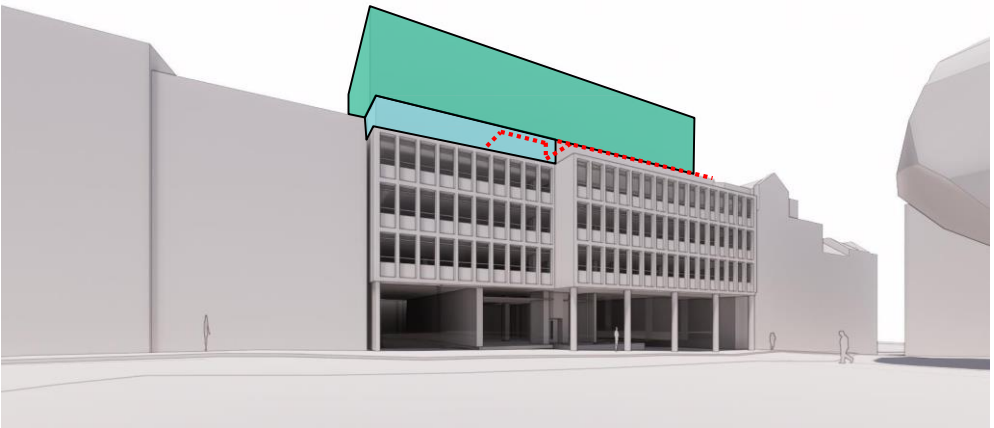
Massing Study 3



Massing Study 4



Massing Study 5



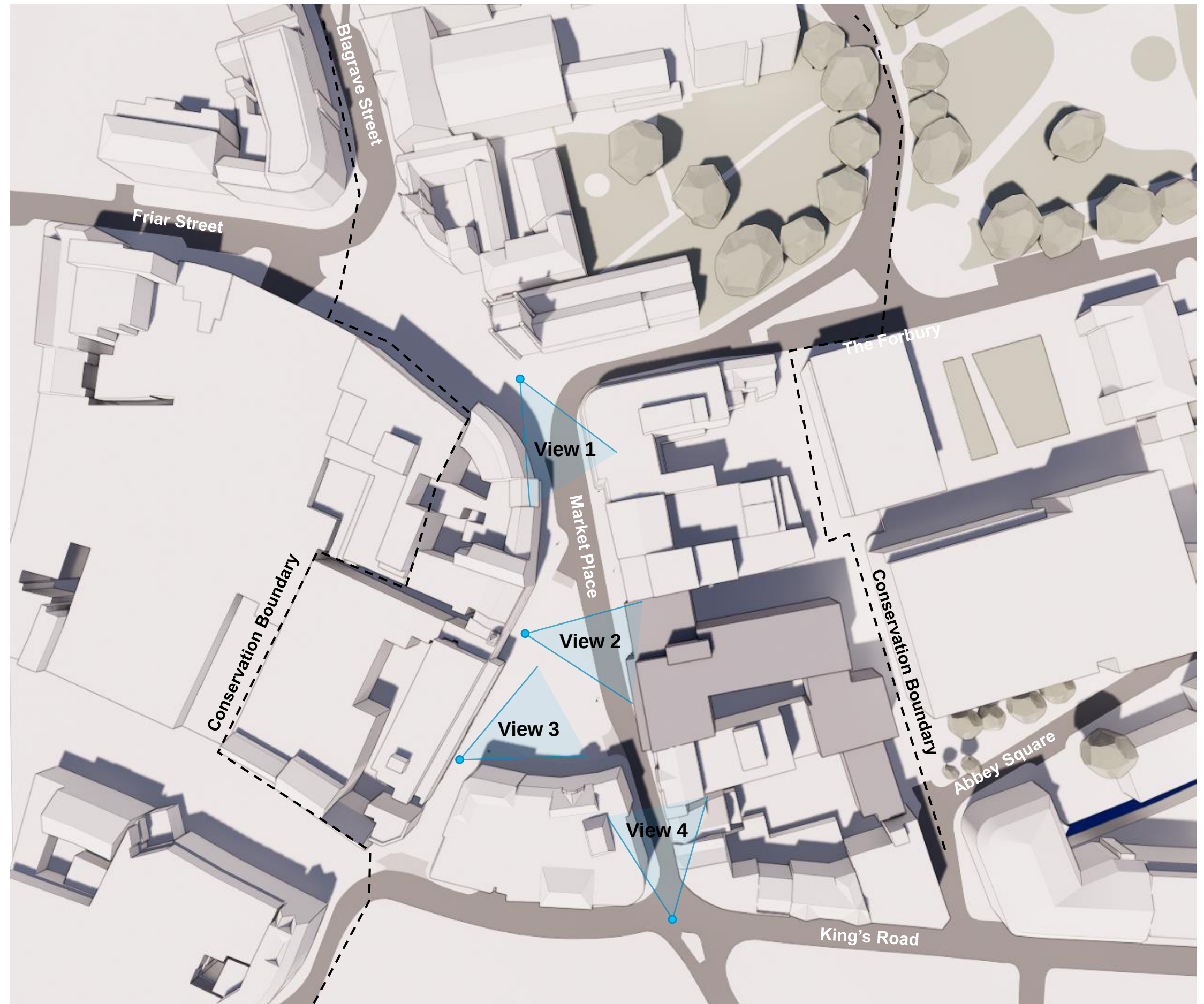
Massing Study 6

4.0 Design Proposal

4.3 Key Views

The map to the right highlights key viewpoints within the conservation area. These views have been recreated in a 3D model and represent the existing building with the additional massing.

- View 1: Pedestrian pathway outside St. Laurence's Church
- View 2: Top of Market Place Square
- View 3: Bottom of Butter Market
- View 4: Jackson's Corner



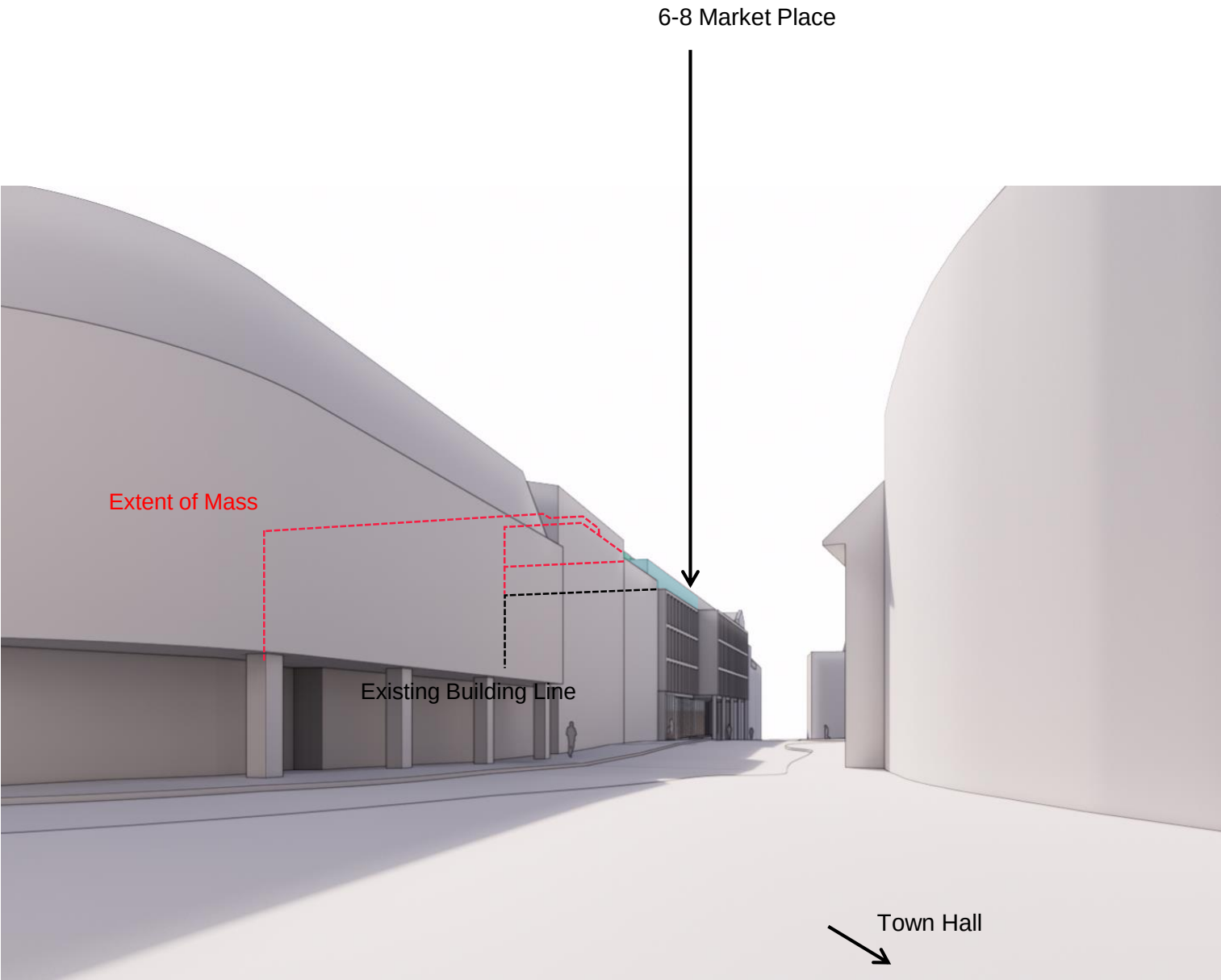
4.0 Design Proposal

4.3 View 1 & 2

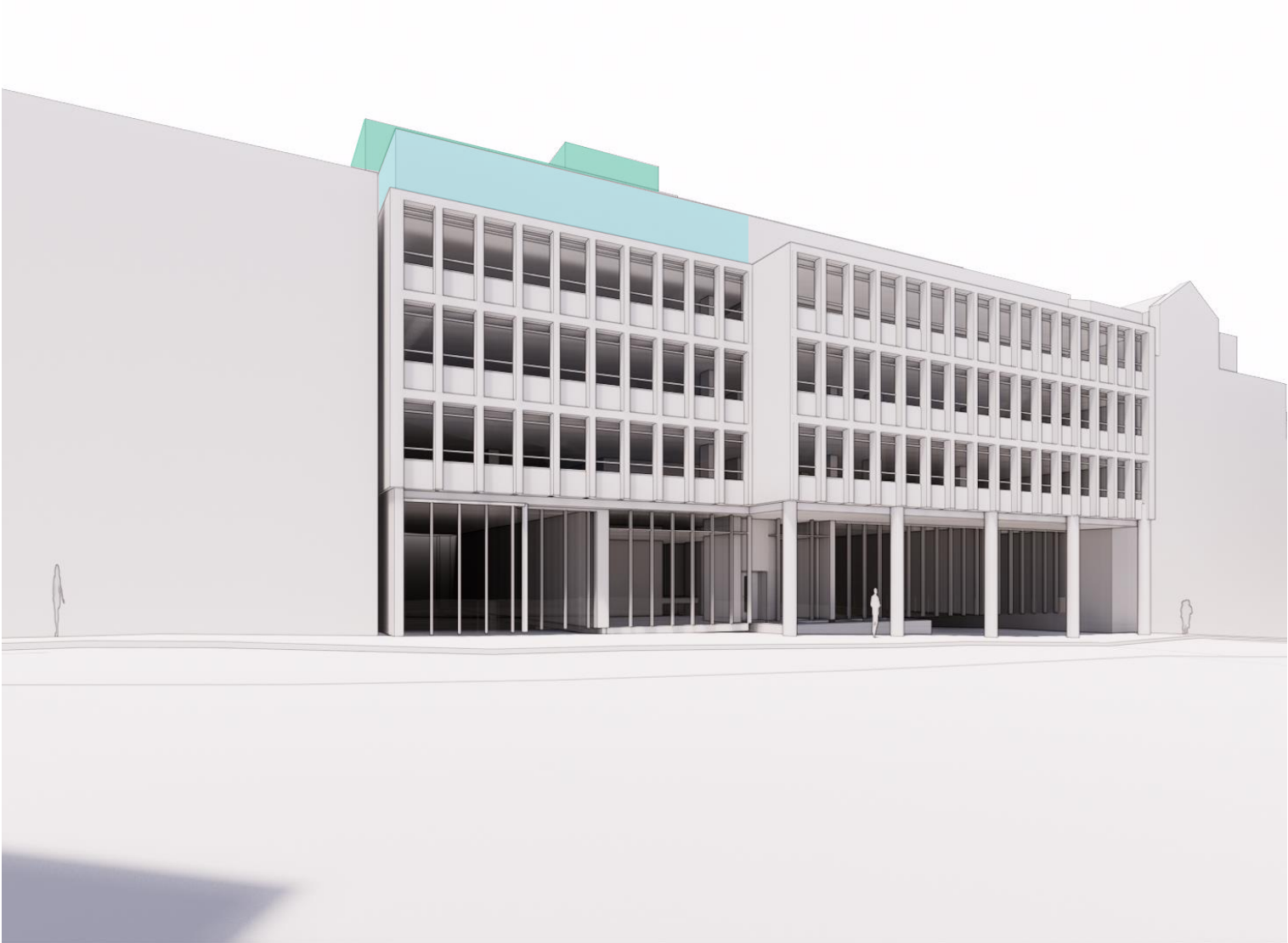
2 Images displaying the impact of the additional massing to the existing building.



Key View Map



Top of Market Place

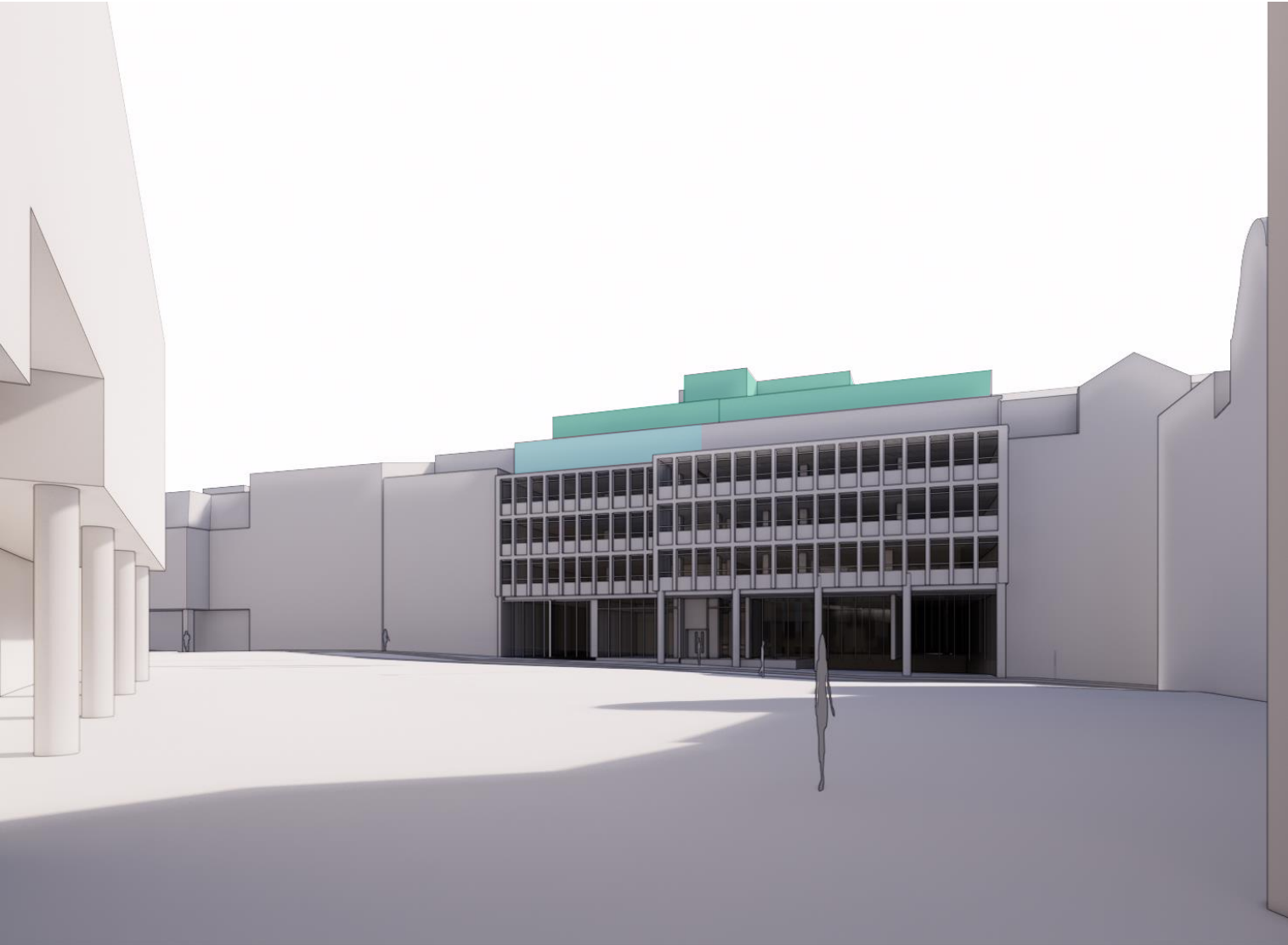


Market Place Square

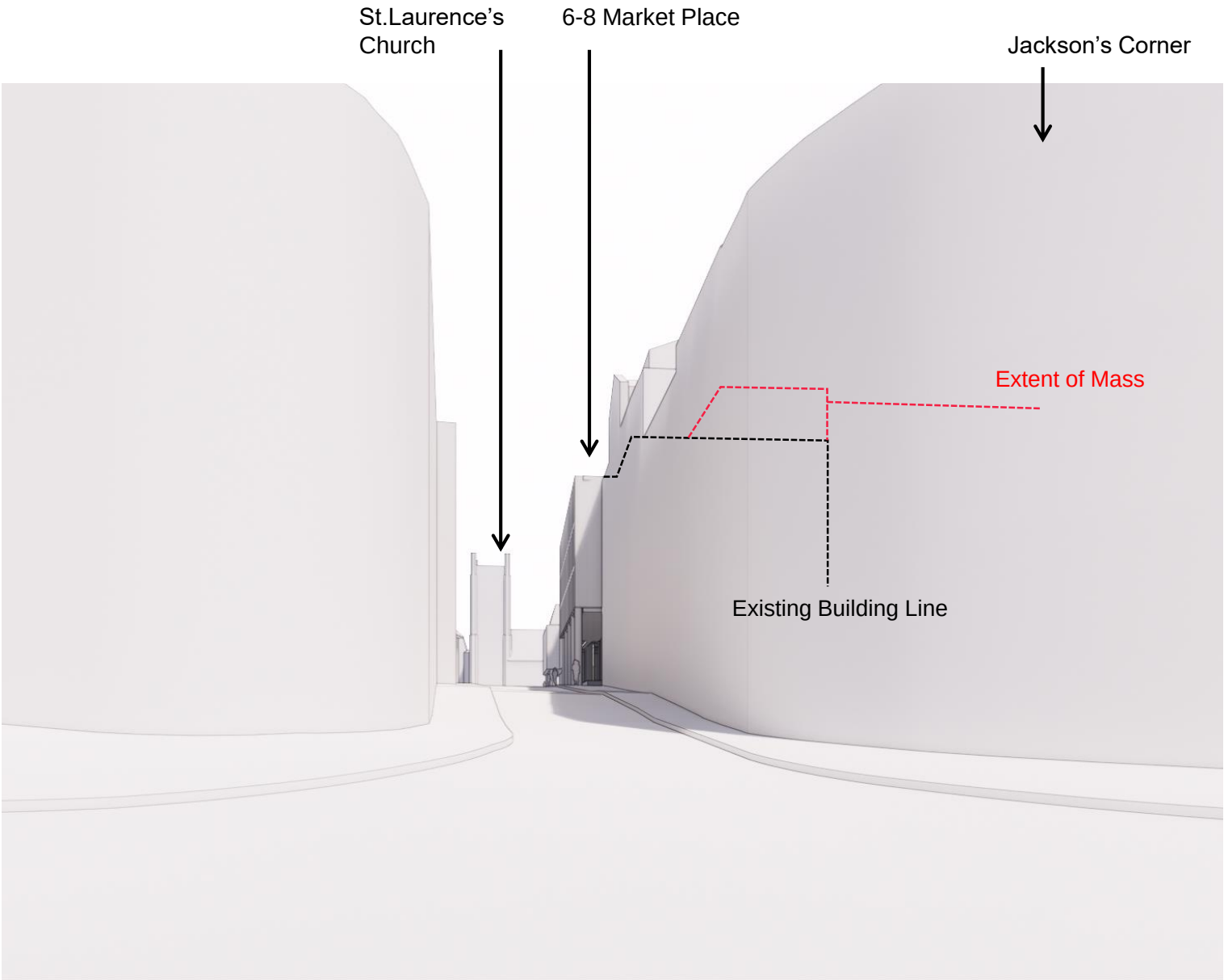
4.0 Design Proposal

4.3 View 3 & 4

2 Images displaying the impact of the additional massing to the existing building.



Bottom of Butter Market



Jackson's Corner

5.0 Façade Study

5.0 Façade Study

5.1 Building Elevation Study

The existing building façade comprises of a series of concrete bays. Each bay features a metal framed window with an openable middle section of glass, with vertical concrete fins either side that run the height of the building from the 1st floor upwards.

The right hand portion of the façade pushes outward towards the street, away from the existing line of buildings and is supported by a series of blue coloured columns.

The ground floor is split into 4 distinct units and step down in relation to the slope of the site. A dentist and tesco store sit either side of the main entrance into the building, with majority of this frontage being curtain wall accompanied by signage.

At the 4th floor the floor plate reduces and is used as a roof terrace space.

Addressing policy:

Policy CR14e states, ‘Development should: Enhance the conservation area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings.’

Policy EN1 states, ‘seeks to protect and enhance the historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their setting.’

Utilizing the existing structural framework of the façade will provide a starting point for exploration.

Keeping the rhythm of elements already present, and enhancing it with the use of materials to reflect that of the surrounding context, will help provide a more contemporary aesthetic without disrupting the existing.

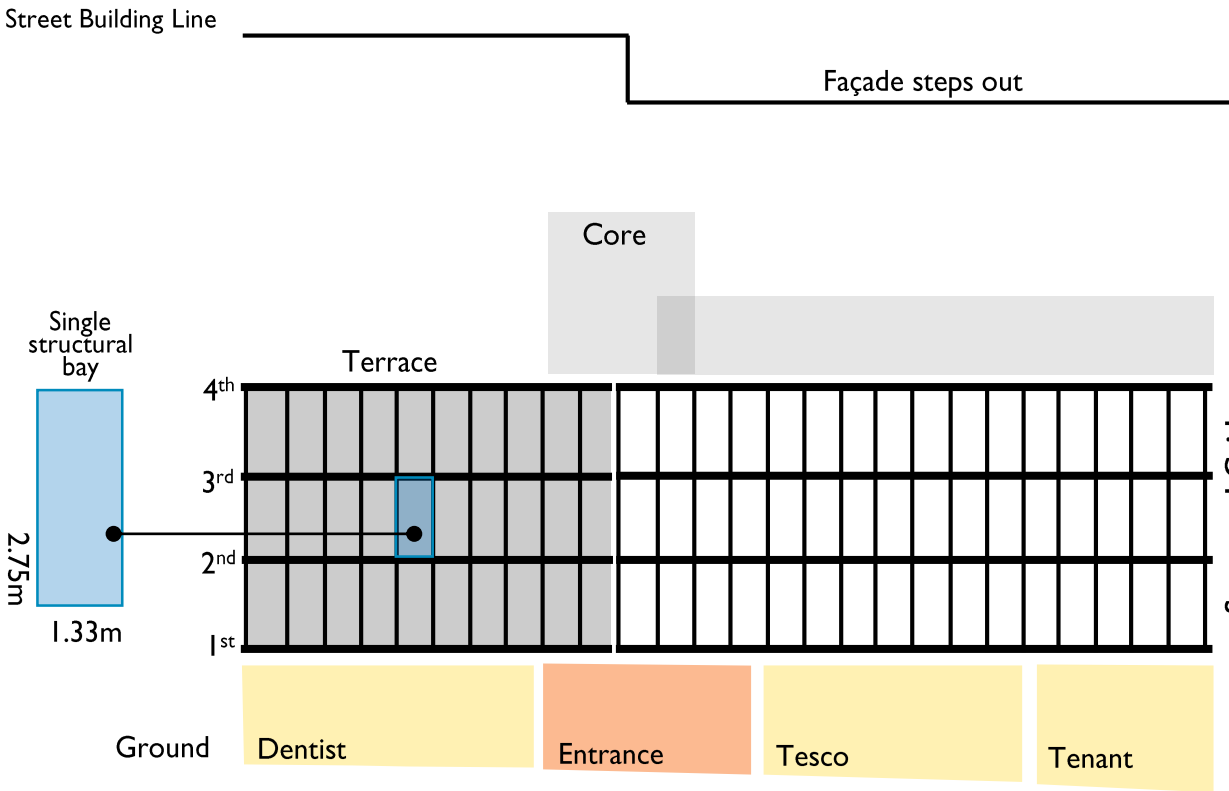
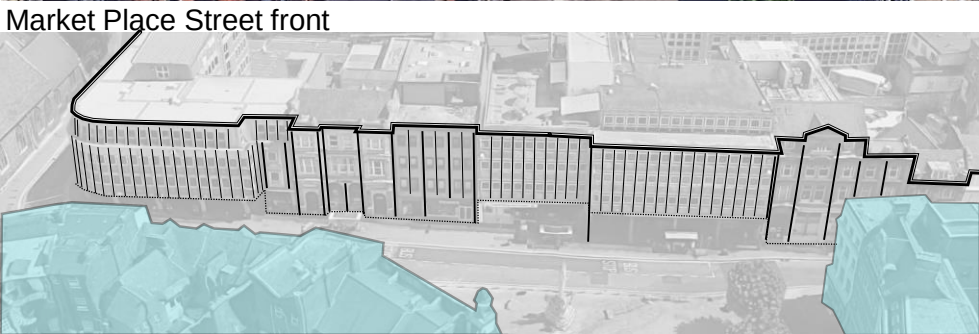
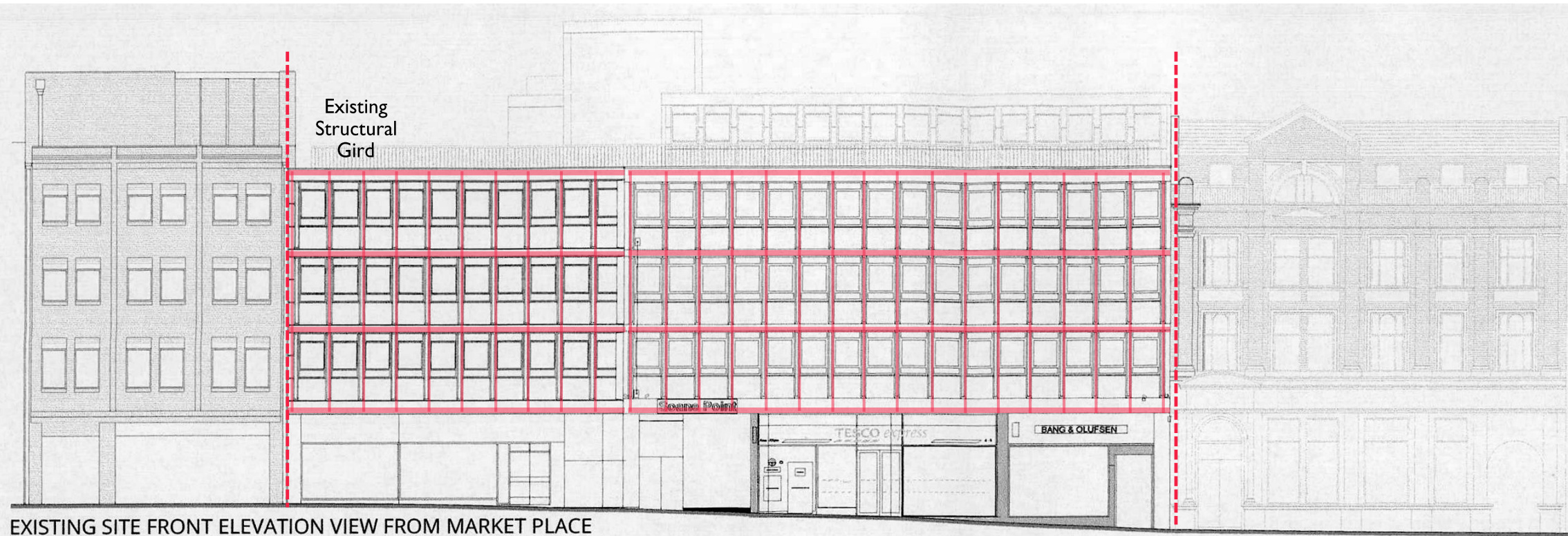


Diagram of Elevation Language



Horizontal linearity of street front



EXISTING SITE FRONT ELEVATION VIEW FROM MARKET PLACE
ELEVATION B-B
Scale 1:200 @A3

Existing West Elevation

5.0 Façade Study

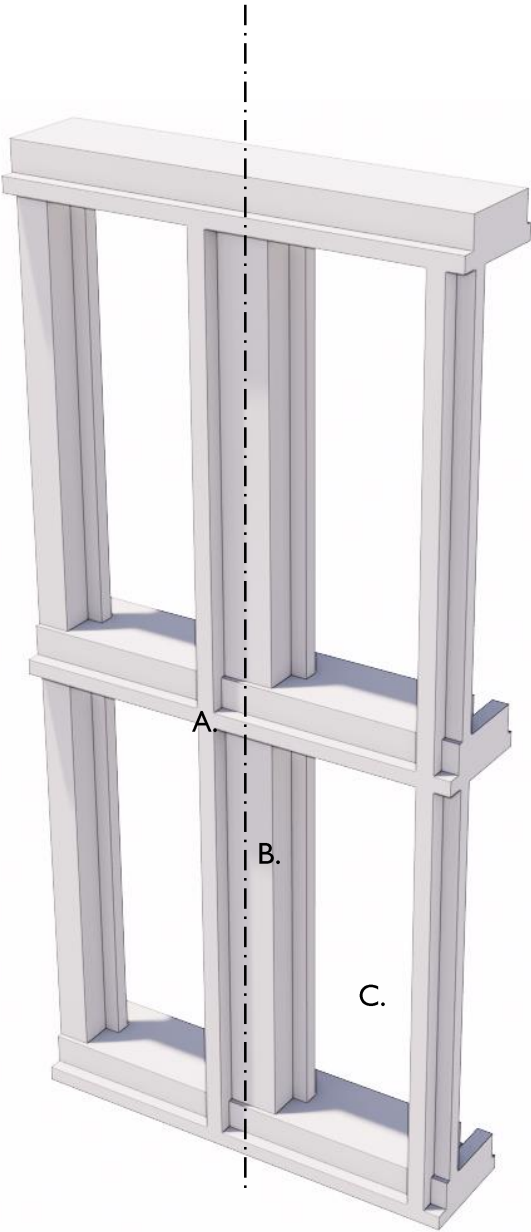
5.2 Bay Design

In order to maintain the visual rhythm and language of the context, the design and repetition of a single bay across the frontage has been explored. The use of brick detailing, similar to that of the town hall, has been employed to create a visual and historic connection to the surrounding local context.



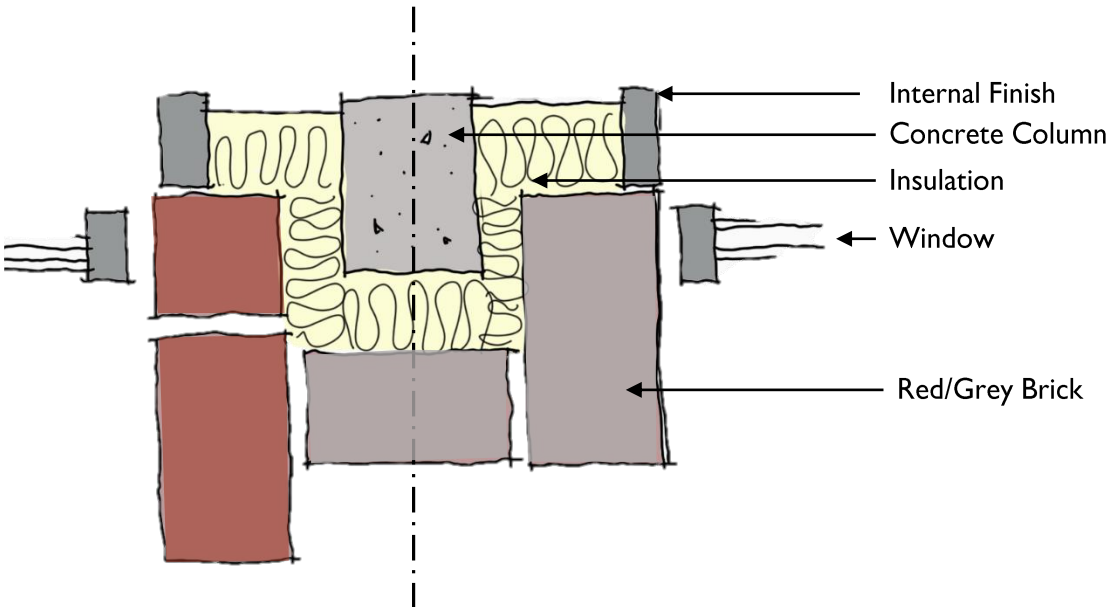
Structural Grid Line

Existing Bay

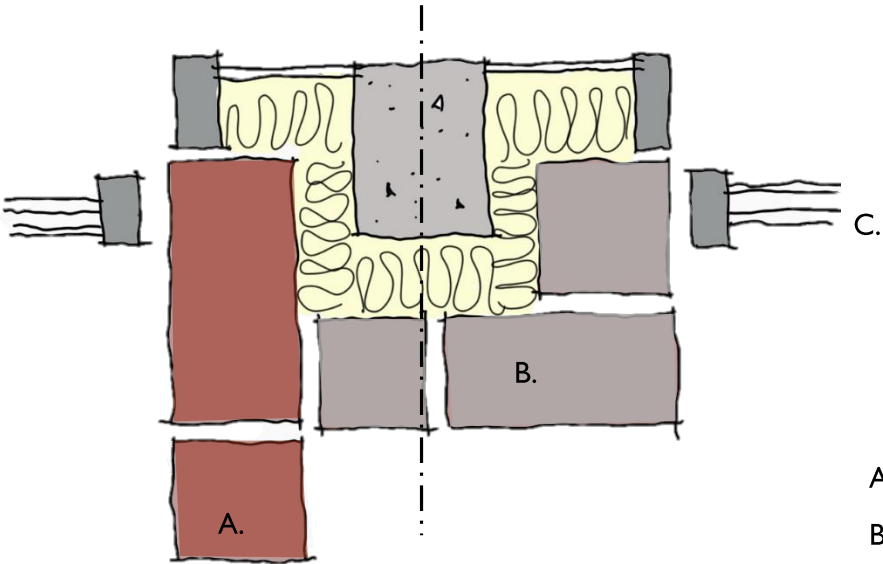


Proposed Bay

Detail Sketch Section of Brick



Brick Arrangement 1



Brick Arrangement 2

- A. Brick Corbel
- B. Brick Pier
- C. Window

5.0 Facade

5.3 Design Studies – Reading Brickwork

We are currently exploring themes for the design of the façades particularly with thought given to the main façade fronting Market Place. Until we can establish the existing structural solution and its exact relationship with the boundary, it will be difficult to determine the design of the façade.

In examining the finer examples of the local architecture in the conservation area there is a strong theme that comes out. In renaissance architecture, most notably with Michelangelo's Laurentian Library in Florence, the classical architectural elements are expressed in stone and the main field of the wall is in plaster. So too here in Reading, the gothic architecture uses the strong red brick to articulate the main structural elements and a grey brick to act as the background field of the wall. It is the play of the expression of these two types of brickwork that we would like to emulate in a modern idiom with the design of the new façade.

The design will therefore play with the polychromatic brickwork but will also need to take into account the rhythm of the structure and the requirement for natural ventilation. In order to retain the building as naturally ventilated or mixed mode to reduce the reliance on energy, the façade needs to continue to provide ventilation operable by the individual.

Over the next couple of pages we have begun to explore design studies ideas for how this might develop.



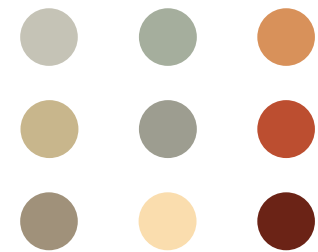
Reading Town hall



173 Friar Street



Jackson's Corner



Colour Palette



Michelangelos' Laurention Library



Reading Town Hall

5.0 Façade Study

5.3 Design Studies – Brick/Curtain Wall

The bays feature a red brick corbel and grey brick pier that surrounds a full height window panel. This panel can then be further divided to allow for openable partitions and further articulation

Variations of this theme have been explored as initial façade studies. These are set out below for discussion with the officers.

Careful consideration has been given to the Site’s location within a Conservation Area and its proximity to a number of Listed Buildings. The design of the west façade seeks to respect the existing building lines and rhythm present to ensure that the proposals protect and enhance the surrounding historic environment in line with the requirements of Policies EN1, EN3 and EN6.

High quality materials which reflect that of the surrounding context will be used to ensure a more visually pleasing and contemporary aesthetic that compliments the historic built fabric.



1. Reading Town hall

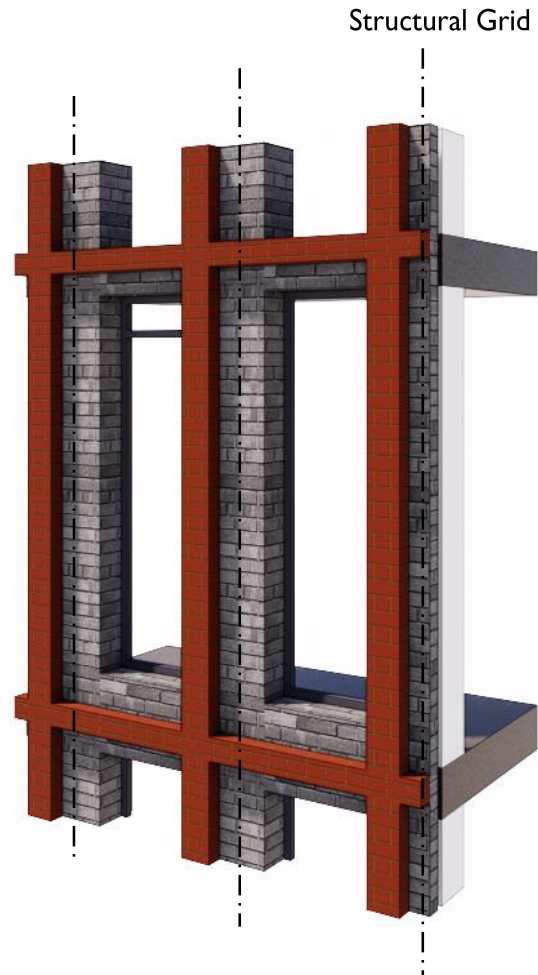


2. 173 Friar Street



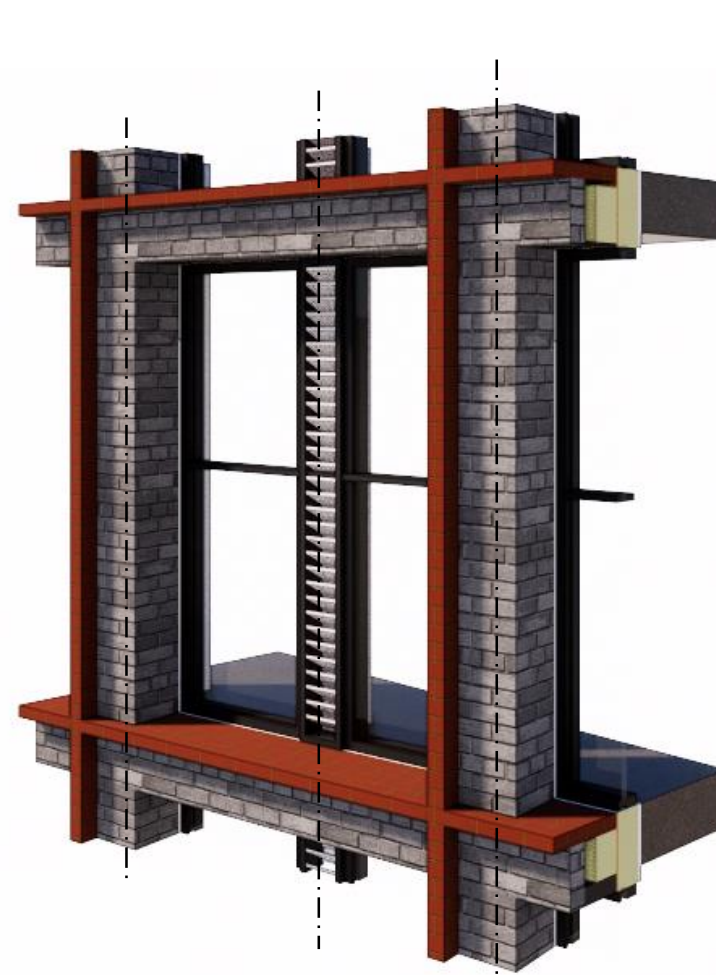
Single Bay 1 - Preferred Bay Study

- Single Full Height Window
- 1/2 brick thick Red Brick Corbel
- Grey Brick Surround
- Full height louvre ventilation



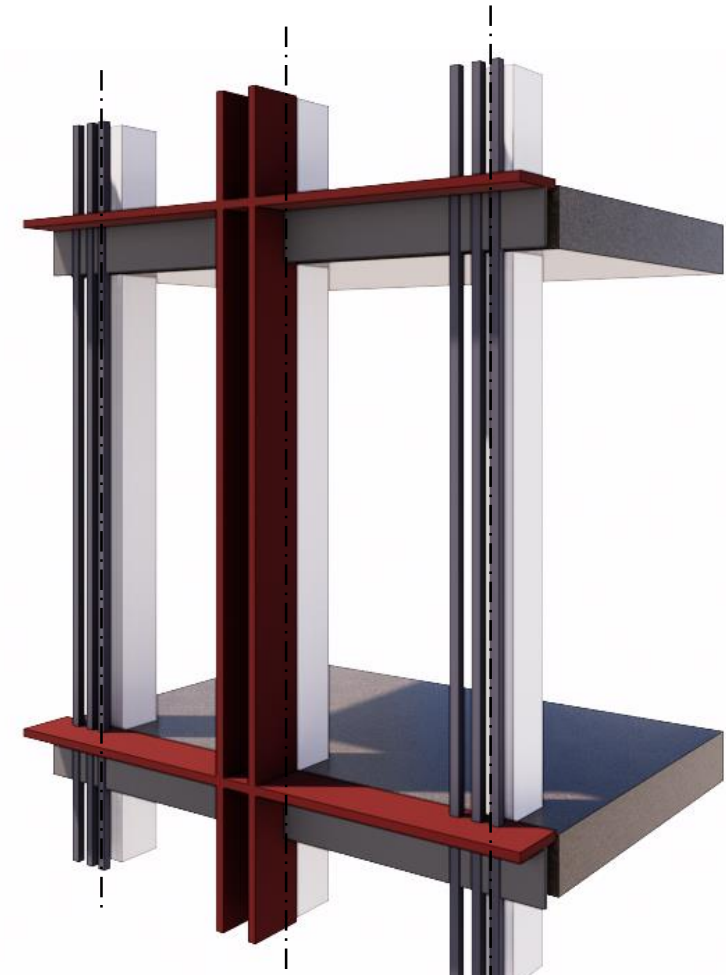
Single Bay 2

- Single Full Height Window
- 1 brick thick Red Brick Corbel
- Grey Brick Surround
- Full height louvre ventilation



Double Bay

- Double Full Height Window
- Middle Spandrel/louvre Panel
- 1/2 Red Brick Corbel
- Grey Brick Surround



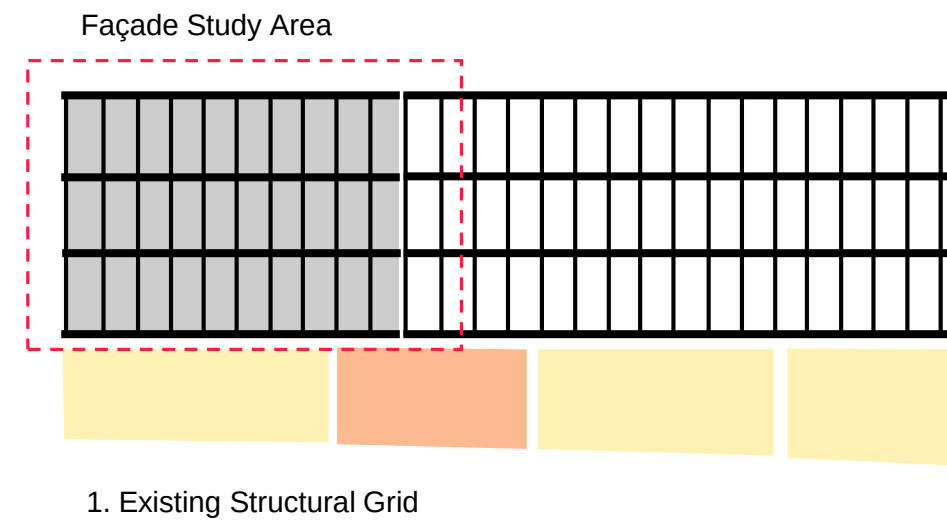
Curtain Wall Option

- Vertical Mullions to accentuate structure
- Horizontal Mullions to follow Slab edge

5.0 Façade Study

5.3 Design Studies – Brick

Initial studies of the façade were explored using the single bay 1 study across the western elevation. This is the prominent elevation facing onto Market Place Square.



Single Bay I

- Single Full Height Window
- Red Brick Corbel
- Grey Brick Surround



Double Bay

- Double Full Height Window
- Middle Spandrel Panel
- Red Brick Corbel
- Grey Brick Surround



Mixture of Double & Single

- Double bays along first storey façade
- Single bays to rest of facade

5.0 Façade Study

5.4 Perspective View I

Image highlighting single bay brick study from the bottom of Market Place.



1. Single Bay Study 1



5.0 Façade Study

5.4 Perspective View 2

Image highlighting single bay brick study from the top of Market Place.



1. Single Bay Study 1



Appendix: Existing Building Plans

Basement Floor

Marketplace



Scale: 1:250 @ A3

Ground Floor



Scale: 1:250 @ A3

First Floor

Marketplace



Scale: 1:250 @ A3

Second Floor

Marketplace

Office

NIA
9

Roof Access



Scale: 1:250 @ A3

Third Floor

Marketplace



Office

NIA
13

Roof



Scale: 1:250 @ A3

Fourth Floor

Marketplace

Terrace

NIA
14
Office

Roof



Roof Plan

Marketplace



