



BROAD STREET MALL, READING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

NOVEMBER 2018



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1.0 Overview

This statement supports the Full Planning Application submitted by Moorgarth Ltd for the proposed developments above the existing Broad Street Mall (BSM) in order to provide additional housing and retail.

The proposals include the reconfiguration of existing retail at ground floor level along with new retail space, totalling 1,200 m² (GIA) alongside 493 new apartments.

The proposals will seek to align, where possible, with the emerging West Side Major Opportunity Area Policy and Hosier Street Development Framework which supports residential development on the BSM site.

Town Context Objectives

- Reinforce the Hexagon Quarter in to a new vibrant urban quarter with focus on residential and culture.
- Meet the demands for new homes in a growing South East Hub
- Take advantage of one of the largest brownfield sites in the town centre

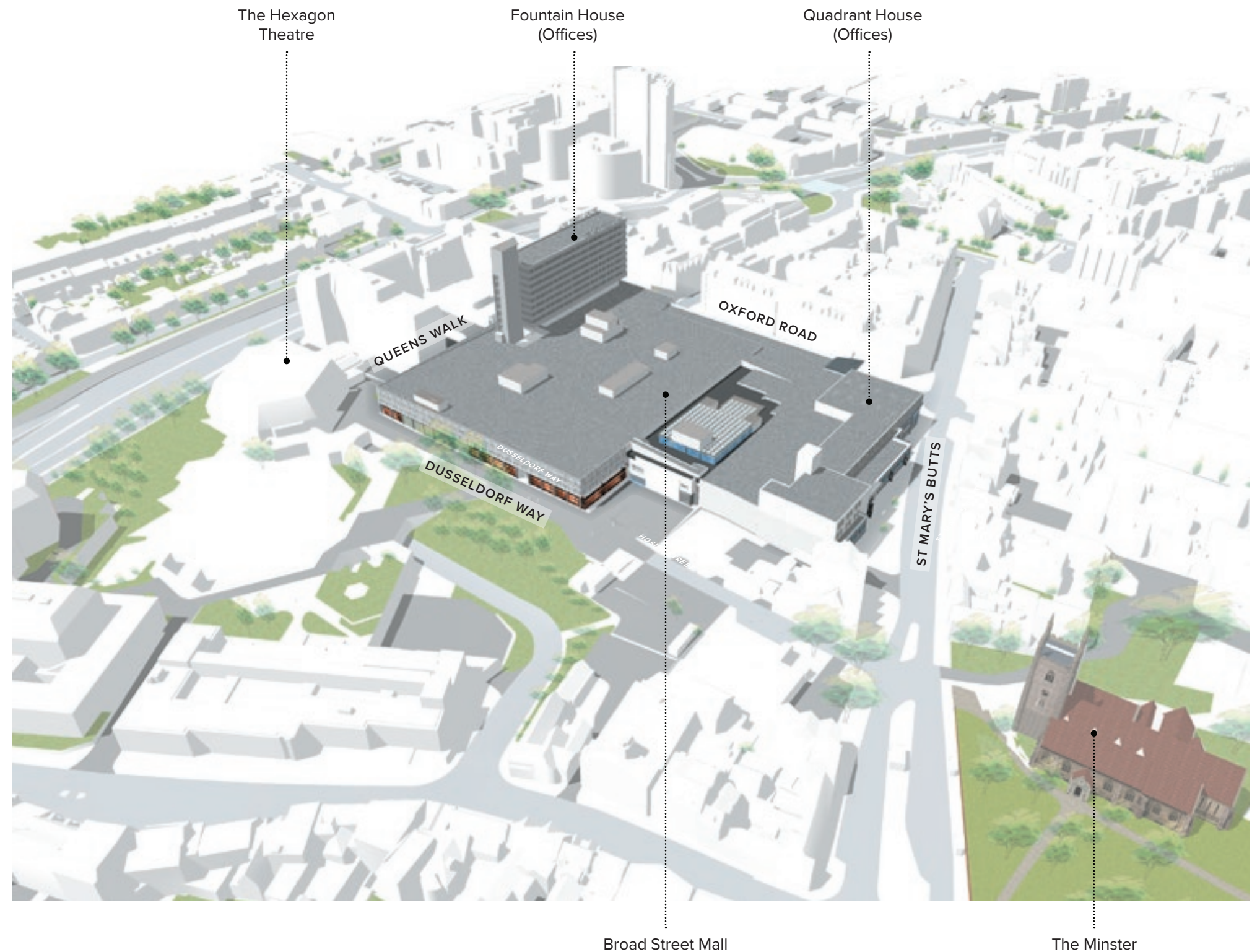
The Site and Masterplan Objectives

- Reconnect the historic core of Reading
- Enhance the inward looking edges of Broad Street Mall
- Improve the routes and public realm

Design Objectives

- Ensuring residential mix and affordable provision is appropriate to policy guidance
- Developing appropriate scale and form
- Ensuring Quality in Architecture and Landscaping

Moorgarth believe that this application will make a significant contribution to the town centre through the regenerative potential that it offers.

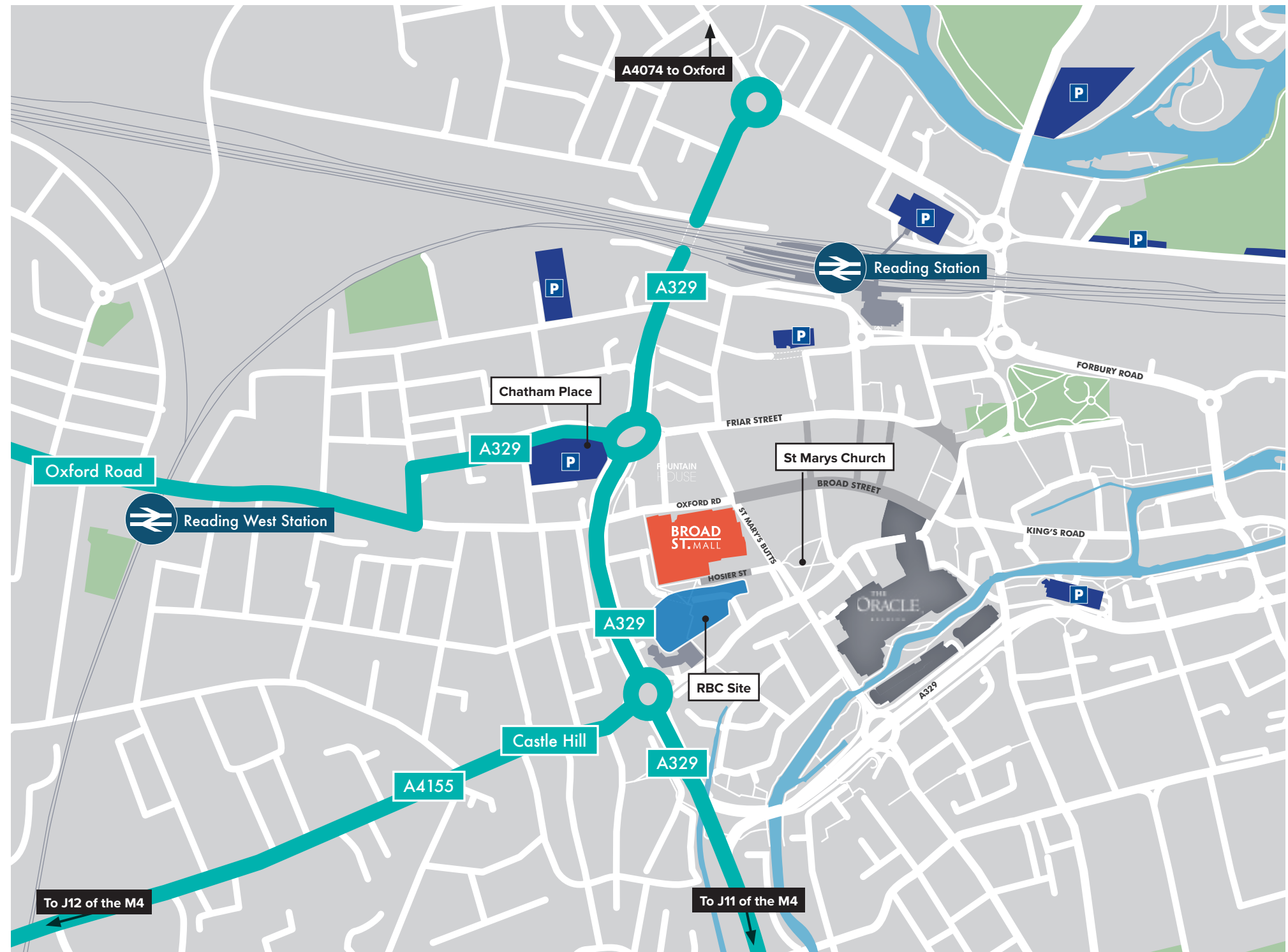


2.0 Assessment | 2.1 Site Location

Broad Street Mall (BSM) site lies on the western side of the town centre adjacent the A329. It is situated roughly halfway between the main rail station to the north and the Oracle Shopping Centre to South.

The Broad St Mall is located in the heart of Reading adjacent site also houses office space in Quadrant House and Fountain House buildings above the main centre.

The site has an excellent central location with a significant number of shops, bars and restaurants nearby. The site is in close proximity to Reading railway station and the Hexagon theatre & magistrates Court, and is well served by buses.

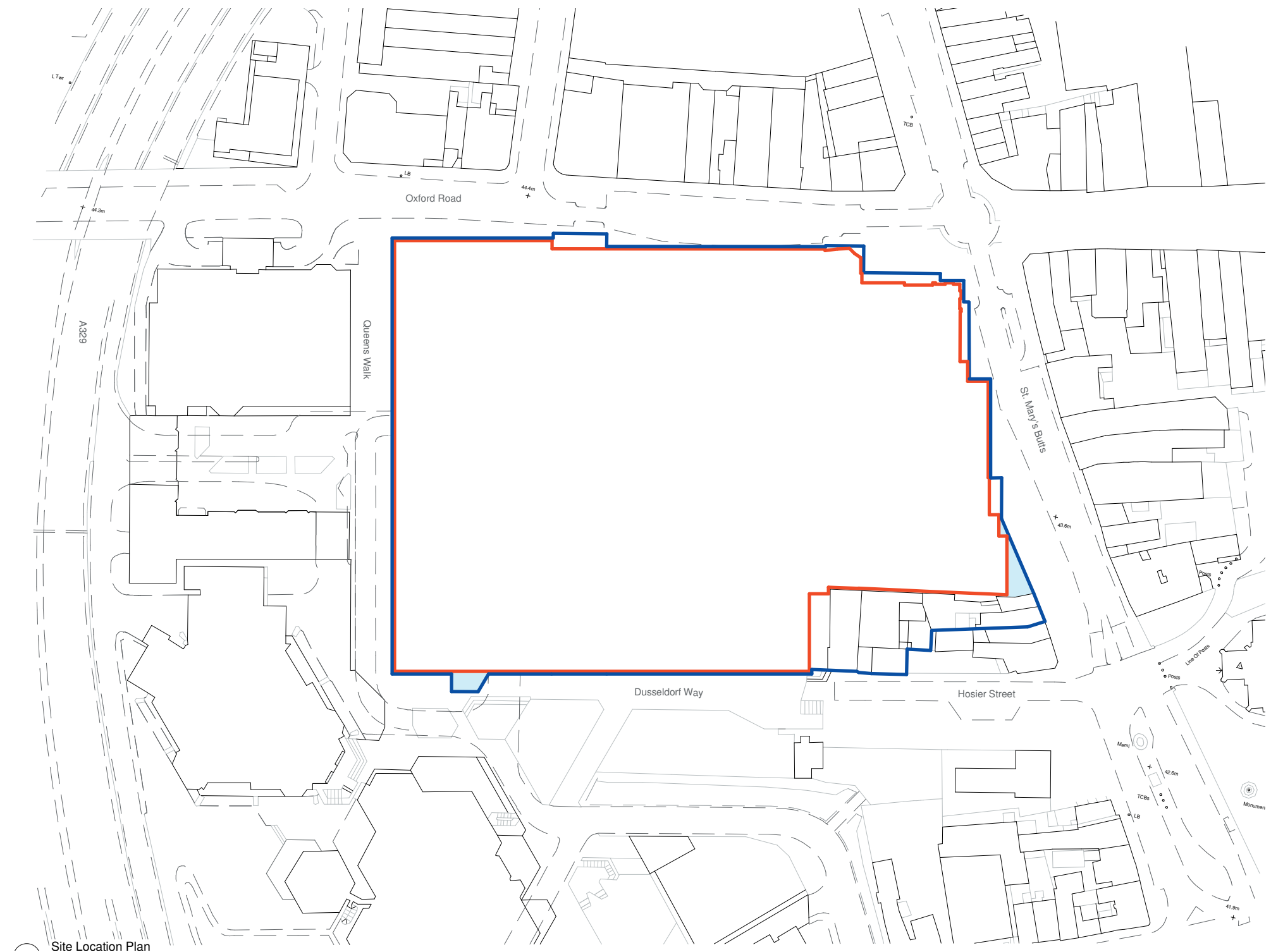


2.0

Assessment | 2.2 Land Ownership

Land Ownership

The application boundary falls within the site ownership which for the most either hugs the external envelope or the basement line underneath, evident in the south court ownership line. It also includes the site which currently occupied by vacant buildings which previously housed Eva's nightclub, though this is not included in this application boundary.



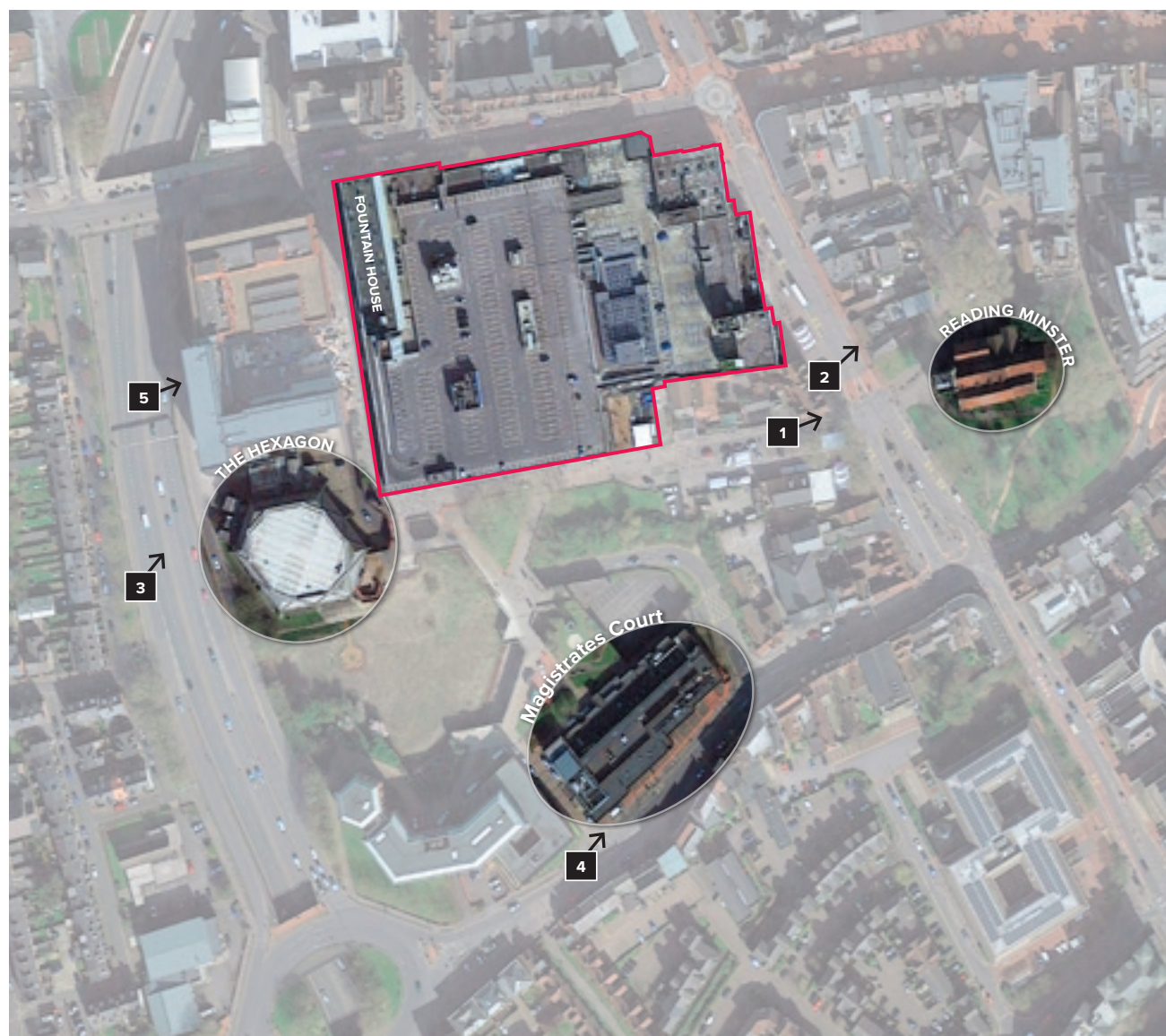
KEY: — Application Boundary — Ownership Boundary

2.0 Assessment | 2.3 Context Photographs

The existing urban environment surrounding Broad Street Mall is varied in both public realm and architecture.

The facades are in general inactive partly due to a lack of ground floor occupation and the upper level car park use. It also indicates that there is a weak retail loop and units further away lack exposure from passing trade.

Oxford Road has better linkages with the town centre leading to greater footfall. Footfall analysis of the gateways show that the Broad Street entrance on Oxford road is by far the most active gateway with nearly half the pedestrian traffic. The architectural context adjacent consists of mid rise gable fronted traditional red brick buildings.



Key plan showing photograph locations



St Marys Church (Reading Minster)



St Marys Butt



View from the A329 looking towards the Hexagon



Magistrates Court



Access from A329 to the Centre car park

2.0 Assessment | 2.3 Context Photographs



Key plan showing photograph locations



Car Park deck



Dusseldorf Way



Queensway



South Court



View down Oxford road



View looking down to the car park access road



The Hexagon first floor entrance



Hosier Street

2.0

Assessment | 2.4 Broad St Mall Shopping Centre

Broad St Mall Shopping Centre

Broad Street Mall is a large indoor shopping centre located in central Reading, England. There is a large multi-storey car park with direct access to the first floor of the centre. It is close to The Hexagon theatre and the offices of Reading Borough Council.

Below is a brief history of the centre.

- Plans for the shopping centre were made by the Reading Borough Council in 1956, however it took more than a decade to find a suitable site and buy it.
- The centre was originally known as the Butts Centre, and was named after the adjacent St Mary's Butts
- The current name relates to Reading's principal pedestrian shopping street, Broad Street, and the centre is situated at the west end of the street.
- It was opened in 1971.
- The centre was purchased by Doughty Hanson & Co in June 2001 and sold in March 2004.
- Moorgarth acquired the site in 2015.



2.0 Assessment | 2.5 Conservation Area

St Mary's Butts/Castle Street

The site sits adjacent to the St Mary's Butts and Castle Street Conservation Area, which is made up of three character areas:

- Saint Mary's Church and Graveyard
- Saint Mary's Butts
- Gun Street and Castle Street Frontages

The majority of the buildings contained within this conservation are listed in their own right, but comprise an overall area of historic character.

The area also includes the Victorian Fountain, which is considered to be a minor local landmark.

Hosier Street, which links the site to the conservation area, is considered to have a negative impact on the historic character of the area and therefore redevelopment of this area would be beneficial.

The Reading Minster is of particular interest. One of key planning strategies for the development is to create a vista along Dusseldorf Way toward the Minster. This is discussed in further detail in the design section of this document.



KEY: Conservation Area Application Boundary Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

2.0

Assessment | 2.6 Listed Buildings

Buildings of Interest

The application site is located adjacent to the St Mary's Butts / Castle Street Conservation Area. There are a large number of listed buildings along St Mary's Butts, Castle Street and Minster Street.

Particular buildings and structures of particular interest include:

- Church of St Mary (Reading Minster Grade I)
- Church of St Mary, Castle Street (Grade II*)
- Sun Inn, Castle Street Grade II
- Former Cottage at rear of No. 8 Castle Street grade II
- 8, 10, 12 Castle Street Grade II
- The Allied Arms Inn – Grade II
- 55 & 55A St Mary's Butts
- Queen Victoria Jubilee Fountain – Grade II
- Jubilee Cross – Grade II



KEY: Conservation Area Application Boundary Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

2.0

Assessment | 2.7 Materials Found Within the Conservation Area

Contextual Materials

The existing urban environment surrounding Broad Street Mall is varied in both public realm and architecture.

Perhaps the most distinctive façade is **Reading Minster**, or the **Minster Church of St Mary the Virgin with its stone and flint chequerboard external treatment.**

Other distinctive historical features are the timber framing with herringbone brick in the gable ended buildings fronting St Mary's Butts.

More modern context which merits discussion is the formed concrete screen to the car park which has a geometric repeat with abstract relief akin to a rock face.

For the most part the elevations of Broad Street Mall are a mix of concrete panelling and aluminium framed glazing in alignment with the modernist style of the era it was built. These have been added to in more recent times again utilising a modern material palette.

Other distinctive building façade treatments can be found in the building adjacent Broad Street Mall along Oxford Road. These are a mix red and grey brick with buff detailing. Along first floor level is feature band of blue glazed bricks.



Car Park Screen



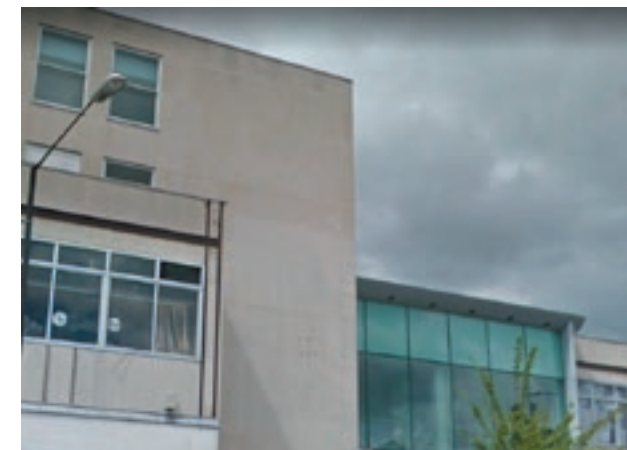
St Marys



Pavlovs Dog Building



Oxford Road



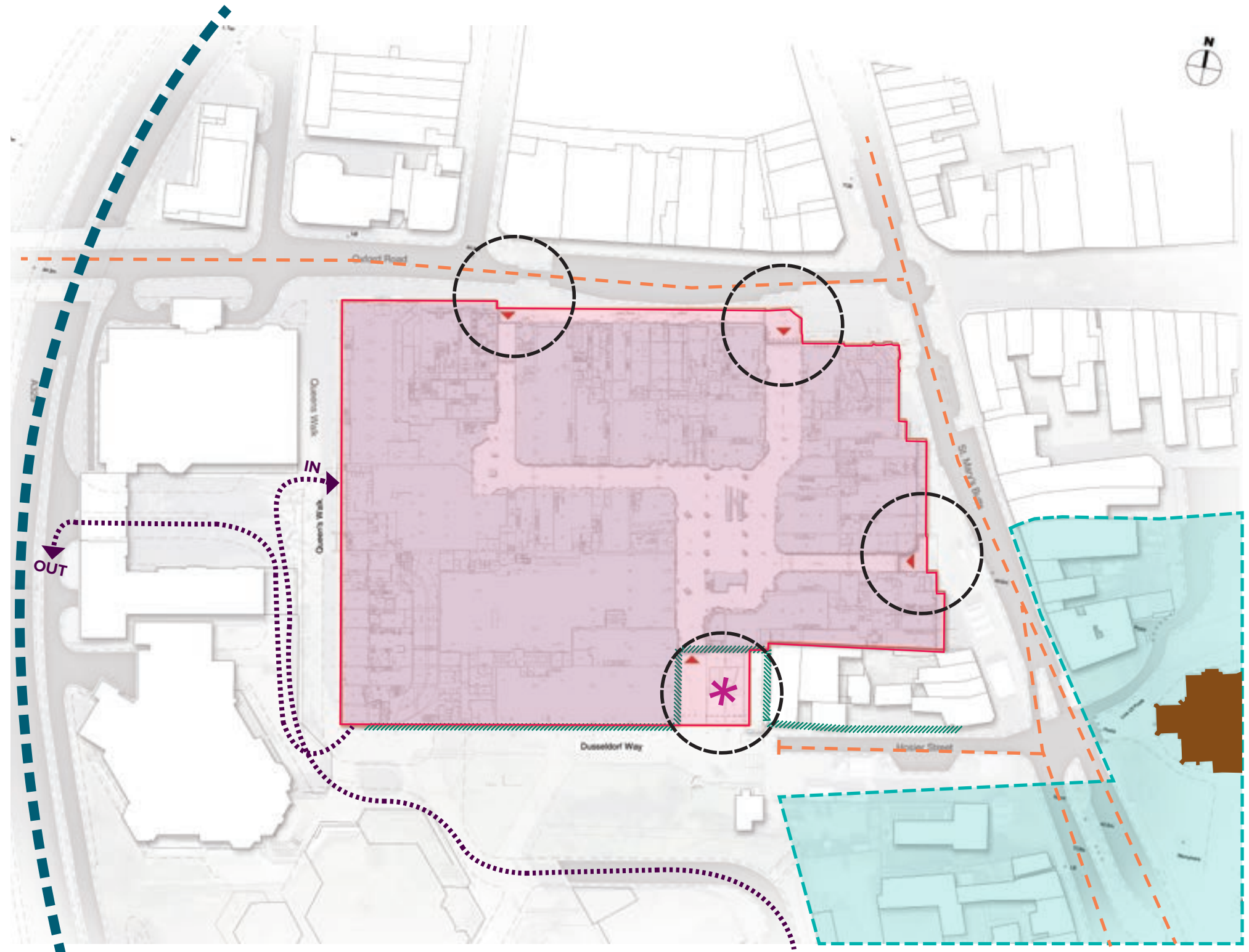
Broad Street Mall - Concrete Panelling

2.0

Assessment | 2.8 Existing Site Connectivity & Constraints

Constraints & Considerations

- 1970s mall design leads to a blank inward looking development and does not respond well to its context or public realm.
- Poor gateways in the centre especially at South court.
- Urban environment although green is drab and inactive.
- Poor quality and tired architecture especially around south court.
- The constraints of the live retail environment and multi-storey car park have to be taken into account.
- Sensitive conservation area adjacency needs to be considered.
- Western grouping tall building area opportunity.
- Views towards St Mary Church.
- External podium deck considerations and constraints.



2.0

Assessment | 2.9 Planning Policies - West Side Major Opportunity Area

The key objectives of the West Side Major Opportunity Area:

- Provision of mixed uses
- Improvement to pedestrian and cycle permeability along Dusseldorf Way and Queen's Walk - both key movement corridors
- Consideration of the transition between low and medium density residential and the conservation area
- Demonstration of a comprehensive approach to the sub-area, which does not prevent neighbouring sites from fulfilling their aspirations

Site Specific objectives:

- Retention of the existing Mall with additional developments above, along with improvements to existing mall frontages
- Continued retail and leisure provision
- Maintaining frontages along Oxford Road and St Mary's Butts
- Improving frontages to Hosier Street and Queen's Walk with uses such as Residential
- An opportunity to significantly improve parts of the area to better relate to the conservation area

"The west side area will be a mixed-use extension to the west of the centre containing high-quality mixed-use environments and fostering stronger east-west links into the central core."

- Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan



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2.0 Assessment | 2.9 Planning Policies - Hosier St Area Development Framework

In general there is alignment with the framework as the scheme as be designed within the original policy parameters. The key objectives that align with the development framework are outlined below:

- Reinforce the Hexagon Quarter in to a new vibrant urban quarter with focus on residential and culture.
- Meet the demands for new homes in a growing South East Hub
- Take advantage of one of the largest brownfield sites in the town centre

The Site and Masterplan Objectives

- Reconnect the historic core of Reading
- Enhance the inward looking edges of Broad Street Mall
- Improve the routes and public realm

Design Objectives

- Ensuring residential mix and affordable provision is appropriate to policy guidance
- Developing appropriate scale and form
- Ensuring Quality in Architecture and Landscaping



KEY:

Development framework area	Core area around Hosier Street (RBC owned)	Thames Valley Police	Magistrate Court	Broad Street Mall
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2.0 Assessment | 2.9 Planning Policies - Tall Building Strategy

The site sits within the Western Grouping/Cluster set out in the Reading Tall Buildings Strategy. As the extract below this recommends a cluster of tall buildings is the most appropriate development in this area.

“Up to three tall buildings would be appropriate, focused along the line of the IDR, to mark the area as the civic heart of Reading and a gateway to the centre.

Tall buildings should be distinctive and iconic and of a similar design.

Building heights should generally be lower than the tallest buildings around the station. Building heights should reduce towards the conservation area in the South and the lower topography in the East and North.

The area should generally continue the larger block structure that exists along Broad Street and Friars Street and also integrate its permeability through direct North-South pedestrian routes. Tall structures in tower form should be sited along the IDR and combined with lower structures that should seek to reinforce the alignment on the street (IDR).

Tall buildings should create a sense of a fine grained, light townscape scale by introducing a small number of slim and elegant towers that are spaced generously apart

Transition in scale should be achieved by including angular planes which ensure that tall buildings step away from the lower scaled neighbouring buildings and the use of setbacks that are aligned with surrounding building heights.

Tall buildings proposed in isolation will not be appropriate, as they should be linked to the physical regeneration of a wider area.

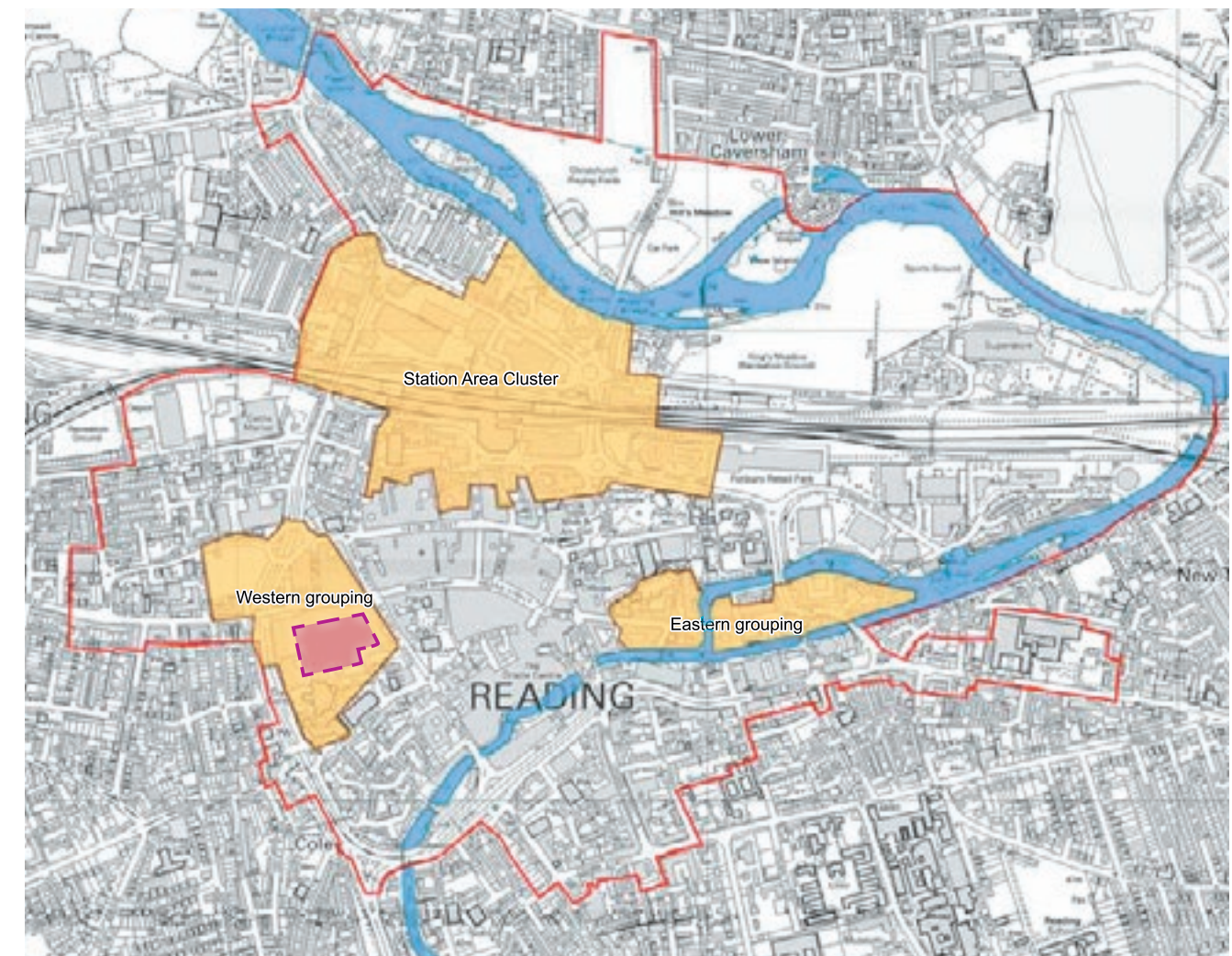
The most significant overshadowing impact by tall building developments in this cluster is considered to be afternoon shadows” over the west half of Friar and Broad Street in the pedestrianised Central Reading area. This would be cast by buildings along the easternmost edge and should therefore be limited in height or receded to mitigate this impact. This would also affect property along West Street, St. Mary’s Butt, Gun Street and the east end of Castle Street.

Tall buildings along the westernmost edge of this cluster could overshadow property in zones A and B throughout the morning hours. This mainly includes property along Chatham Street, Euton Place and Howard Street.

Views to be protected Tall buildings should only be permitted within this area if their form, spacing and roofline design can be proved to enhance the view: From St. Mary’s Butts to Greyfriar’s Church; From Hosier street to St. Mary’s Butts. In addition, consideration should be given to how proposed.

The specific area of the Broad Street Mall/ Hosier Street area has been identified as part of the Western Cluster of tall buildings, as set out in planning policy.

“In recognition of the ‘Western Cluster’, primarily focused at Chatham Street, and the existence of the 10-12 Storey Fountain House, support is given to tall buildings on this site in accordance with the approved principle that all tall buildings clusters on the town’s periphery, are to be subservient to building heights at the Station.” - Hosier Street Area - Outline Development Framework page 355



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KEY: Areas with some townscape capacity for tall buildings Site Location

2.0 Assessment | 2.9 Planning Policies - Hosier St Area Development Framework

The site sits within the Outline Hosier Street Area Development Framework.

It clearly sets out a vision of this area as:

“The area will portray a unique character and sense of place retaining the historical associations of the area and providing high quality public realm, both through the enhancement of existing public spaces adjacent to the site and the provision of new spaces that provide a setting and focus for new development.”

- Strengthen and rediscover what was the historical core of Reading, an area which has become more peripheral to the town centre from the 18th century onwards.
- Reference to the western grouping as well as pre-application submission for tall residential building on the Broad Street Mall site.
- It also sets out the height classifications as well as the general principle of grading down towards

the conservation area.

- It also sets out the height classifications as well as the general principle of grading down towards the conservation area.

“The hub and spoke approach to tall buildings in the town assigns preeminence and dominance to the central cluster at Station Hill. Consequently buildings on the site will need to perform a supporting function to the central cluster at the station.”

Outline Hosier Street Area Development Framework

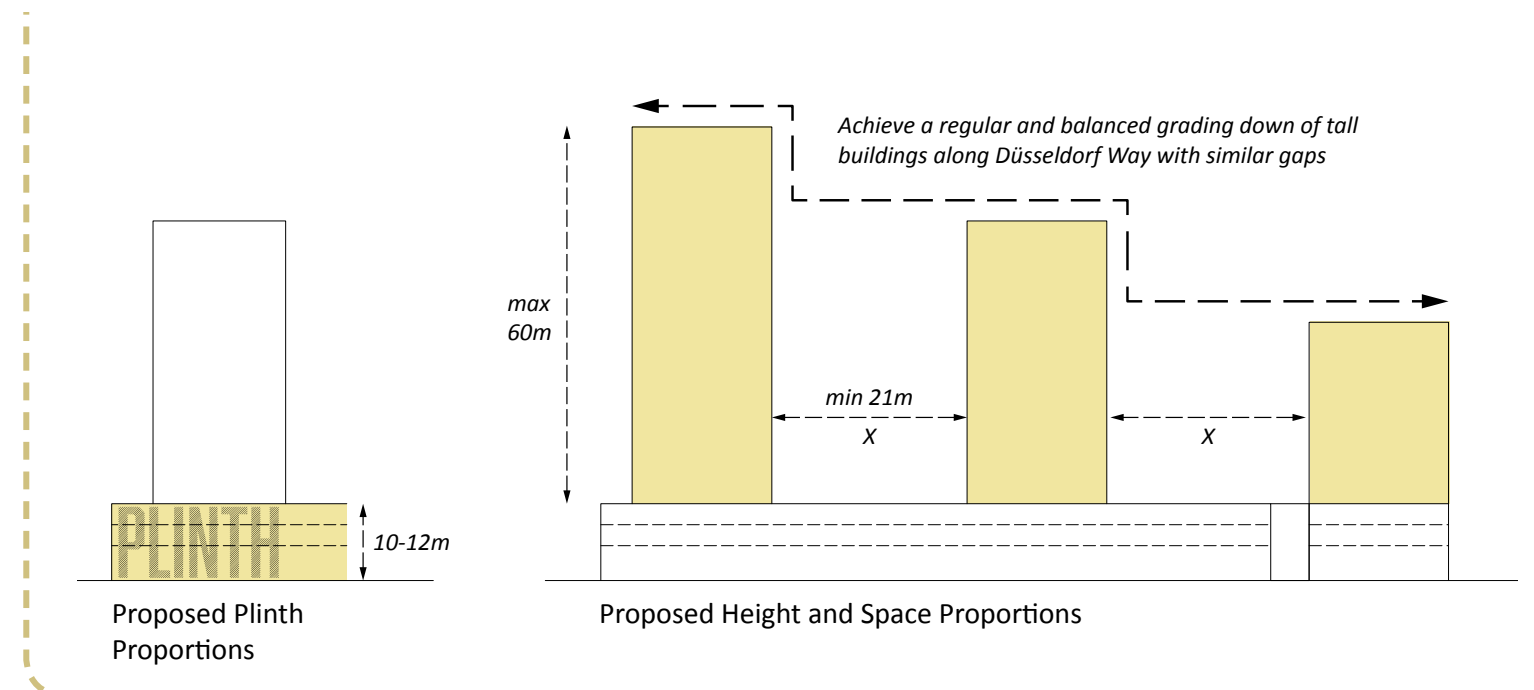


Figure 22 BUILDING PARAMETER DIAGRAMS



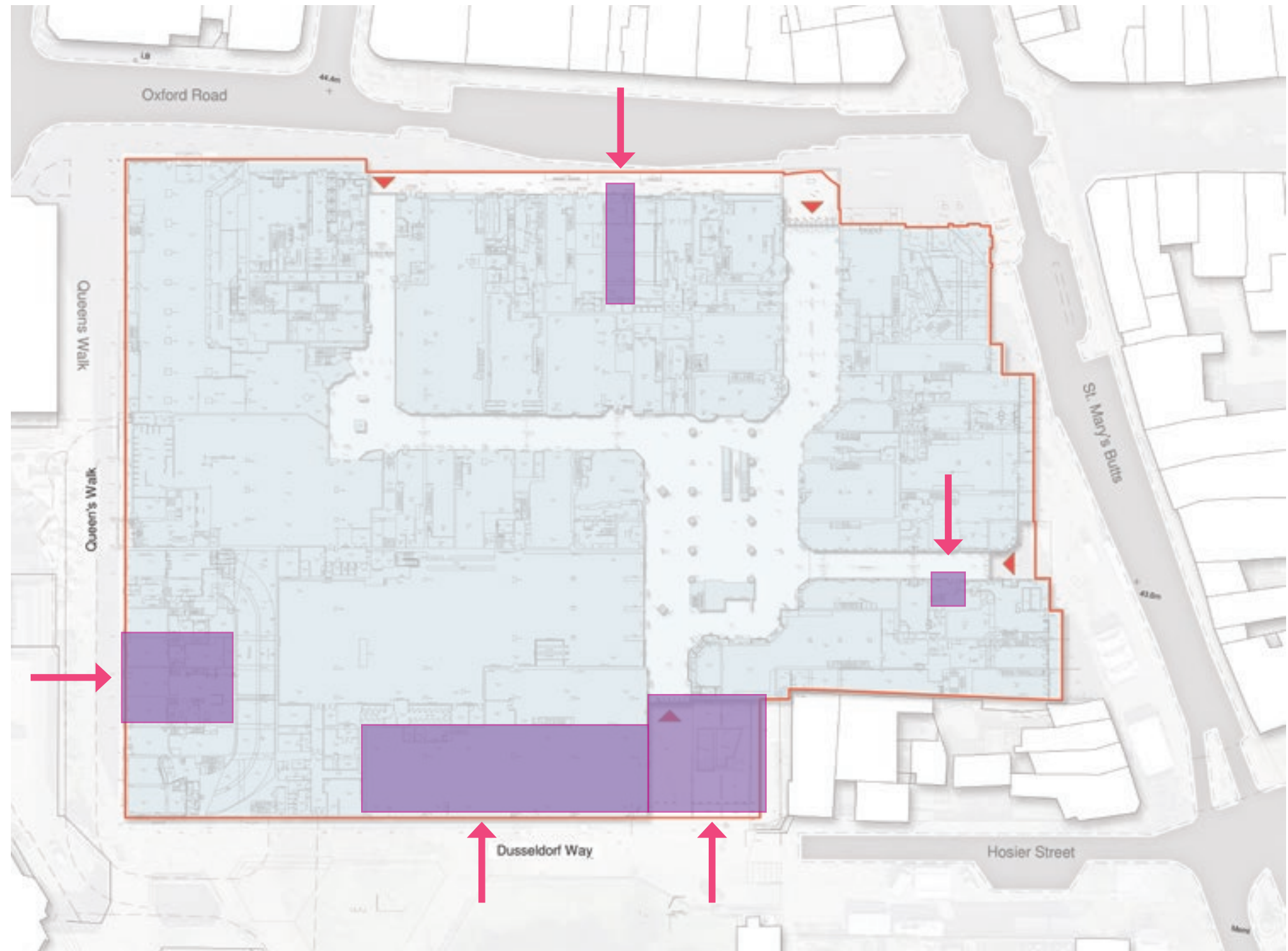
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2.0 Assessment | 2.10 Available Ground Level Space

To achieve the principles set out in the Development Framework, a number of technical assessments were carried out by the team.

One of the first exercises in the development of the layouts was to determine where the proposals would meet the ground level to allow for residential access whilst maintaining an active retail frontage to the centre.

In a constrained, live retail environment these areas were limited as it was important not to impact on the recently enhanced retail offer in Broad Street Mall. These spaces were identified and proposed as entry points for the proposals as indicated opposite.



KEY: Available Space Potential locations for residential access

2.0 Assessment | 2.11 Available Basement Space

The ground level space allocation helped determine available space at basement level and therefore identified a zone within which the proposed circulation cores could be located.

An already well established service route for the centre meant that these areas would be utilised for cycle storage, residential servicing and deliveries.



KEY: Available Space

2.0 Assessment | 2.12 Structural Constraints

As the core positions were defined by the available space and least impact on the centre and car parking levels, a structural strategy for the tallest blocks was discussed with the structural engineers to work within the constraints of a live retail environment.

Sites A, B, C and E

Confined space piles are proposed to be constructed within the shopping centre's basement following the removal of all non-load bearing masonry walls and basement concrete slabs.

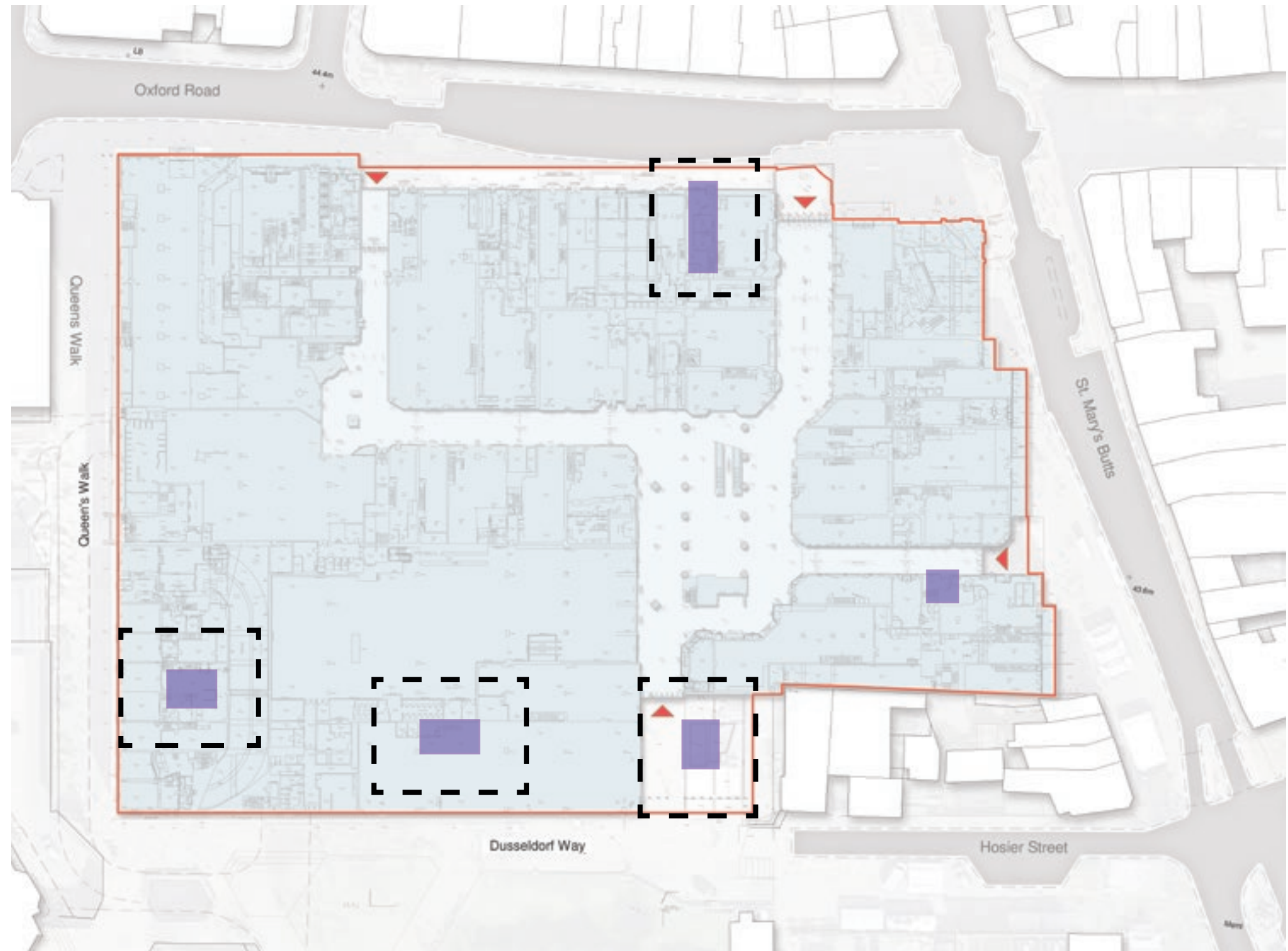
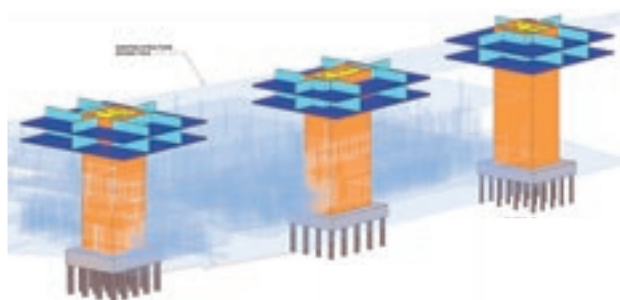
The piles will support a reinforced concrete stair and lift shaft core walls. This central reinforced concrete circulation core will provide the main support of the upper habitable suspended floors and more fundamentally to provide the main stability to the entire structure.

This approach leads to a square floor plate with a maximum 8m cantilever from the core, allowing sufficient space for an efficient residential layout.

Further residential design considerations were taken into account such as the adjacencies of the units, achieving adequate day lighting and impact on nearby properties.

Site D

Quadrant House has an existing circulation core accessible from the Eastern Gateway into the centre. The structural strategy includes the additional of 2 levels of a lightweight structure above the existing quadrant house along with the refurbishment of the existing block into residential dwellings.



KEY:

 Core locations	 Span of proposed floor plate
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3.0 Involvement | 3.1 Pre-Application Discussions

This section of the DAS summarises the consultation activity that has been undertaken in relation to a planning application for the redevelopment of Broad Street Mall (“the site”) for Moorgarth (“the Applicant”).

The Applicant recognises the ongoing need to provide clarity about the proposals. As a result, the project team thought it was important to facilitate an open and transparent discussion about their proposals. Four Communications, a specialist public engagement agency, was appointed by The Applicant to develop and deliver a public consultation strategy for the site. The brief was to provide information about the proposals to Broad Street Mall and address any queries from councillors, community and amenity groups and local residents.

Consultation and engagement on the future of the site began with a preview event on proposals for a new hotel on the site of the former Eva’s nightclub. The event was held at the Broad Street Mall on Monday 6 and Tuesday 7 August, and was promoted through a letter sent to all tenants, key stakeholders and 598 near neighbours.

The programme of public engagement continued with the Council’s autumn SPD consultation which was attended by members from the project team. The event was also attended by Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Tony Page, Vice-Chair of Planning Applications Committee, Cllr Karen Rowland, and Abbey ward councillor Mohammed Ayub.

Representatives from local businesses, institutions and residents associations were also in attendance. The event gave attendees an opportunity to address local concerns, including questions on the proposals for Broad Street Mall. The project team were on hand to address any questions in relation to the plans for the Mall.



3.0 Involvement | 3.2 Public Consultations

Most recently, a public exhibition was held over three days from Thursday 29 November to Saturday 1 December. The public exhibition was based in the Mall and was advertised to stakeholders, tenants and c.5300 local residents. Attendees included representatives from the Council, local amenity societies and local businesses.

An advertisement for the exhibition was also displayed on digital screens around the mall. In addition, members of staff wore exhibition branded jackets from Thursday to Saturday.

Throughout the consultation process a dedicated telephone number, e-mail and mailing address were supplied and managed by Four Communications; providing further information to residents, local groups and stakeholders upon request which will continue to be active as proposals develop and progress.

This extensive consultation has informed the Applicant's plans as they have developed and as they are presented in this document.



WELCOME

WELCOME TO OUR EXHIBITION ON THE FUTURE OF BROAD STREET MALL.

We want to create an exciting new destination for Reading, with high quality retail spaces, new homes and extensive public realm improvements.

Over the summer we spoke to the community about the first stage of our vision for improvements to Broad Street Mall. This included a proposed hotel and restaurant on the site of the former Eva's nightclub on Hosier Street. We have now submitted a planning application for this stage.

This exhibition is an opportunity for you to see our wider proposals for the regeneration of the Mall and provide feedback. At the end we would be grateful if you could fill out our questionnaire and let us know your views.






THE TEAM

MOORGARTH

Moorgarth are specialists in real estate asset management, enhancing assets by creating a physical environment where their tenants can flourish.

Moorgarth pride themselves on their open approach. They work alongside people and organisations to tailor projects to suit the target market. They listen to their tenants, understand markets and deliver.

CORSTORPHINE + WRIGHT ARCHITECTS

C+W Architects has an award-winning ethos, creating high quality architectural solutions that blend a strategic, designed approach with an integral commercial awareness.

As placemakers, C+W know that architecture is about more than individual buildings and look to work collaboratively with their clients to understand and develop the spaces around and between structures.

C+W Architects marry 35 years of professional experience with cutting edge technologies, producing design solutions that enhance the built environment.




PUBLIC REALM

The redevelopment aims to deliver generous new public realm improvements alongside private amenity space for residents.

In detail, this could include:

- ▶ Planting around the site, including robust and attractive year round species.
- ▶ Street furniture including planters and seating.
- ▶ External lighting to create an attractive and safe night time environment.
- ▶ Hard landscaping, including brindle and red clay paving.
- ▶ Private roof gardens for new residents.




Selection of the banner artwork displayed at the public exhibition held on 29th November - 1st December 2018

4.0

Evaluation | 4.1 Site Strengths & Weaknesses

STRENGTHS

- Opportunity to take advantage of one of the few brownfield sites in the centre of Reading to accommodate the growing demand for urban living.
- To strengthen the area as a key quarter, as it once was, through new development
- **Open up the frontages and continue the rejuvenation of Broad Street Mall offer through development**
- Opportunity for a tall building grouping in the designated cluster
- **Become a vibrant catalyst for future development in this quarter of the city**
- Take advantage of a highly accessible public transport area.



Brownfield Site



Opportunity for a tall building



Open up frontages

WEAKNESSES

- 1970s mall design leads to a blank inward looking development and does not respond well to its context or public realm
- Poor gateways in the centre especially at South court
- Urban environment although green is drab and inactive
- Poor quality and tired architecture especially around south court
- The constraints of the live retail environment and multi-storey car park have to be taken into account.
- Sensitive conservation area adjacency needs to be considered
- Western grouping tall building area opportunity
- Views towards St Mary Church
- External podium deck considerations and constraints



Blank inward looking development



Drab and inactive environment



Sensitive conservation area

4.0

Evaluation | 4.2 Design Drivers

Design Principles

- Develop a design strategy for upper level uses with the least disruption to live retail environment.
- Improving the Vistas along Dusseldorf Way from the Hexagon through to the Reading Minster and the conservation area.
- Develop an architectural approach that responds to the modernist 1970's architecture of broad street mall but is also sensitive to the adjacent conservation area.
- Ensure where possible that the new development has an active outward looking aspect both at street level and upper level.
- Ensure that the development aligns with the principles set out in the Hosier Street Area Development Framework.
- Evolve an architectural strategy that responds the design guidance set out in the tall buildings guidance.
- Ensure good quality design and architecture.

